CAMPING SITES, CARAVAN HOLIDAY PARKS & RESIDENTIAL PARK HOME ESTATES

The information provided in this booklet will help site operators to understand their legal obligations. Further information can also be found on the Water Regs UK website www.waterregsuk.co.uk.

What are the water fittings regulations, byelaws in Scotland?

The water fittings regulations are national regulations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, byelaws in Scotland, which protect drinking water by ensuring plumbing systems are designed, installed and used safely.

When do they apply to camping sites, including caravan holiday parks, and residential park home estates?

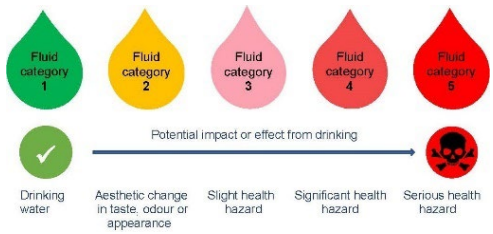
If there is any form of mains water supply on site, even if it is only a back-up, these regulations/byelaws apply.

What do site operators need to do?

1. Ensure the installation is safe by notifying the local water undertaker at least 10 working days before making any changes to plumbing systems. (In this document the term water undertaker includes Scottish Water.)
2. Prevent drinking water supplies from becoming contaminated by knowing what are, and avoiding, all the contamination risks on site.
3. Protect your plumbing installations from all forms of damage and maintain the quality of the water

What is contamination?

Contamination occurs when there is a change in water quality. If the water supply on a camping site or residential park estate were to be contaminated it would potentially pose a risk to the health and wellbeing of not only those on site but also, if it entered the public water supply, that of the wider community.



The regulations/byelaws identify five categories of contamination risk, reflecting the impact and risk to health. These range from no risk (fluid category 1) to serious health hazard (fluid category 5).

Contamination by backflow occurs when fluid in a plumbing system flows in the opposite to the intended or normal direction of flow. Backflow is not theoretical rather an ever present threat to people's health.

MAKE SURE YOUR SITE IS SAFE

To ensure the plumbing on site is legal and safe make sure you tell the local water undertaker in advance of any plumbing work you are planning to do.

Although there are some exemptions in the case of camping sites and residential parks advanced notification of any proposed plumbing work, even that undertaken by an approved contractor, may require notification.

What is notification?

If a camping site or residential park, including temporary sites has any form of mains water supply, then the water fittings regulations/byelaws apply. These make it a legal requirement for the local water undertaker to be given advanced notice of any proposed plumbing work. This is an important simple and essential check to minimise the risk of waste and contaminating water supplies both on the site and in the wider community.

The water undertaker has 10 working days to respond to a valid notification. The proposed work should not start until after the 10 days is up.

The water undertaker can either decline or grant consent. If consent is granted conditionally then these conditions must be met.

If no response is received consent is deemed to have been granted. The proposed plumbing work can proceed but the owner/occupier has the legal obligation to ensure it is fully compliant.

Notification requirements

Although broadly similar there are differences in the notification requirements in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. If there are any questions, please contact the local water undertaker for advice.

What has to be notified: camping sites?

In the case of caravan, motorhome and camping sites if the individual units are, or are intended to be, supplied from an existing supply notification is always required for proposed plumbing work unless there is an exemption for work completed by an approved contractor.

The regulation/byelaws limit those installations which an approved contractor does not have to notify. The exemptions do not include the installation of a plumbing system outside a building or at a depth of less than 750 mm or more than 1350 mm below ground. Meaning any alteration to pipework at shallow depth or above ground must be notified irrespective of who completes the work. Including when the point of entry for a water supply on a pitch is adapted or modified in anyway. For example, when the supply to a relocated caravan needs to be repositioned.

For further information contact the local water undertaker.

What has to be notified: residential park homes?

