

Responsibilities of a Water System Owner/Operator



Under the Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation owners and operators of a drinking water system are responsible by law to ensure that the water is safe for domestic use. Domestic use is defined as water used for human consumption, food preparation or sanitation (i.e., water used for drinking, cooking, cleaning, etc.).

The following table is a summary of the water system owner and operator responsibilities.

<p>1. Supply Safe Drinking Water (Act s.6, Reg s.5)</p>	<p>All water supplied to customers/users must be free from harmful microorganisms (bacteria, viruses or parasites). Health related chemicals found in the drinking water must not exceed certain levels.</p> <p>Drinking water taken from surface sources (lake, creek or spring) or ground water sources (shallow well) at risk of containing harmful microorganisms must be treated (i.e. Chlorine, Ultra Violet light).</p>
<p>2. Construction Permit (Act s.7, Reg s.6)</p>	<p>Construction permits are required to construct a new water system or to alter or extend an existing water system.</p>
<p>3. Operating Permit (Act s.8, Reg s.7)</p>	<p>To operate a water system requires a valid Operating Permit issued by Fraser Health. Terms and Conditions may be applied to the permit where necessary.</p>
<p>4. Operator Training (Act s.9, Reg s.12, 4.2)</p>	<p>A Certified Operator is required for all water systems serving a population of 500 or more persons.</p> <p>A small water system is not required to have a certified operator unless otherwise required by the Drinking Water Officer/Inspector as a condition on your operating permit.</p>

5. Water Sample Collection & Testing (Act s.11, Reg s. 2,8,9)	Owners/operators are required to collect and submit water samples to an approved laboratory. The laboratory tests for the presence of total coliform and E.coli bacteria. Owners/operators are expected to have the drinking water tested for specific chemicals every 3 to 5 years.
6. Emergency Response Plan (Act s.10, Reg s.13)	Owners/operators must have a written plan detailing what they will do in the event of an emergency (e.g. if the drinking water supply becomes contaminated with E.coli bacteria – issue a boil water advisory to all users).
7. Immediate Reporting (Act s.12, Reg s.9)	If an owner/operator receives a report from a laboratory regarding an E.coli positive water test result, he/she must immediately notify Fraser Health (Drinking Water Officer/Inspector).
8. Notify Drinking Water Officer of Threat (Act s.13)	As soon as an owner/operator becomes aware of a possible threat to their water system (e.g. chemical is spilled into their water supply or someone has tampered with their system) he/she must immediately notify Fraser Health (Drinking Water Officer/Inspector).
9. Notify Water Users of Threats to Drinking Water (Act s.14)	If an owner/operator becomes aware of a possible health threat and is unable to immediately notify the Drinking Water Officer/Inspector, he/she must immediately notify the users of the drinking water supply of the threat. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner/operator receives a report from a laboratory regarding an E.coli positive water test result or • Owner/operator considers that there may be a health threat to the drinking water system.
10. Publication of Information (Act s.15, Reg s.11)	Owners/operators are required to make various types of information public. This includes information regarding their emergency response plans and water quality monitoring test results.
Recommendation: Operation & Maintenance Recordkeeping	Owners/operators should keep a record of routine maintenance and repairs, water test results, operational issues, etc.

Unofficial versions of the act and regulation can be downloaded from: www.hls.gov.bc.ca/protect/dwact.html

For any questions or concerns contact your Drinking Water Officer/Inspector at 604-870-7900.

Website: www.healthspace.ca/fha
www.fraserhealth.ca