

# Guernsey Water Advice Sheet

Guidance on Cuprosolvency of Copper Supply Pipes



## Background

Guernsey Water has become aware of a problem on **new** supplies where elevated levels of copper have been detected in drinking water (above the **maximum accepted level** of  $2000\mu\text{g/l} = 2\text{mg/l}$ ). This is predominantly as a result of **long copper** supply pipes, where the water inside has been left to **stagnate** after wet commissioning.

Having been in contact with the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS) and all UK water companies, Guernsey Water can confirm that the issue of elevated copper levels in new installations has **been observed in other parts of the UK**. The internal coating of the copper, once damaged in this way, cannot always be rejuvenated and may require pipe replacement.

Guernsey Water is reminding all plumbing contractors working in the Island that they must give notice of works **10 working days prior to commencement**. Please see Schedule 3 Byelaw 5 of our Water Byelaws book. Consent will only be given where the notice/plan contains the following details:

- **PIPE MATERIAL**
- **PIPE DIAMETER**
- **PIPE LENGTH**



## Guidance

As a guide, copper supply pipe lengths to the point of consumption (i.e. kitchen or bathroom tap) should be kept to a minimum.

Method statements for the commissioning of copper supply pipes must include measures to prevent stagnation or anything that might cause the deterioration of the water quality therein. In developments where the water supply is not going to be used straightaway, the supply pipes must be drained down, or where water use will be infrequent **a flushing regime should be put in place to completely displace the water standing in pipes** of a frequency defined by the system design/installation engineer.

Guernsey Water is not aware of any similar water quality issues on any other pipe materials used in domestic plumbing.

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