

WaterSafe

Key briefing points



1. Objectives of WaterSafe

To contribute to the safety of drinking water supplies and protection of customers, by:

- Bringing together the seven existing Approved Contractors' Schemes
- Promoting good plumbing practice and compliance with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations and Scottish Water Byelaws
- Providing an easily accessible, online search facility listing approved plumbing businesses employing competent, recognised individuals
- Reducing the risk to drinking water supplies from poor plumbing practice

2. What is WaterSafe?

- An umbrella organisation with a nationally recognisable brand, bringing together the seven existing Approved Contractors' Schemes in the plumbing sector
- 'WaterSafe' is the brand and Certification Mark of WaterSafe Installers' Scheme Ltd - a company limited by guarantee
- The WaterSafe board is made up of directors from the founding organisations:
 - APHC
 - CIPHE
 - SNIPEF
 - Anglian Water
 - Severn Trent Water
 - Thames Water
 - WRAS
 - Water UK
 - Worshipful Company of Plumbers
- The board also includes an observer from the Trading Standards Institute
- UK water companies through WRAS have funded WaterSafe
- WaterSafe has the full support of all water companies and drinking water quality regulators in the UK

3. How does WaterSafe work?

- Watersafe.org.uk provides an easy-to-use search facility so consumers can identify a qualified plumber employed by a company, which is a member of one of the seven Approved Contractors' Schemes
- Only recognises and gives 'WaterSafe Approved' or 'WaterSafe Recognised' status to those business and individuals respectively which meet defined competency and regulation standards:
 - NVQ Level 2 in Mechanical Engineer Services (plumbing) (6089) Recognised Water Regulations qualifications
 - Appropriate Insurance
- Has audit arrangements and disciplinary procedures
- Has customer commitment and customer redress arrangements plus compliance specification for members

4. Benefits

- **For customers**

- Know they have a competent plumber employed by an approved plumbing business
- Don't have to worry about confusing brands and acronyms
- Know work will meet Water Fittings Regulations/Byelaws
- Know there will be reduced risk to their water supply
- Know they have right of redress through clear arrangements and that work should be put right if not completed correctly
- Will get a 'Work Completed' certificate from the installer which can be used as a defence if challenged by the local water company enforcing the Regulations/Byelaws

- **For plumbers**

- National promotion through WaterSafe and water company endorsement of WaterSafe
- Enhanced status and recognition for competent, qualified plumbers.
- Alternative assessment and qualification route (with BPEC) for 'time served' competent plumbers
- Customers' expectations going forward for a WaterSafe recognised plumber – under a brand customers can trust

- **For water companies**

- Supports compliance with Water Fittings Regulations/Byelaws
- Supports the duty to enforce Water Fittings Regulations/Byelaws
- Allows greater focus on high-risk plumbers
- Provides an additional service to customers
- Offers opportunity for water efficiency advice and competent Installation advice
- Supports the Water Safety Plan approach from source to tap
- Facilitates better control of drainage misconnections

5. Progress

- Successful public launch in QEII Conference Centre, Westminster, on 8 October 2013
- Extensive consumer campaign plan in conjunction with PR agency - Bright PR. Including the launch and campaigns to 'Get Girls Plumbing' and 'Trust Approved Plumbers'
- On-going trade promotion including PR and advertising
- WaterSafe now has 1504 member businesses, employing 3024 plumbers
- The WaterSafe website is now receiving 5000 visits each month