

17th February 2004

Circular Letter: WSP2/04

*To each local authority*

## **DRINKING WATER NATIONAL MONITORING PROGRAMME**

As outlined in Circular Letter L1/03 (WSP) dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003 and later circulars this Department is with the assistance of Consulting Engineers Mott Mac Donald Ltd and E.G. Pettit and Company supporting the planning and implementation of the Drinking Water National Monitoring Programme (DWNMP). The main objective of the Programme is to secure compliance with national and European drinking water regulatory requirements and to establish uniformity in the sampling, testing and entry of data for drinking water supplies and associated reporting procedures. The programme particularly assists local authorities' in the implementation of the European Communities Drinking Water Regulations (S.I. 439 of 2000) which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004.

This circular is to advise local authorities on the progress achieved to date and to highlight certain critical activities that require particular attention.

### 1. Draft Reports on Water Supply Schemes

Under the DWNMP significant funding is provided for the collection of public and private water supply scheme information and the mapping of these schemes on a county wide GIS database. Local authorities are the beneficiaries of this work. The quality and completeness of the information received varies considerably and is in some instances disappointing. At this stage, the Consulting Engineers have passed most of the draft reports to authorities for review and are collecting outstanding information for the remaining reports. I am to request that authorities provide the support necessary to conclude this exercise and in particular that:-

- The draft report on water supply infrastructure in your administrative area is comprehensively reviewed by your authority in a timely manner and that all available outstanding information is passed to the Consulting Engineers.
- Those authorities that have not supplied a reasonable amount of information and have not received their draft reports supply all available outstanding information to the Consulting Engineers as a matter of urgency.

It is regrettable that this protracted exercise continues to demand so much programme time and resources. In acknowledging the genuine efforts of many authorities and their provision of the necessary information I would stress that the information/questionnaire was first issued almost a year ago, has since been requested many times and that data collection will conclude at the end of February (2004). I would again ask for your urgent and full co-operation.

## 2. Quantification of Sampling and Analyses Requirements

Draft "Sampling Frequency Spreadsheets" have been prepared for each sanitary authority. These are based on the information made available to the Consulting Engineers and will require further revision. The spreadsheets were distributed at the December 2003 workshops. You are asked if you have not already done so to review your draft requirements and revert to the Consulting Engineers on this matter. You are also advised that outstanding information on water supply schemes as outlined at item 1 above, is critical to this process and that the provision of this information will enable the development of an accurate sampling and analyses spreadsheet for your administrative area.

## 3. Update on 2003 Workshops

As you know a series of drinking water workshops were held with the assistance of the Water Services National Training Group in December 2003. We appreciate authorities' attendance, full participation and contribution to the success of the workshops. We acknowledge that all of the issues raised could not be immediately resolved. The EPA is currently reviewing outstanding issues in the context of their draft Guidance and the 2004 Regulations. Any outcomes will be reflected in the final version of the Guidance/Handbook which can be accessed through the EPA's Internet address at: [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie) .

## 4. Training Programme

An essential element of the DWNMP is the provision of training and training manuals. We have following consultation with the WSNTG proposed the development of a comprehensive national water quality training programme. Subject to the agreement of the WSNTG Steering Group this programme will be rolled out in the first half of 2004. We will in advance of the implementation of the national programme circulate a "Model Sampling Manual" which is currently being finalised to authorities.

## 5. Further Information

Further information and assistance will be notified to authorities as the work of the DWNMP progresses.

## 6. Access to Circulars

It should be noted that this Circular and all Departmental Circulars are now accessible at the new the Internet Sharepoint System at:

<http://circulars.lgcsb.ie/doecirculars>

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Liam Gleeson  
Water Services Policy Unit

To - Each County and City Manager and Director of Services (Water Services)  
Copy to - GCCC, AMAI, CCMA, WSNTG, RWNMP Ombudsman's Office and Regional Authorities.

