



Owner/user risk assessment for Private Water Supplies.



Instructions: Complete Section A below and the other relevant section(s) of the form. Once you have completed the self-assessment you can complete the tear-off summary sheet in Section H and return it to your local environmental health service who will then contact you to provide more advice or to carry out a full risk assessment.

Section A – Introduction

1. Where does the water supplying your private water supply come from?

Tick all that are relevant.	Where does the water come from?	Finish answering this section and then go to the section shown below, next to the answer you ticked.
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Well Borehole Spring Stream/River/Loch/Reservoir I don't know where my private water supply comes from	Section B Section C Section D Section E Section F

2. Do you know where the source is? Yes/No

Yes. If you know where the source of your private water supply is then you can continue with the risk assessment.

No. If you don't know where the source is you will not be able to complete the risk assessment as you will not know what potential dangers exist at the source. You should contact your local environmental health service for assistance in completing a full risk assessment.

3. Do you have control over what happens at the source e.g. you own the land around the source? Yes/No

Yes. If you can control what activities go on around the source e.g. animal grazing, crop growing, slurry spreading, septic tank discharges, then you will have more opportunity to make any improvements that may be necessary to protect the quality of your drinking water.

No. Having no direct control over what happens at the source of your drinking water supply means that you may be unable to make any improvements to your drinking water without first contacting and discussing them with whoever does control the land around the source. If you don't know who owns the land, or are reluctant to discuss the matter with them, you can contact your local environmental health service who can assist you.

Section B – Well

4. Is there a stock proof fence around the supply which is far enough away from the well to stop animals or their droppings reaching it (around 4 meters or 13 feet)? Yes/No

Yes. It is important that any fence is far enough away to stop animals reaching over it with their heads or spraying droppings on top of the well. The fence should be in good condition and have a mesh-type construction that will stop the larger of the wild animals, such as deer and rabbits, from getting near your well.

No. Stopping animals from getting near or on top of your well will stop their droppings from going into your well. Even if the well has a cover there is still the possibility that animal droppings will become dissolved and wash into the well when the weather is wet. Having a suitable fence around the well will reduce the risk that you and your family are drinking water contaminated by animal droppings. There may also be other risks to your supply. It would be worth considering getting more advice on how to protect your private water supply. Your local environmental health department can give you such advice.





5. Is there a ditch around the well that is lined (stops water draining through the bottom or sides) to take away any rain water that might flow across the ground and go into the well? Yes/No

Yes. It is important that the ditch is lined with material that will stop water leaking out of it and into your well. It is also important to make sure that the ditch drains water away from the well and there is no stagnant water left in the ditch. Ditches should be regularly inspected and maintained.

No. Following heavy rainfall or snowmelt or in periods of prolonged rainfall the ground may not be able to let water soak into it. In these conditions the rainfall will flow over the surface of the ground where it will pick up bits of soil and animal droppings that may be present. If there is not a suitable ditch to channel this water away from your well, all the soil and animal droppings the water has collected will end up in the well. Having a suitable ditch to protect your well will reduce the risk that you and your family are drinking water contaminated by animal droppings. For more advice contact your local environmental health service.

6. Is there a properly constructed (e.g. water-tight) cover that will stop vermin from getting into the top of the well and which is secured to prevent access by other people? Yes/No

Yes. A good cover that can be secured is important in keeping vermin out of your well. A cover that can be secured is also important to stop other people being able to interfere with your drinking water supply. You should regularly inspect the cover and make sure that no animals have decided that inside your well is a nice place to set up home.

No. Without a good cover you cannot stop animals from entering your well. Animals such as field mice, voles and frogs are attracted to wells. If the cover doesn't stop them getting into the well your drinking water may be contaminated with their droppings, or if they fall in and die, you will end up drinking water containing their decomposing bodies. For more advice on how to protect your drinking water supply contact your local environmental health service.



Section C – Borehole

7. Is the borehole protected with a watertight chamber? Yes/No

Yes. You should regularly inspect the borehole chamber to make sure that no surface water is getting inside. If surface water does get inside then it may contaminate your borehole by passing down between the casing (pipe) and the grouting.

No. If there is no chamber, or if the chamber is not watertight, your drinking water supply is at risk of becoming contaminated. Water that enters the area near the borehole will contain bits of soil and animal droppings that may have been nearby. These contaminants can then enter the borehole by passing between the casing (pipe) and the grouting. This will result in you and your family drinking contaminated water. For more advice on how to protect your borehole contact your local environmental health service.

