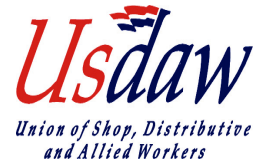




Drinking Water Provision



Many complaints are received by the health and safety section at central office regarding the quality or provision of drinking water in the workplace. This guide sets out the requirements required in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

Regulation 22:

- (1) *An adequate supply of wholesome drinking water shall be provided for all persons at work in the workplace:*
- (2) *Every supply of drinking water required by paragraph (1) shall –*
 - (a) *be readily accessible at suitable places; and*
 - (b) *be conspicuously marked by an appropriate sign where necessary for reasons of health and safety.*
- (3) *Where a supply of drinking water is required by paragraph (1) there shall also be provided a sufficient number of suitable cups or other drinking vessels unless the supply of drinking water is in a jet from which persons can drink easily.*

(ACOP) (approved code of practice)

212 Drinking water should normally be obtained from a public or private water supply by means of a tap on a pipe connected directly to the water main. Alternatively, drinking water may be derived from a tap on a pipe connected directly to a storage cistern which complies with the requirements of the UK Water Bye-laws. In particular, any cistern, tank or vessel used as a supply should be well covered, kept clean and tested and disinfected as necessary. Water should only be provided in refillable containers where it cannot be obtained directly from a mains supply. Such containers should be suitably enclosed to prevent contamination and should be refilled at least daily.

213 Drinking water taps should not be installed in places where contamination is likely, for example in a workshop where lead is handled or processed. As far as is reasonably practicable they should also not be installed in sanitary accommodation.

214 Drinking cups or beakers should be provided unless the supply is by means of a drinking fountain. In the case of non-disposable cups a facility for washing them should be provided nearby.

215 Drinking water supplies should be marked as such if people may otherwise drink from supplies which are not meant for drinking. Marking is not necessary if non-drinkable cold water supplies are clearly marked as such.

216 Any cold water supplies which are likely to be grossly contaminated, as in the case of supplies meant for process use only, should be clearly marked by a suitable sign.

Another problem raised by reps in supermarkets is the issue of refusing people drinking water at checkouts. There is no health and safety basis to this refusal and it should be challenged through your employers negotiated procedures.

The full set of regulations, 'Workplace (Health, safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 are available (priced) from the HSE at: <http://www.hsebooks.com/Books/>

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