

## WATER USED BY MOBILE CATERERS

### What we have done

In the past we have taken routine water samples from mobile caterers. This has consisted of samples of water being taken from all receptacles at the premises that contain water for washing up, cleaning and human consumption etc.

### What we have found

Having tested the water from mobile catering premises we often found that the water contained higher than normal levels of coliforms. Coliforms are a particular group of bacteria that are naturally present in soils and many raw waters; however some coliforms (*E coli*) are the result of contamination by faecal matter. Presence of coliforms indicates poor bacterial quality of the water and always results in further investigation. UK standards require that no samples should contain any coliforms.

### What you need to do

If the water you use for your business is taken from a mains water tap, then it is very unlikely that this is a source of contamination. However there is an increased risk if the mains water tap is situated outside.

Nevertheless it is essential that you carefully clean all your water receptacles inside and out, and associated pipe work including the taps within the vehicle. The best way to do this is by flushing through the whole system. We generally recommend using a sterilising fluid such as Milton. You must read the instructions carefully following the dilution ratio and rinsing procedure. You must ensure that you do this thoroughly and regularly; once a week should be adequate.

You must also ensure that the water containers you use are;

- Made of food grade materials and be enclosed
- Emptied and refilled regularly so as to avoid unacceptable contamination by micro-organisms
- Water containers should not be used for any other purpose and you must have separate containers for "clean" water and "waste" water. These should be clearly labelled for such use.
- You should avoid using hose pipes to fill containers.
- Outside taps will need to be cleansed regularly to remove environmental contamination.

If you have any questions regarding the above then please do not hesitate to contact:

*The Public Health Department, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Civic Centre,  
Castle St, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN Tel: 01685- 725000*