Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

School | kura drinking water safety

Code of practice for schools | kura on Council water supply networks

A focus on hygiene, maintenance and training will reduce your contamination incidents and support a safe and clean drinking water supply for all students, staff and visitors. It is especially important to note that tamariki are at high risk for infections. Extra care must be taken to ensure their safety.

Repair damage promptly

Arrange for any leaks or damage to your drinking water system to be repaired promptly. This stops damaged and leaky pipes from allowing contaminants to enter your drinking water.

Contractor selection

Always choose a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to work on your drinking water system (i.e. a registered plumber or drainlayer).

Personal hygiene | hauora

Your contractor must wash their hands thoroughly before working on the water supply.

Your contractor must wear clean clothes and protective gear like gloves and masks. Clean clothes reduce the risk of introducing contaminants. Gloves and masks create a barrier, protecting both the water supply and the individual from potential exposure.

Your contractor should avoid touching their face while working on the water supply. Face/hand contact can transfer germs from mouth, nose, or eyes to the water supply.

Illness | māuiui

If the contractor has any stomach issues like diarrhoea or vomiting, they must not work on the water supply until they are fully recovered.

The contractor must inform the school principal | tumuaki immediately if they feel unwell. Appropriate measures can then be taken to prevent potential contamination and protect the health of the school community.

A contractor must wait at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped before returning to work on the water supply. This will reduce the risk of transferring any remaining pathogens to the water supply.

Equipment and tools

The contractor must keep tools and materials clean and properly stored to reduce contamination.

The contractor must use dedicated tools for your water supply system to avoid cross-contamination from other tasks.

Worksite hygiene

The contractor must maintain cleanliness in work areas. This will keep contaminants from entering the water supply and compromising water quality and safety.

Restrict access to your water system and work site to authorised personnel only.

Testing and monitoring

If the contractor has been working on your drinking water system, they must disinfect the pipes with chlorine before they are brought back into use.

The contractor must conduct a pressure test to make sure there are no leaks.

The contractor must also take a water sample after disinfecting the pipes and have it tested by an IANZ-accredited laboratory for E. coli and total coliforms to check that there is no microbial contamination.

Backflow prevention

If your school conducts any activities which could contaminate your drinking water (e.g. swimming pool, laboratory, dental clinic, rainwater tank), you must have an appropriate backflow prevention device installed on the water supply for each activity to prevent drinking water from becoming contaminated.

Backflow prevention devices must be tested annually to make sure they are working correctly.