



(Case Ref: ZA25159) Correspondence from Sarah Newton MP1 message

Sarah Newton MP <sarah.newton.mp@parliament.uk> 3 March 2016 at 09:45 To: john@layte.com

Dear Mr Layte,

I understand that South West Water has arranged a meeting at your home with all relevant parties to discuss your concerns regarding their offer of compensation. I do hope that this meeting goes well.

I copy below the response I have now received from the House of Commons Library, in reply to my recent enquiry on your behalf.

I hope that the information contained in the response is helpful to you.

If this is not the case, or if you feel that I can be of further assistance to you in any other way, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Thank you once more for taking the time to get in touch.

With kind regards,

Sarah

House of Commons Library, Policy Specialist (Environment), Science & Environment Section

"In brief, a legal duty is placed on all users, owners or occupiers and anyone who installs plumbing systems or water fittings and water-using appliances to ensure they are installed and used in accordance with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. More information is provided on the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS) website. Water undertakers (i.e. South West Water in this case) have a legal duty to enforce the regulations.

According to WRAS, these regulations apply from the point where water enters the property's underground pipe (usually at the stop tap at the property boundary), to where the water is used in plumbing systems, water fittings and water-using appliances. However they do not apply in premises which have no provision of water from the public mains supply, not even a back-up supply, and rely solely on a private borehole or well supply. The primary focus of these regulations is to protect public health and to keep the water supplied by water companies safe to use for domestic purposes and free from contamination.

This means that (other than premises that are complete cut off from the public mains supply) both types of water use your constituent is referring to are covered by the requirements of these regulations. More information is provided by South West Water on their website here – installing rain water harvesting systems are specifically mentioned as requiring notification to their Water Regulations Department.

In relation to heating systems a number of requirements apply, including in relation to installation and backflow prevention. For example, closed circuit central heating systems have to be filled initially with water but may require additional 'topping up' at intervals during use. **Some central heating systems may contain additives and the water can be contaminated. Therefore they cannot be permanently connected to any supply pipe without an adequate backflow prevention device.** WRAS publishes a number of technical interpretations and other advice to facilitate compliance with the Regulations, including in relation to water heaters. For example: backflow prevention for filling and topping up heating system primary circuits; and installation of mains fed water storage heaters.

I hope that is helpful for your purposes. This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual or a particular case. It should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice, or as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required."

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