

Guidance for the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009

This guidance note is to be read in conjunction with the Water Regulations Guide which is available online at:

http://www.wras.co.uk/Regulations_guide.htm

The Water Regulations Guide covers the water fittings regime in place in England, Scotland and Wales upon which the **Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009** are based. When the guide is next revised it will take account of the differences between Northern Ireland and GB Regulations.

The main differences between the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 (the 1999 Regulations) and the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (the 2009 Regulations) are as follows:

1. Technical differences

Permissible temperatures within pipes

- 1.1 The technical requirements of both sets of Regulations are nearly identical although paragraphs 9 and 15 of Schedule 2 to the 2009 Regulations reduce the permissible temperature of water within pipework to 20°C. This is because there is the risk of legionella growing at temperatures above 20°C.

WC's, flushing devices and urinals

- 1.2 In paragraph 25 of Schedule 2 to the 2009 Regulations the requirement to have operating introductions for dual flush toilets permanently marked on the cistern has been removed.

- 1.3 Paragraph 25(1)(d) inserts a new requirement that no flushing cistern should be installed unless it incorporates a suitable method of installation or an appropriate backflow prevention device.

2. General differences

Interpretation (regulation 1)

- 2.1 The definition of Approved Contractor is different in the 2009 Regulations giving NIW the sole responsibility of managing the Approved Contractor Schemes.

Notifications (regulation 5)

- 2.2 The Regulations list certain water fittings which must be notified to Northern Ireland Water (NIW) before installation. This gives NIW an opportunity to impose conditions before contractors undertake certain types of work in order to reduce any possible risk of contamination to the public drinking water supply as well as wastage. The 2009 Regulations extend the list of notifications required by including:

- (b) a WC with an ascending spray or flexible hose
- (d) a pump delivery pipe drawing water from a supply pipe;
- (j) greywater, recycled water, reclaimed water and rainwater harvesting systems;
- (k) water systems for fire fighting, including domestic sprinklers;
- (l) a flexible shower hose or other flexible outlet for use in conjunction with a WC;
- (m) a 'shower-toilet' or 'bidet- toilet' where, either as part of the WC itself or as an addition or adaptation of it, a stream of water is provided from below the spillover level of the WC pan for personal cleansing.

2.21 The list of items that can be installed by Approved Contractors without prior notification to NIW is extended in the 2009 Regulations by including:

- (l) a flexible shower hose or other flexible outlet for use in conjunction with a WC;
- (m) a 'shower-toilet' or 'bidet- toilet' where, either as part of the WC itself or as an addition or adaptation of it, a stream of water is provided from below the spillover level of the WC pan for personal cleansing.

2.22 Unlike the 1999 Regulations we have removed the authorisation for Approved Contractors to install a Type BA device for protection against fluid category 4 fluids without the consent of NIW.

Relaxation of requirements (regulation 10)

2.3 The 2009 Regulations are different to the 1999 Regulations in that the Department will not grant a relaxation unless NIW can demonstrate that it would not pose a danger to public health.

Annual enforcement report (regulation 13)

2.4 The 2009 Regulations introduce a requirement for NIW to publish an annual enforcement report detailing levels of enforcement activity. This will assist the Department in determining if NIW has met its duty to enforce the Regulations as well as ensuring openness and transparency regarding enforcement of these Regulations.

Recouping of costs (regulation 14)

2.5 The 2009 Regulations give NIW the power to recoup any reasonable costs incurred in remedying any contamination incident caused by a contravention of the Regulations.

Schedule 1

- 2.6 The definition of fluid category 2 has been clarified for ease of reading although there is no difference in interpretation.

3. Useful contacts

- 3.1 For technical advice and assistance with the application of the Regulations, you should consult Northern Ireland Water Limited or WRAS. Northern Ireland Water Limited is responsible for enforcing the requirements of the Regulations through its Plumbing Inspection Teams.

Technical queries should be addressed to:

Water Regulations Team

Northern Ireland Water Limited

Ballykeel Office

Larne Road

Ballymena BT42 3HA

Telephone: 0845 7440088

Email: waterline@niwater.com

- 3.2 WRAS provides assistance to the water industry and general public in the consistent application and interpretation of the Regulations. It publishes a range of useful information and guidance to facilitate compliance with the Regulations including a Directory listing Approved Products, which meet the requirements of the Regulations. The Scheme can be contacted at: WRAS, 30 Fern Close, Pen-y-Fan

Industrial Estate, Oakdale, Gwent, NP11 3EH. Tel: 01495 248454
email: info@wras.co.uk. Website: www.wras.co.uk/

- 3.3 The Department for Regional Development has responsibility for water fittings policy in Northern Ireland. The Department for Regional Development also has a duty to ensure that Northern Ireland Water Limited carries out its enforcement duties adequately.