

Drinking Water Quality

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water obtain its water supply from lowland rivers, from reservoirs, lakes and streams in the hills and from underground boreholes. Before the water is supplied it is treated to remove impurities then disinfected. Drinking water is distributed partly by gravity and partly by being pumped through mains and holding tanks called service reservoirs.

The quality of drinking water supplies is of a very high standard as it must meet the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2001 for quality. We undertake extensive sampling in all areas of the production and distribution process to ensure drinking water supplies meet these quality standards. The Company carry out over 150,000 tests on its water supplies each year. Over the years these tests have shown a continuing improving trend, over 99.8% of results fully comply with the Regulations. This continuing improvement has been achieved as a result of our investment, improved operations and our commitment to service.

If a particular sample does not meet all the required standards, this does not necessarily mean that it is unfit to drink. Some standards relate to the appearance of the water rather than to a possible health risk. In addition, many of the standards that have been set for health reasons are based on lifetime exposure rates and so incorporate a wide margin of safety.

Following privatisation in 1989, there has been a major capital expenditure programme to rebuild and refurbish many water treatment works. Expenditure is now targeted at maintaining and improving these works and the mains refurbishment of the network system.

Between 1995 and 2000, 1,900 km of mains were replaced or refurbished. The current programme of investment is to improve a further 4,500 km of mains by 2010, the aim being to continue to improve the high quality of water that is already being delivered to customers.

Information on the quality of our supplies is freely available to our customers. We maintain a computerised register containing details of all the tests carried out on the samples taken by the company to monitor quality. You can view the register at Nelson (near Caerphilly) and Dinas (near Caernarfon). However arrangements can be made through these offices for viewing the register at local offices such as Clydach, Withybush, Glascoed and Hereford. In addition we are happy to offer information by post for any of our water supplies if you contact us, giving your address. This is a free service and is restricted to information relating to the area of your own home, but we are prepared to offer information more widely if you are involved in research or have a particular interest.

There are two groups of people who independently check the quality of water that the Water Company supplies. These are the Drinking Water Inspectorate and the Environmental Health Officers of Local Authorities. If there is any cause for concern, these two groups of people are informed as well as public health authorities, who have a responsibility to judge that we are providing the best response to any problems.

Should you require further information call us on 0800 052 0130.