In the case of residential park homes, lodges and caravan holiday parks, if the individual units are, or are intended to be, supplied from an existing supply, notification is typically only required if the unit is to be relocated and pipework laid at less than 750 mm or above ground is to be altered. For further information contact the local water undertaker.

How to notify

Many water undertakers have their own notification forms and dedicated contact information which can be found on the water undertaker's website and here. It is important to use the local water undertaker's form especially when submitting electronically.

If the local water undertaker does not provide a form, for a notification to be valid it must include:

- The name and address of the person giving notice and, if different, the name and address of the person to whom the consent should be sent.
- A description of the proposed work or material change of use.
- The location of the premises and their use or intended use.
- If using an approved contractor their name
- With the exception of some items (further information can be found here), a plan which relates to the proposed alteration work and a diagram showing the pipework and fittings to be installed.

What is an approved contractor?

Approved contractor schemes are organisations for plumbing contractors approved by water undertakers or appointed by the Secretary of State. There are six schemes. Only those qualified to install in compliance with water fittings regulations/byelaws can join.

Some work carried out by approved contractors does not require advanced notification. Certificates of compliance issued by approved contractors can be used as a legal defence if their work is not compliant. Further information can be found on the Water Regs UK website www.waterregsuk.co.uk

WaterSafe

WaterSafe is not an approved contractor scheme, it is a free website which the general public can use to search for a local approved contractor. For further information please refer to the WaterSafe website www.watersafe.org.uk

MAKE SURE THE DRINKING WATER IS SAFE

Contamination risks

Make sure the drinking water supplies on site, and in the network, remains safe by identifying all possible sources of contamination and ensuring steps are taken to protect against the water supplies being contaminated by them.

There are various risks which might be found on site to be aware of, including:

- Grey water - domestic wastewater
- Black water – sewerage
- Manure
- Alternative water sources
- Hydrocarbons
- Chemicals
- Swimming pools

Avoiding contamination

The best way to avoid contamination is to limit the risk of any potential sources of contamination coming into contact with drinking water, including the plumbing fittings supplying it. This will help to ensure that those who are working or staying on site as well as the wider community remain safe.

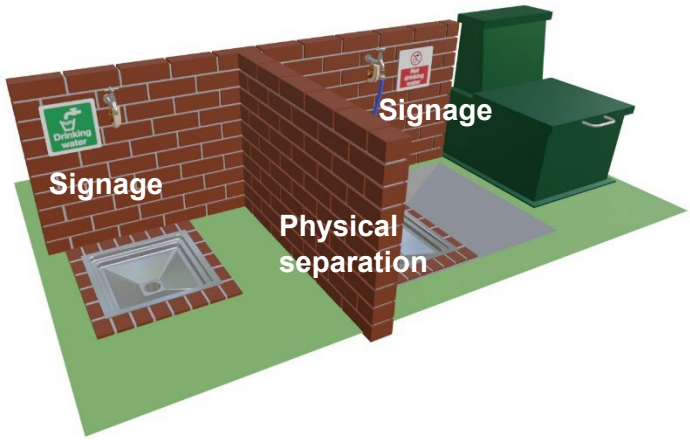
The information provided below will highlight some of the areas of risk on camping sites and help site operators to ensure the drinking water supplies remain safe.

Drinking water points

It is important that taps are regularly cleaned and disinfected. This will help stop bacteria and other microorganisms, which occur naturally, growing on both the inside and outside of the tap spout..

To reduce the risk of contaminated water finding its way into the drinking water supply when filling water carriers a gap should be maintained between the tap spout and carrier. Drinking water points should be physically separated by a partition from wastewater and chemical toilet emptying points and signage to denote usage applied.

To save water consider using a self-closing tap.



