



Drinking water taps

The water fittings regulations in [England, Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland, byelaws in Scotland](#) are legal requirements which apply to all premises which have, or will have, a mains water supply, even if it is only a backup supply.

An important item of public health legislation, their purpose is to protect drinking water supplies. Their objective is to prevent contamination, misuse, waste, undue consumption or erroneous measurement of water. They do this by setting legal requirements for the design, installation, operation and maintenance of water fittings, including water-using appliances.

The booklet provides information about drinking water taps.

For further information about these requirements please refer to the Water Reg UK website www.waterregsuk.co.uk or contact the local [water undertaker](#).

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Does a drinking water tap have to be installed?

If water is supplied for drinking, cooking, bathing or washing (domestic use) a drinking water tap must be installed.

Where possible this should be supplied direct from mains i.e. not via any water fitting which stores, treats or filters the water.

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Do drinking water taps have to be supplied direct from mains?

It is recommended where possible drinking water taps be connected directly to the incoming mains water supply. Where this is not feasible, they can be fed from a storage cistern or pumped, but wholesomeness must be maintained, meaning the water fittings used must not adversely affect water quality.

Can a water softener or conditioner be installed?

Yes, as long as it's of an appropriate quality and standard.

Please note if the softened or conditioned water is to be used for drinking, cooking, bathing or washing (domestic purposes) then it must remain wholesome i.e. satisfy water quality requirements.

What is wholesome water?



Wholesomeness is defined in water quality regulations ([England & Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#)). To be considered as wholesome water must:

- Meet all the prescribed standards set out in the relevant version of the water quality regulations.
- Be aesthetically acceptable to customers in terms of appearance, taste and odour.
- Not contain anything, either alone or in combination, which may be harmful to health.

Do taps need to be labelled?

Any tap supplying water which is not wholesome must be labelled in accordance with [BS 1710](#).

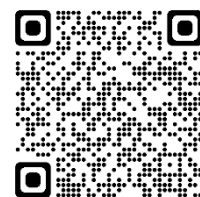
In non-household premises it is recommended all taps are labelled to help users to distinguish between sources of drinking and non-drinking water.

What is a self-closing tap?

A self-closing tap is one which turns itself off automatically after a set time or volume of water has been discharged, for example non-concussive and infrared taps often used to save water or in areas where taps are prone to being left open.

Additional sources of information:

- [Installation Guidance](#)
- [Backflow Protection Guidance](#)
- [Notification Guidance](#)
- [Multifunctional taps](#)



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