

1st October 2015

Information Letter 03/2015

To: Board Level and Day to Day contacts of Water and Sewerage Companies and Water Companies in England and Wales

Dear Sir/Madam

Regulation 31 approval of products and substances intended for disinfection, disinfection or cleaning agents of waterworks apparatus and distribution systems.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this letter is to inform companies¹ of a change in the policy and practice to the requirement for regulation 31² approval of those products and substances currently included in Section A4 of the List of Approved Products for use in the Public Water Supply in the United Kingdom.

Background and change to policy

2. Regulation 31 prohibits water companies from introducing or applying products and substances to water which is to be supplied for domestic purposes (generally regarded as drinking, washing cooking and food production). Companies may however introduce or apply such products where *inter alia* such application or introduction has been approved under regulation 31(4)a by the Secretary of State. Approved products and substances, intended for disinfection, disinfection or cleaning of waterworks apparatus and distribution systems, are included in section A4 of the [list of approved products](#) accessible on the Inspectorate's website.
3. These products and substances are clearly intended to be used whilst plant/equipment is off line, with the product or substance being flushed away or its concentration reduced to a minimum, that gives rise to no, or negligible risk, to water quality, before the supply is resumed. A

¹ This term refers to water undertakers, water supply licensees and inset appointees

² Regulation 31 of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000 (England) (as amended) and regulation 31 of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2010 (Wales) (the Regulations) and equivalent regulations in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

precautionary approach has been taken to date to require suppliers/manufacturers to apply for regulation 31 approval.

4. Since these substances and products are not intended to be introduced or applied to water intended to be supplied for domestic purposes they do not come within the scope of regulation 31. In future therefore suppliers/manufacturers of substances and products intended to be used as described above will not be required to apply for approval under regulation 31 and any applications made will not be considered. The current listings in section A4 will remain until the five year period of validity has expired, after which they will be removed from the list and no renewal will be issued. Applicants for any product currently subject to renewal of approval or initial application will be contacted individually about their applications.

Action by companies

5. Companies should note the change in policy and practice as described above. If a company wishes in future to use a product that is not currently listed in section A4 they should take a risk based approach to determine whether or not the use of such a product presents an acceptable risk, having taken any mitigating steps if necessary, to water quality.
6. Companies should note this change only applies to those products and substances included in section A.4 of the list.

General

7. The Inspectorate will write to all approval holders whose products and substances are included in section A.4 to explain how this change in policy and practice affects their inclusion in the list.

Enquiries

Any enquiries regarding this letter should be made to Peter Marsden on 07795 520 505 or by email to peter.marsden@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Copies of this letter are being sent to Pamela Taylor, Chief Executive, Water UK; Carol Skilling, Water Resources Management, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Olwen Minney, Water Management Team, Welsh Government; Sue Petch, Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland; Margaret Herron, Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland; Tony Smith and Chairs of the Regional Consumer Council for Water;

This letter is being sent electronically to Board Level and day to day contacts. Please acknowledge receipt by email to dwi.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk. Hard copies are not being sent but the letter may be freely copied.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pollard'.

Claire Pollard
Deputy Chief Inspector (Science Strategy)