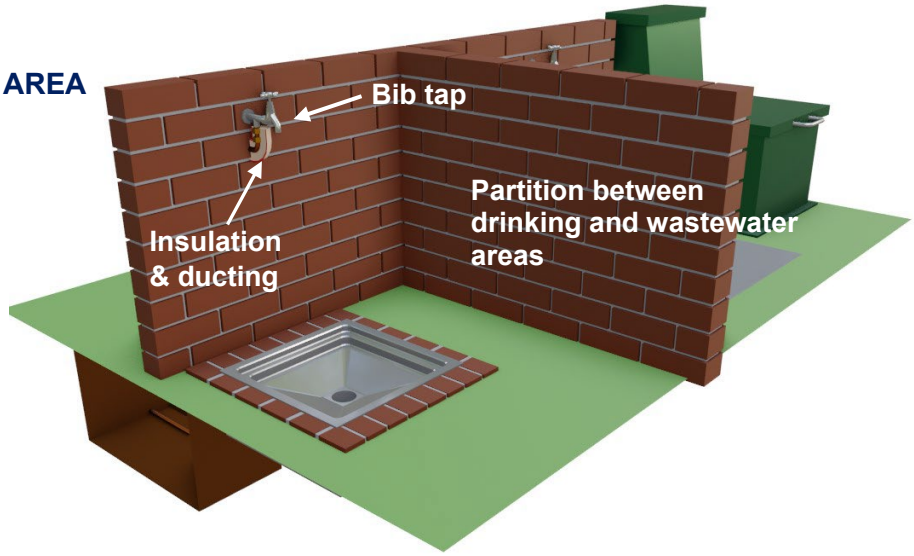
Wastewater and chemical toilet emptying points

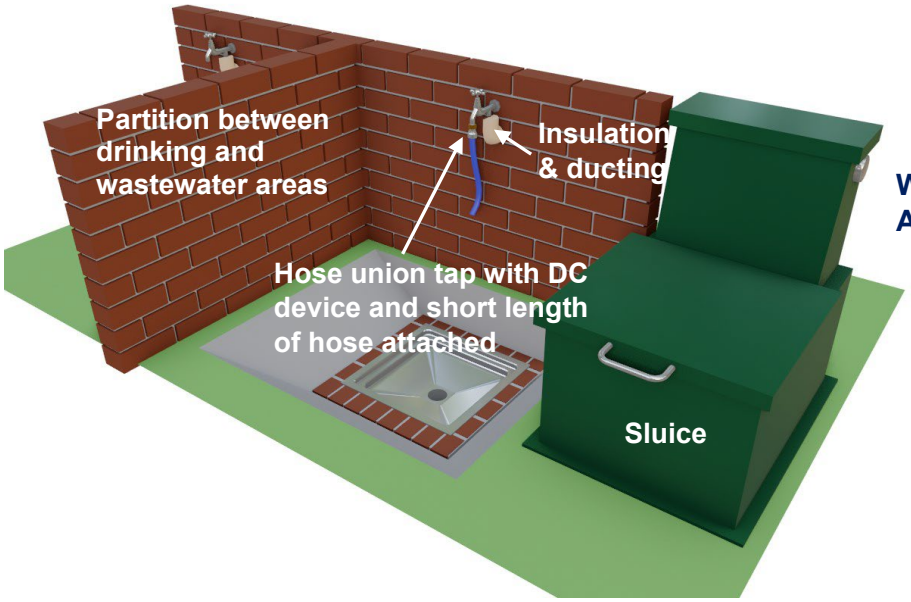
These installations are classified as a serious health hazard. Whilst a partition between them and drinking water points will reduce the risk of contaminants coming into contact with drinking water taps it will not address the risk of backflow. Contamination as a result of contaminated fluids flowing the wrong way in the pipework supplying water to these facilities.

To prevent backflow a barrier (backflow protection) which stops contaminated fluid flowing backwards is needed. The regulations/byelaws identify several different backflow prevention arrangements and devices, each having a rating based on fluid category and type of backflow. To address the serious health hazard risk, a backflow prevention arrangement which provides fluid category 5 protection must be installed. A Type DC arrangement can be used to for this purpose. Please be aware that installing a pipe interrupter (DC device) reduces water pressure, and if functioning correctly may discharge water.

