

24 February 2020

Town Councils, Management Corporation Strata Titles, Facility Managers, Building Owners/Occupiers, and Business Owners

Dear Sir/Madam

PROVISION OF DRINKING WATER

In February 2018, amendments to Part IX of the Environmental Public Health Act (“EPHA”) pertaining to quality of drinking water were announced in the Parliament. Subsequently, amendments to EPHA, and the subsidiary regulations, namely, Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations, came into operation on 1 April 2019. These legislations are administered by the Singapore Food Agency (SFA).

2. The objective of this circular is to inform drinking water providers about their responsibilities in relation to the above-mentioned legislations. Drinking water providers include Town Councils, Management Corporation Strata Titles, building owners or occupiers, business owners and others, who may provide¹ PUB-supplied drinking water in the course of business², to the public or a section of the public (such as property owners, customers, patrons, visitors or staff members).

3. Drinking water providers must ensure that drinking water provided to the public or a section of the public in the course of business is unpolluted and wholesome³. Water providers who fail to comply with this legislative requirement may become liable for regulatory actions such as a fine not exceeding \$20,000.

¹ The term, “provide”, in relation to drinking water also means to convey, distribute, produce, supply, offer to provide or otherwise make available any drinking water, regardless of whether the water is provided free-of-charge.

² Excluding sale of bottled natural mineral water and bottled drinking water regulated under the Sale of Food Act (Cap. 283); and any supply/provision of drinking water to a vessel or ship regulated under the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Act (Cap. 170A) and the Merchant Shipping Act (Cap. 179); and provision of drinking water solely to the PUB.

³ Drinking water is considered as unpolluted and wholesome if the water— (a) conforms to the drinking water quality requirements prescribed in the Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations; and (b) does not, based on any prescribed methodology or assessment, contain any contaminant, either alone or in any combination, at a concentration or value that constitutes a potential danger to human health.

4. We would like to seek your assistance to inform relevant stakeholders about this circular, which include business owners who are receiving PUB-supplied drinking water from your organization and then providing the water to their customers, visitors, staff members and others, in the course of business.

5. For further details on the legislations and legislative requirements, kindly refer to Annex of this circular or visit SFA's website at: <https://www.sfa.gov.sg>

6. If you have any feedback on drinking water quality and water quality incidents, please contact PUB's hotline at 1800-2255-782 (1800-CALL-PUB), or submit your feedback via PUB's website at <https://www.pub.gov.sg/contact> for such matters.

7. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Teh Chun Siong
Director
Operations Management Department
Compliance Management Division
Singapore Food Agency

This is a computer-generated circular and no signature is required.

For any queries or clarifications on this circular, please contact:

- Mr. Pok Kwoon Yong at the email address, Pok_Kwoon_Yong@sfa.gov.sg
- Dr. Pranav S. Joshi at the email address, Pranav_Joshi@sfa.gov.sg
- Ms Cheryl Lin at the email address, Cheryl_Lin@sfa.gov.sg

Annex

S/N	Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Issuance of the circular	
Q.1	<p>Why is this circular issued?</p> <p>The circular is issued in order to raise awareness among drinking water providers. The objective of this circular is to inform drinking water providers about their responsibilities in relation to the legislations administered by SFA as mentioned in paragraph 2 of the circular, and also to explain the roles of SFA and PUB on matters related to quality of drinking water.</p>
Legislations and clarification of requirements	
Q.2	<p>How do we know whether our organization is considered a drinking water provider?</p> <p>If your organization is providing drinking water to the public or a section of the public in the course of business, then your organization is considered a drinking water provider under the following legislations, which can be accessed from the website, namely: https://sso.agc.gov.sg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Part IX of the Environmental Public Health Act.(b) Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations. <p>The term, “provide”, in relation to drinking water means to convey, distribute, produce, supply, offer to provide or otherwise make available any drinking water, regardless of whether the water is provided free-of-charge.</p> <p>Examples of drinking water providers include PUB, Town Councils, Management Corporation Strata Titles, building and facility owners/occupiers, business owners, etc., who provide drinking water to property owners, or their customers, patrons, visitors, staff members or others, in the course of business.</p> <p>The scope of the above-mentioned legislations (a) and (b) excludes the sale of bottled natural mineral water and bottled drinking water regulated under the Sale of Food Act (Cap. 283); and any supply/provision of drinking water to a vessel or ship regulated under the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Act (Cap. 170A) and the Merchant Shipping Act (Cap. 179); and provision of drinking water solely to the PUB. You can visit the SFA’s website at https://www.sfa.gov.sg for more details.</p>

