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# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet

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## **Operational Responsibilities of Community Public Water Systems**

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of significant compliance activities and their cost for operating a small community public water system. Such a system is defined as a water system designed to serve at least 25 residents on a year round basis. Examples include municipal water systems, systems at mobile home parks, condominiums, and single family housing developments.

The following are the responsibilities of the water system owner.

### **Water Quality Monitoring**

#### **Bacterial Monitoring**

A few disease organisms in a single glass of water can cause illness. Thus bacterial water quality testing is done frequently. A new system typically samples for bacteria on a monthly basis. The number of samples taken is based on the population served and the configuration of the system.

#### **Chemical Monitoring**

Chronic exposure over a long period of time is usually necessary to experience a risk to health, thus water quality testing for chemical contaminants is much less frequent. These chemical factors include: inorganic compounds (IOCs, which include metals), volatile organic compounds (VOCs, which include solvents and hydrocarbons), synthetic organic compounds (SOCs, which include pesticides), radiologicals (RADs), nitrate, and nitrite. As a result of the federally mandated Phase II and V regulations, which occurred in the early 1990s, each category has its own sampling frequency. Systems are eligible to apply for sampling waivers for VOCs and SOC. Waivers are granted based on source protection criteria and systems must be in compliance with DWGB rules to participate. More information regarding the program can be found on the web at [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov); go to the A to Z List and choose "Chemical Monitoring Waivers."

#### **Lead and Copper Monitoring**

Lead contamination is a major concern especially when ingested by small children. Sampling under this rule reflects this concern. The number of samples required is based on the system's population. Systems that do not exceed the action levels, 0.015 mg/L for lead and 1.3 mg/L for copper, will sample each site twice the first year, once a year for the next three years, and then once every three years. Systems that exceed action levels need to do corrosion control studies, possibly provide treatment, and do additional sampling.

### **Operator Certification**

All community water systems are required to retain a New Hampshire certified operator. To meet this requirement, the owner can: hire a New Hampshire certified operator, become a certified operator by taking the examination, or have an individual associated with the water system become certified. There is training provided annually to assist water system personnel in obtaining certification. The cost of the examination for a grade C1A operator is \$50. The renewal period for certification is two years and the renewal fee for the grade C1A operator is \$50. Within each two year renewal period, continuing education is required to maintain certification. For grade C1A operators, required for very small systems, the continuing education requirement, per renewal period, is a minimum of five hours.

### **Field Inspections**

DES staff inspects all community water systems every three years. There is no cost for this inspection. However, if samples are taken by DES staff, the system owner is responsible for payment of all water quality testing fees.

### **Design Approval of Changes to an Existing System**

Design review approval is needed for **all changes** to a public water system. This includes, for example, expansion of the system to new customers, adding new treatment equipment, and adding new wells

### **Consumer Confidence Reports**

All community water systems are required to produce an annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). The CCR informs water customers about specific water quality parameters of their drinking water, the source of their water, the status of source water protection for the area impacting the water they use, and where they can obtain additional information about drinking water issues related to their water system.

The CCR is to be completed and distributed to your customers and to this office by July 1 of each year. Each CCR should include the most recent water quality data from the previous calendar year. The system must also submit a letter of certification to this office by October 1 of the reporting year stating that the system has distributed the CCR to your customers and that the information used in the report was correct and consistent with compliance monitoring data previously submitted to DES. For further information, including a CCR template and an example certification form, please visit our website at <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dwgb/capacity/consumer.htm>.

### **Permit to Operate**

Community water systems are required to pay an annual "Permit to Operate" fee. The annual fee is based on household equivalents or 2.5 people per service connection. The cost is structured on \$10 per service connection with a maximum fee of \$300. The Permit to Operate certificate runs from July 1 to June 30.

### **Emergency Plans**

Community systems are required to have and maintain an emergency plan (EP). An EP helps establish a protocol for the management and staff of a water system to follow in case of an emergency and helps a water system reduce its vulnerability to emergencies. Plans are required to be submitted to DES every six years beginning in 2003. It further requires the plan be reviewed annually by the system and updated as needed.

### **Administrative Record Keeping System**

Documentation relative to the system's sampling requirements (sites and schedules), water quality information, compliance information, and improvements and expansions, must be maintained. It is important for the owner to notify this office of address changes and other significant changes affecting the water system. Detailed recordkeeping requirements can be found by visiting the DWGB fact sheet

webpage at [www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/dwgb/index.htm](http://www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/dwgb/index.htm) and scrolling to WD-DWGB-7-1, “Water System Records Retention.”

It is ultimately the responsibility of the water system’s owner to ensure these requirements are implemented regardless of whether the property served by the system is leased/rented to other parties.

<b>Small Community Public Water System’s Sampling Schedule Fees</b>		
<b>Test</b>	<b>Sampling Schedules</b>	<b>Average Pricing</b>
Bacterial	Monthly, Quarterly, or Semi-Annually	\$ 24.00
Lead	Semi Annual	\$ 22.00
Copper	Semi Annual	\$ 22.00
Nitrates	Every Three Years	\$ 16.00
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IOC (Inorganic)	Every Three Years	\$ 310.00
SOC (Synthetic)	Annually (2)	\$ 650.00
VOC (Volatile)	Annually (1, 2)	\$ 120.00
Uranium Mass	1,3	\$ 50.00
Combined Radium	1,3	\$ 150.00
Compliance Gross Alpha	1,3	\$ 37.00
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All new systems – quarterly for first year.</li> <li>2. With Chemical Monitoring Sampling Waiver – test every three years.</li> <li>3. Schedule based on initial monitoring.</li> </ol>		

The above prices are based on averages from laboratories that provided information in August 2007. A list of accredited laboratories that offer drinking water testing services may be found by visiting [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov); go to the A to Z List and choose “Laboratory Accreditation.”

**For Additional Information**

Please contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau at (603) 271-2513 or [dwgbinfo@des.nh.gov](mailto:dwgbinfo@des.nh.gov) or visit [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov), click on A-Z List and choose Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau.” Access to additional fact sheets and public water information is also available from [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov) ; just click on Publications/Fact Sheets in the Quick Links and the “OneStop data and information” icon.

Note: This fact sheet is accurate as of May 2009. Statutory or regulatory changes or the availability of additional information after this date may render this information inaccurate or incomplete.