DRINKING, WASTEWATER AND CHEMICAL TOILET EMPTYING POINTS

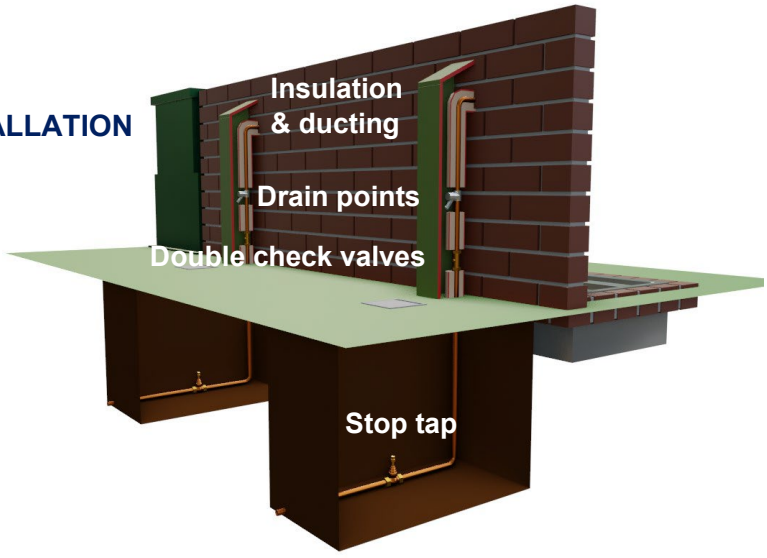
DRINKING WATER AREA





WASTEWATER DISPOSAL AREA

REAR VIEW OF INSTALLATION



PROTECT YOUR PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS

The following advice should help those responsible for camping sites and residential parks to prevent water quality being adversely affected and plumbing installations damaged.

Water Quality

If a plumbing system has not been used for a while it is recommended it be flushed.

Plumbing systems which have been drained should be flushed and recommissioned prior to reoccupation. Disinfection is not usually required.

Environmental risks

For drinking water supplies to remain safe it is important they do not become contaminated with other fluids. There are various ways this could happen, including by backflow, ingress and permeation.

Incorrectly installed or poorly maintained air gap arrangements may fail to protect against backflow.

It is essential adequate backflow protection arrangements are installed where water sources combine. For example, where there is a point of connection between mains water and other water sources such as rainwater, recycled water, river water, borehole supplies and swimming pools.

Plumbing incorrectly installed or inadequately maintained poses a risk. Blue MDPE pipe should only be installed where light is excluded as exposure to light can result in it becoming brittle and breaking down.

Any above ground plumbing must be protected against environmental, accidental and animal damage. A regular inspection should be undertaken of pipework and water fittings to identify leaks or other issues. This will help to reduce waste, prevent contamination and save cost.

Hoses attached to hose union taps are a high contamination risk. Backflow via a hosepipe submerged in a bucket, toilet waste tank, puddle, drain or swimming pool is a very real possibility. If a hose pipe is being used it must be supplied via a backflow prevention arrangement providing the correct level of backflow protection, typically a Type DC arrangement or break tank.

Fixed hoses installed for firefighting should be labelled for firefighting use only, not be used for any other purpose and a check valve installed to provide for backflow protection.

Bib taps, taps to which a hose cannot be connected, are a lower risk providing that a gap between the tap outlet and the spillover level of whatever it is discharging water into is maintained at all times.

