



Water Safety Plan

Hartlepool Water's number one priority is to deliver a safe, wholesome water supply to all of our customers across the whole supply area. The water should meet all the regulatory standards as set down in UK law, be pleasant to drink and available for the wide variety of uses in the home. The safety of our water supply is paramount and we take extensive steps to protect the water from contaminants as it travels from our borehole sources through to your tap. Public health is our business and everyone involved in delivering water to your home or business is fully aware of this heavy responsibility. To demonstrate our commitment, we have a comprehensive sampling programme which runs throughout the year and samples from source to tap. Where samples fail to meet the stringent standards, we carry out a full investigation to understand the reasons for the failure and to put in place measure to protect public health.

Maintaining high hygiene standards is nothing new to Hartlepool Water or the Water Industry in general. Since public water supplies were made available in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, good engineering practice, sound science and careful attention to hygiene during maintenance works and operation of the water system have been at the heart of what we do.

What has changed?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognised that to deliver a safe water supply, all countries should adopt a water safety planning approach to look at the all the likely risks from source to tap. This approach has been endorsed by the UK and translated into UK law. The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) is the regulator responsible for policing water companies and ensuring we all meet the strict quality standards for drinking water and is therefore also interested in the way we manage risks that might affect drinking water.

In late 2008, Hartlepool Water carried out a detailed risk assessment of all the water delivery stages from borehole source to tap. This included an assessment of risks to water quality in the catchment, treatment works, storage reservoirs, water mains network and within the customers' premises. These assessments were very wide ranging and examples included:

- Measures to protect individual boreholes from surface water
- Measures to protect the groundwater from diffuse pollution
- Maintenance procedures to protect hygiene during water mains repairs
- Procedures to ensure only approved chemicals and materials are used in contact with the drinking water
- Measures to monitor and control treatment operations
- Advice to customers on how to preserve the quality of water in the home

Hartlepool Water submitted a detailed Water Safety Plan to the DWI in late September. In November, it was confirmed that the Plan met the legislative requirements and was fit for purpose.

What did the Plan tell us?

Risks were scored according to a risk matrix both before and after we took account of any risk reduction measures that we take as part of our daily operations. For example, during repairs to our water mains there is a risk of ingress of surface water and contamination from unapproved fittings. To mitigate these risks, we use trained and experienced people and fittings approved for use in contact with drinking water as means of mitigating these risks. Having examined the extensive range of risks that face us as a water supplier, we found that there were no risks with a residual risk factor that we deemed to be unacceptable and therefore requiring additional measures, investment or procedures.

Whilst this is an excellent result with no high level risks remaining, we did identify improvements we can make to our processes, procedures and measures to lower residual

risks still further. One key result was the need to improve the waterproofing on some of our storage tanks early in 2011. This requirement has been built into our investment plans for the next 5 year period.

A specific benefit of the planning process has been to bring together and assess the risks to water quality in the home. Water is a perishable product like many other foodstuffs and must be stored in a cool place in clean containers. The plumbing in the home can also affect the quality of your water, for example, from storage tanks that do not have adequate covers fitted. We have adopted the guidance produced through our Trade Association, Water UK in the form of a simple leaflet which gives lots of practical advice on keeping water safe to drink in the home. You can obtain a hard copy from us or download the attachment from this website.

Our Plan has provided some important guidance and gathers together a wide range of data important to us to run an efficient and effective water supply business and most importantly, to protect the health of the customers we serve. We also have an obligation to communicate our Plan to our stakeholders including the following groups:

- Our customers be they large industrial, commercial or domestic customers
- Our Regulators including the Environment Agency, the Drinking Water Inspectorate, the Consumer Council for Water and Natural England
- Our Local Authorities and through them our Parish Councils
- The Health Protection Agency through our local Consultant for Communicable Disease Control (CCDC)
- Our employees

We have included a reference to our Plan in our billing leaflet distributed to all of our customers in March 2009 and this briefing note is now available through our website. It must be noted that the Plan itself cannot be published owing to the sensitivity of the some of the information from a security aspect.

If you have any questions or want to discuss how our Plan helps to protect the water we supply to you, then please either telephone 01429 858050 during working hours (Monday to Friday 0830 to 1700 hours excluding Bank Holidays) or write to us at Hartlepool Water, 3 Lancaster Rd, Hartlepool TS24 8LW or e mail us at enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk