



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Date: 8 August 2022

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the WC Suite Performance Specifications

We are writing to invite views on proposed amendments to the WC Suite Performance Specifications.

In England and Wales the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 ('the regulations') regulate how water systems are designed, installed and operated. Regulator Specifications that provide detailed performance, verification and in some cases installation requirements, can also be approved. We are proposing to amend the WC Suite Performance Specification, the Specification on the Prevention of Backflow and associated specifications commonly referred to as Test Code Sheets. The changes are to address incidents of backflow from WC cisterns whilst reflecting innovations in the design of WC suites.

We are also using the consultation to gather evidence on faulty toilet valves which are causing a loss of water. We want to understand peoples' views and see what might be done to enable manufacturers to improve the products to meet consumers performance expectations.

The following documents can be found on Citizen Space (Defra's online consultation tool) at: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/drinking-water-quality/wc-suite-performance-specifications>

- Consultation on WC Suite Performance Specifications
- Annex A – Regulator Specifications and Test Code Sheets
- Annex B – Consultation questions

Responses

This consultation will run for 8 weeks from **8 August to 3 October 2022**.



We strongly encourage responses through Citizen Space (link above). Consultations receive a high level of interest across many sectors and using the online tool assists our analysis of responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of issues.

However, responses can be sent by email or post. We must receive these responses by **3 October 2022**. In your response please state: Your name; your email address; your type of organisation and its name; the size of the organisation you represent; the region you are based in; whether you would like your response to be confidential; and your interest in the consultation.

Please send responses by email to drinkingwaterquality@defra.gov.uk, or in writing to WC Suite Performance Specifications Consultation, Water Services Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Seacole Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

If you have any queries on this consultation, need a hard copy of the document or need a Welsh language version, please email or write to us at the above addresses.

This consultation will be of interest to:

- businesses who manufacturer, assemble or sell WC suites or associated components,
- businesses who test water fittings,
- water companies as enforcers of the Regulations,
- other organisations such as professional and membership organisations, consultants who have an interest in specifying, designing, maintaining water systems and plumbing fittings.

We encourage you to share this consultation widely with other organisations and individuals who may be interested in the proposed amendments to the WC Suite Performance Specifications.

Confidentiality and data protection

The consultation process has been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office. These can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes these are primarily the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). We have obligations, mainly under the EIRs, FOIA and DPA, to disclose information to particular recipients or to the public in certain circumstances.

This consultation is done in partnership with the Welsh Government. As a result of this, responses may be shared, analysed and reviewed by colleagues in Defra and the Welsh Government.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential.

If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

A summary of responses to the consultation will be published on the government website but will not include personal names, addresses or other contact details. An annex to the consultation summary will list all organisations that responded. Defra may also publish some or all of the content of your response to this consultation.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please send by email to consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk or by post to: Consultation Coordinator, 2nd floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX.

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries, please contact us as above.

Yours faithfully

Water Services Team - **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Water Policy Branch - **Welsh Government**