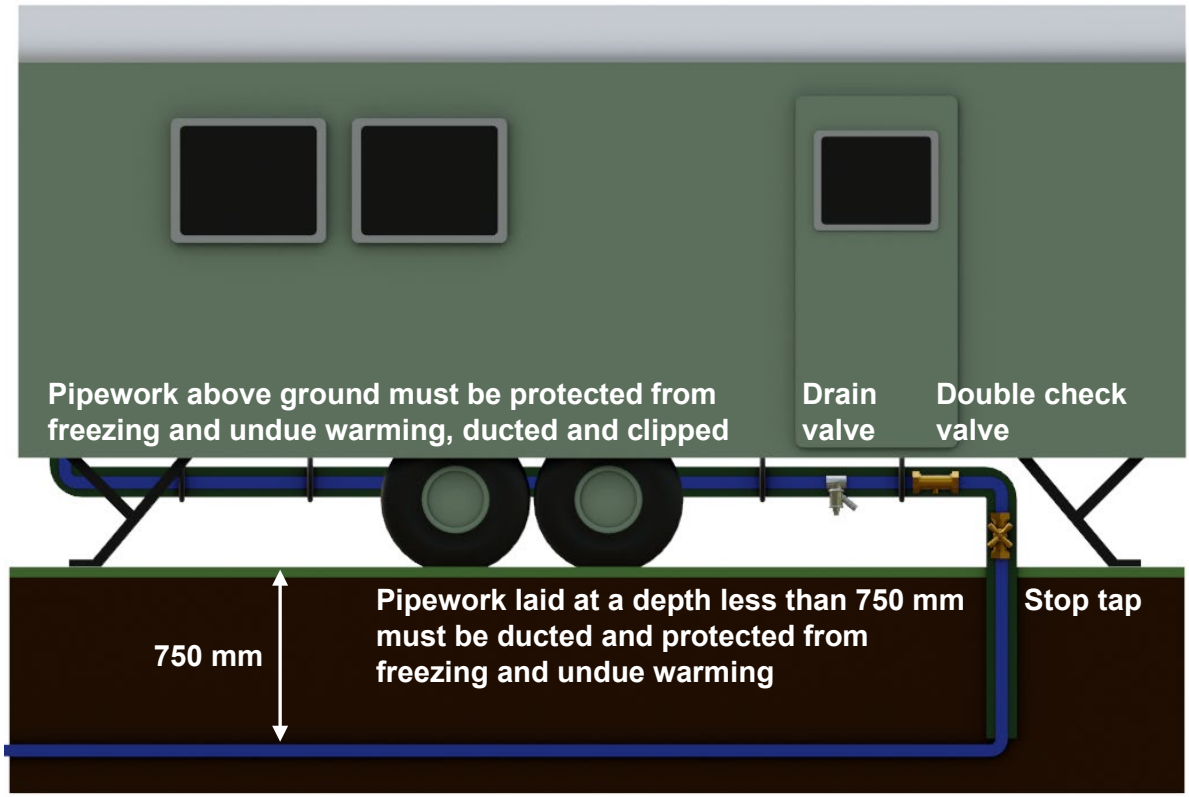
Pipework should never be installed in a contaminated environment such as a sewer or cesspool. Plastic plumbing fittings are at risk of permeation by diesel or heating fuel, pesticides, insecticides and similar organic substances or fluids, so should never be installed where they could come into direct contact, including contact with soil contaminated with them.

Insulation

It is not just pipework which can be affected if it is exposed to freezing temperature, all water fittings are at risk. To avoid damage to plumbing systems in unoccupied caravan and holiday homes consideration should be given to the plumbing being drained down.

Any pipework laid at a depth of less than 750 mm needs to be protected. This typically is done by installing trace heating, but the local water undertaker may consider insulation providing it is suitable for use. For further information please refer to the pipe insulation tool.

It is not just cold weather which is a concern, hot weather can lead to warming of cold water. To literally avoid pouring money down the drain make sure any exposed pipework is insulated.



Installation or alteration of any pipework laid at less than 750 mm or above ground, even when the work is undertaken by an approved contractor is always notifiable. For further information speak to the local water undertaker.

Physical damage

Damage to pipework caused by animals or machinery is a common cause of leaks. To prevent damage to property, avoid costly repairs as well as the waste of water and risk of contamination, ensure pipework is ducted and seal off any rodent entryways.