

Changes to drinking and bulk water supply points at River Thames lock sites

March 2021

Overview

We are modifying the mains water points at our lock sites and associated camp sites on the non-tidal River Thames. This includes taps for drinking water containers, bulk water supplies, and taps at chemical toilet disposal and sewage pump-out facilities.

The modifications are intended to remove any potential risk of contamination to drinking water supplies as required by the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. They are also in accordance with industry best practice guidelines developed for the recreational marine industry by the Industry Specialist Consulting Group. Participating members of the ISCG are Anglian Water, British Marine, Canal and River Trust, Hafren Dyfrdwy, Jersey Water, Royal Yachting Association, The Yacht Harbour Association, Severn Trent, Southern Water. The changes will bring the arrangements at our sites in line with those put in place by other navigation authorities, marinas, boat yards and other providers of these facilities.

What's changing?

Where needed, 'backflow' prevention devices will be fitted to all taps in close proximity to the river. We are also removing all hoses. Together, these measures will prevent the risk of river water, or stagnant water or bacteria contained in hoses, potentially being sucked into the sterile drinking water supply network as a result of back-pressure in the system.

Once the necessary modifications are completed, anyone wishing to use our mains water supply points will need to provide their own hose if necessary, with a standard Hozelock-type connector attached. The hose should be 'food grade' quality suitable for fresh water use. These are widely available from chandleries and camping and caravanning supplies outlets. However the hose **should not**:

- be more than 7 metres long
- be of an expandable type
- have any type of additional fitting attached.

All the above will result in back pressure being created. This will cause water to be vented out of the supply tap before it enters the hose. Clear instructions will be displayed at all supply points.

The backflow prevention devices will considerably reduce the rate at which water is dispensed from the taps. Please allow additional time to fill containers and bulk water holding tanks. Please also expect an increase in the amount of waiting time if the facilities are already in use. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience these necessary changes may cause.

The roll-out of the modifications is already underway, and is due to complete in early April.

The locks where these facilities are provided are listed [here](#).

More information

Should you require more information, please email WaterwaysThames@environment-agency.gov.uk

