

Application of the Act to accommodation premises

The Safe Drinking Water Act (the Act) applies to all drinking water providers who supply water to members of the public including supplies provided in short-term accommodation premises. Such premises may include bed and breakfasts, farmstays, motels, hotels, caravan parks and holiday rentals. This fact sheet provides advice on the impacts of the Act on the provision of drinking water in accommodation premises.

The Act is designed to provide a practical and cost effective approach to ensuring safety of drinking water supplied to the public. As a result, exemptions have been included for rainwater supplies provided in low risk premises including accommodation and recreational premises. Many accommodation providers who supply rainwater to guests will be exempt from the requirements of the Act.

What do I need to do if I supply drinking water to guests?

SA Water or other reticulated supplies

If your drinking water supply is provided by SA Water or another mains water provider you are not required to comply with the requirements of the Act. SA Water and other reticulated supplies are subject to the full requirements of the new legislation.

Water Carter

If you have your drinking water tanks topped up/filled with water supplied by a carter you should ensure that the water carter is registered with the Department for Health and Ageing (DHA) as a drinking water provider.

Rainwater

If you supply rainwater for drinking (including as an optional alternative to a mains water supply) you have two options:

1. Exemption

Provisions for exemption have been included in the Act for rainwater tank supplies in low risk premises including accommodation facilities (providing the facility drink rainwater is a matter of personal choice). The exemption for rainwater tank based supplies is consistent with Government policy that for most people

rainwater represents a low risk but the decision to drink rainwater is a matter of personal choice.

Exemptions are subject to the provision of advice to consumers of the supply of rainwater. The Safe Drinking Water Regulations require installation of a sign near taps that supply rainwater for drinking (e.g. kitchen and bathroom) and inclusion of information in promotional material (e.g. booking forms and brochures)

2. Comply with the requirements of the Act

If you decide that complying with the legislation is an advantage for your business (e.g. good practice, continuation of existing practices), you will need to register with DHA as a drinking water provider. You will also need to comply with all other requirements of the Act and Regulations including adoption of a RMP, routine monitoring and regular inspection. For responsible providers who currently have recognised good practices in place the cost of compliance will be minimal.

Registration as a drinking water provider is a one-off, free event. In addition, DHA has developed a standard RMP for small rainwater supplies. Standard plans will include a monitoring plan and incident



protocol. Testing for a small rainwater supply is likely to be limited to an annual *E.coli* test. Most premises will need to be inspected on an annual basis. Inspections of drinking water supplies can be combined with existing inspections/audits where possible. Combined inspections for premises that supply drinking water in conjunction with food may be undertaken by local council Environmental Health Officers. DHA is working with the South Australian Tourism Industry Council to incorporate inspection of drinking water supplies into current tourism accreditation practices.

Bore water

Bore water supplies can be subject to contamination and may contain high levels of naturally occurring heavy metals. Bore water must be tested for microbiological and chemical quality prior to use for drinking. Exemptions are not applicable to bore water supplies as these supplies are subject to the requirements of the new legislation. DHA has developed a standard RMP for small bore water supplies which includes a monitoring program and incident protocol.

Surface water supplies

Surface water supplies can be subject to contamination from human and animal waste and generally require filtration and disinfection to ensure that the water is safe for drinking. Surface water supplies are subject to the requirements of the new legislation.

What if I provide a food service in addition to a drinking water supply?

Premises that prepare food and beverages for guests (e.g. hosted bed and breakfasts) are defined as a regulated premise under the new legislation. Regulated premises cannot seek exemption from the requirements of the Act and Regulations. This is to maintain consistency with the *Food Act 2001* that requires that water used in food premises must be of drinking quality.

For example, where a bed and breakfast provides full meals (where rainwater is used in food preparation) and drinking water sourced from a rainwater tank, the owner/manager of the bed and breakfast must register as a drinking water provider and comply with all requirements of the legislation. Where a bed and breakfast provides a rainwater supply for drinking and self-catering food provisions only (e.g. cereal, bread, eggs), an exemption from the legislation is applicable subject to users being notified of the provision of rainwater.

For more information:

Water Quality Unit

Public Health

SA Health

Telephone: 8226 7100

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/safedrinkingwateract

© Department of Health and Ageing, Government of South Australia. All rights reserved.



**Government
of South Australia**

SA Health