S/N	Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Q.3	<p>Do I need a licence from SFA if I am a drinking water provider? What are my responsibilities as a provider of drinking water?</p> <p>Drinking water providers are not required to obtain any licence from SFA. However, a water provider must only provide unpolluted and wholesome drinking water to the public.</p> <p>The water provider must also comply with any notice issued by SFA’s Director-General, Food Administration (DGFA), to stop the provision of drinking water, and any direction to provide information or document relating to any process, material, chemical or feedback concerning provision of drinking water. Failure to comply with these legislative requirements may render the water provider liable to regulatory action as per Section 79(6) of the Environmental Public Health Act.</p> <p>For water providers who produce and provide drinking water by a system that is capable of producing more than 4 cubic metres of drinking water in a day, they would also need to submit water safety and water sampling plans for approval by SFA’s DGFA, and comply with other requirements prescribed under Part 3 of the Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations.</p>
Q.4	<p>What does wholesome and unpolluted drinking water mean, in the context of the legislations?</p> <p>Under Part IX of the Environmental Public Health Act, and the Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations, drinking water is considered as unpolluted and wholesome if the water—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) conforms to the drinking water quality requirements prescribed in the Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations; and (b) does not, based on any prescribed methodology or assessment, contain any contaminant, substance or organism, either alone or in any combination, at a concentration or value that constitutes a potential danger to human health.
Q.5	<p>As a water provider within a building, what measures should I take to keep PUB-supplied drinking water wholesome and unpolluted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) If you are providing piped drinking water, please follow all applicable requirements, guidelines and standards—

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	<p>(i) available under the Public Utilities Act and its subsidiary legislations, Singapore Standard 636, and any other guidelines/recommendations issued by PUB which are available at https://www.pub.gov.sg; and</p> <p>(ii) recommended by the supplier of the drinking water dispensers and water coolers, including maintenance of these units.</p> <p>The Public Utilities Act and its subsidiary legislations can be downloaded from the website, namely: https://sso.agc.gov.sg</p> <p>(b) If you are providing non-piped drinking water to the public or a section of public, you should maintain water containers in clean conditions.</p>
Q.6	<p>What are the penalties if I fail to comply with the legislations?</p> <p>Any water provider who contravenes the requirements under Part IX of the Environmental Public Health Act would be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$1,000 for every day or part of a day during which the offence continues after conviction.</p>
Roles of SFA and PUB	
Q.7	<p>What are the roles of SFA and PUB on regulation of quality of drinking water?</p> <p>SFA administers the legislations on quality of drinking water, namely, Part IX of Environmental Public Health Act (EPHA) and Environmental Public Health (Water Suitable for Drinking) (No. 2) Regulations.</p> <p>PUB administers the legislations on the technical integrity of water service installations, namely, Public Utilities Act (PUA), Public Utilities (Water Supply) Regulations and Public Utilities (Regulated Works and WSI Design Works) Regulations 2018.</p> <p>SFA regulates PUB in terms of the quality of drinking water supplied by PUB up to the master water meters of various premises.</p> <p>Beyond the master water meter of the premises, drinking water providers who receive PUB-supplied water and provide that water in the course of business to public or a section of the public (e.g. various property owners, or their own customers, patrons, visitors or staff members), such as Town Councils,</p>

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	<p>Management Corporation Strata Titles, building and facility owners or occupiers, and business owners, the following arrangements apply:</p> <p>(a) PUB, as the national water agency, will act as first responder for any feedback or water quality incidents, and should be contacted for such issues.</p> <p>(b) PUB will follow up with the water provider if any water quality issue arises due to reasons involving technical integrity and maintenance of water service installations (such as piping, water storage tanks, etc.). Otherwise, PUB will refer the feedback to SFA if the issue arises due to any other reasons.</p>
Q.8	<p>Whom should I contact if I have a feedback on my tap water, or water quality issues such as discoloured water or water with unusual smell or taste?</p> <p>You should contact PUB at 1800-2255-782 (1800-CALL-PUB), or through on-line submission of feedback via PUB's website at: https://www.pub.gov.sg/contact</p> <p>You may also contact the management in-charge of the property or the building.</p> <p>More information is available at: https://www.pub.gov.sg/watersupply/waterquality/drinkingwater</p>