

Advice – Reinstating a Water Supply After Disuse or Reduced Demand



Before returning a water supply to use by the visiting public* or regular consumers steps must be taken to ensure the water quality is acceptable. The following steps should be considered:

- ✓ Checks of pipes and fitting for signs of ingress, leaks, & biofouling and to check if treatments are working normally.
- ✓ A review of current water demand and the capacity of tanks and treatments.
- ✓ Thorough flushing of the distribution network to renew water stored in tanks and pipework. Flushing should be extended to all affected points of use. (Showers, taps and toilets)
- ✓ Purging the water source itself may be required if inactive for a significant period.
- ✓ Disinfection of the distribution system where appropriate, by a suitably trained plumber or water engineer.
- ✓ An evaluation of any communal drinking water points in relation to the risk posed by COVID-19.

***Please note** - Any resumption of business activity should be done in adherence with the latest government regulations and advice regarding COVID-19 (please visit the www.GOV.UK).

For further advice or information regarding reinstatement of water supplies see the [DWI's detailed guidance](#) or call your water treatment company. The Public Health team 01884 255255 health@middevon.gov.uk can be contacted for more information and advice.

Industry specific guidance for the maintenance and operation of water systems, along with a variety of generic advice for the management of private water supplies, is available through the Drinking Water Inspectorate's (DWI) website.

The DWI state that it is the duty of those supplying water to the members of the public to make sure the water is wholesome for domestic purposes; such as drinking, washing, preparing and cooking food.

During periods of reduced water use or suspension of a supply, the quality of water stored in water infrastructure such as; tanks, pipework and even your water source can become impaired. Deterioration of your water could take place in any part of the supply network.

Hazards include:

- Ingress of faecal bacteria and viruses – e.g. through backflow
- Stagnation – causing algal & bacterial films or unacceptable tastes & odours
- Legionella growth – posing a serious respiratory risk which can be fatal
- Leached plumbing metals and lead
- Treatment chemicals and their breakdown products