



# Sensitive Customers Code of Practice



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## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define which non-household customers we classify as sensitive. We use this document to help us determine which non-household customers should and shouldn't be considered sensitive, and then work with the retailers to keep this information up to date on all relevant systems. It shall also be used by retailers to enable them to identify sensitive non-household customers within our operational area.

## Key principles – describing our approach

- The following have been classified as non-household sensitive customers (in no particular priority):
  1. hospitals
  2. prisons
  3. educational establishments (including special needs schools)
  4. farms and abattoirs (with commercial livestock)
  5. vulnerable domestic customers sharing a supply with a non-household customer premises
  6. sole traders who are sick, elderly, disabled
  7. care homes and nursing homes, where eligible
  8. premises with national civil or security importance
- As per SEMD, we require retailers to inform us where eligible premises (including shared supplies) contain vulnerable domestic customers or vulnerable sole traders.
- We will publish guidance as to which types of non-household customers we consider to fall within the definition of sensitive customer, and we'll respond to any query raised by retailers about the application of our sensitive customer definition.
- We'll determine if a non-household customer is sensitive by using the definition as well as the premises' Standard Industry Classification (SIC) code. The list of codes that we consider as sensitive is included in Appendix 1.
- Retailers will identify any of their non-household customers who meet our definition of a sensitive customer (for example, indicate by them listing a SIC code in Appendix 1).
- Where necessary, we'll query the retailer's classification of a non-household customer as sensitive.

- Where necessary, we'll request that information held by the market operator is updated to remove the sensitive customer classification associated with an eligible premises within our operational area.
- Where appropriate, we'll ask the retailer to update the information held by the market operator to add the sensitive customer classification associated with eligible premises within our operational area.
- We'll respond to any query the retailer raises about the application of our sensitive customer definition.
- We'll work closely with Retailers to establish public health site-specific arrangements for sensitive customers.
- In an event or incident, we'll supply the most appropriate response depending on the nature of the event and the information available to us at the time (through the site-specific arrangements and/or communications with that customer).
- When planning work and/or responding to an unplanned change in water and/or sewerage services, we'll take account of the needs of identified sensitive customers.
- Where necessary, we'll contact the non-household customer deemed to be sensitive (according to our definition of a sensitive customer) to determine their specific needs and/or to validate the information contained within their site-specific arrangement.
- Where our statutory obligations under the SEMD require us to provide an alternative water supply, we'll provide this at a relevant level, in accordance with the priorities within the SEMD.
- We expect retailers to notify us if they become aware of a shared supply whereby a domestic customer is sharing a supply with a non-household customer and that domestic customer is a vulnerable customer.
- Where a non-household customer is on a shared supply with a domestic customer who is a vulnerable customer, we'll investigate the situation and work with the non-household customer and the vulnerable domestic customer to capture the specifics of the domestic customer's vulnerability and make sure the systems and network are configured appropriately.
- Where our investigations confirm that a supply to non-household customer also serves a domestic vulnerable customer, to make sure we meet our obligations to the domestic vulnerable customer, the non-household customer may be classified as sensitive.
- Food and drink manufacturers or other industries that are dependent on water for their business won't be classified as sensitive, however we'll consider their specific needs as far as is reasonably practicable in both our planned and unplanned activities.

## Contacting us

For questions, comments or feedback relating to this document, you can contact us through our [website](#)

For concerns regarding dishonest or unethical behaviour, please contact us on any of the following:



If you are an employee of Thames Water, you can also speak with your Line Manager.