8. Is there a cap on the end of the borehole? Yes/No

Yes. You should make sure that the cap is in good condition and that any cables or pipes that pass through it are also properly sealed. The cap should be inspected regularly to make sure it does not deteriorate.

No. If there is no cap, or the cap is not sealed and water gets into the chamber, it may overflow down the borehole and contaminate your drinking water. Similarly, if the cap is not in good condition and animals such as field mice or voles get into the chamber there is a danger that they will fall into the borehole and contaminate your drinking water. For more advice on how to protect your borehole contact your local environmental health service.





9. Is there a securable cover/door that will stop people or vermin from getting into the borehole chamber? Yes/No

Yes. A good cover or door that can be secured is important in keeping vermin out of your borehole chamber. It is also important as it stops other people being able to interfere with your drinking water supply. You should regularly inspect the cover or door and make sure that no animals have decided that inside your borehole chamber is a nice place to set up home.

No. Without a good cover or door you cannot stop animals from entering your borehole chamber. Animals such as field mice, voles and frogs, as well as many others, are attracted to these places. If the cover or door doesn't stop them getting into the chamber then your drinking water may be contaminated with their droppings, or if they fall in to the borehole and die, you will end up drinking water containing their decomposing bodies. For more advice on how to protect your drinking water supply contact your local environmental health service.

Section D – Spring

10. Is that "spring" really a spring? Yes/No

Yes. Are you sure? When looking at private water supplies, even some professionals can be fooled into thinking that field drains or other types of drainage system are in fact springs. It is very important to make sure that your spring is a real spring. If it is really a field drain then you and your family are drinking soil water – the same water that collects as muddy puddles in fields and gardens. You may want to investigate the source of your spring in more detail. If you want to find out more about your supply then your local environmental health service can give you help.

No. If you have discovered that your "spring" isn't really a spring, you will need some professional advice on how best to proceed. Your local environmental health service will be able to provide that advice. Their contact details are on the back of the Information Guide this risk assessment came in. You can also find their details in your local telephone directory.



11. Is there a vermin proof cap on the overflow pipe from the collection chamber/tank? Yes/No

Yes. It is important that you inspect the vermin proof cap regularly to make sure it is still in place and in good repair. You may want to pay particular attention after heavy rainfall, when the spring may be fuller than usual, which could dislodge or damage the cap.

No. A vermin proof cap will stop animals from crawling up the overflow pipe and getting into the collection chamber. If there is no cap or the cap is damaged then there will be no protection against animals getting into the supply. If animals do get into the collection chamber there is a danger that your drinking water will become contaminated with their droppings, or if they fall in to the chamber and die, you will end up drinking water containing their decomposing bodies. If you want advice on appropriate protection for the overflow pipe contact your local environmental health service.

12. Is there a stock proof fence around the spring collection chamber which is far enough away from the spring to stop animals or their droppings reaching it (around 4 metres or 13 feet)? Yes/No

Yes. It is important that any fence is far enough away to stop animals reaching over it with their heads or spraying droppings near the spring. The fence should be in good condition and have a mesh-type construction that will stop the larger of the wild animals, such as deer or rabbits, from getting near your spring.

No. Stopping animals from getting near or on top of your spring collection chamber will stop their droppings from going into your drinking water supply. Even if the spring collection chamber has a cover there is still the possibility that animal droppings will become dissolved and wash into the spring when the weather is wet. Having a suitable fence around the spring supply will reduce the risk that you and your family are drinking water contaminated by animal droppings. There may also be other risks to your supply. It would be worth considering getting more advice on how to protect your private water supply. Your local environmental health service can give you such advice.





Section E – Stream/River/Loch/Reservoir

13. Is the land beside the stream/river/loch/reservoir used for agriculture or forestry? Yes/No

Yes. If there is agricultural or forestry activity occurring on the land that drains into the stream, river, loch or reservoir then there will be a risk to your private water supply. Ploughing may disturb the ground allowing soil or animal droppings to be released into water that can then drain into your supply. Forestry activity can disturb soils as well as release chemicals such as aluminium into watercourses following activities such as clear felling of timber. If you have concerns about the impact agricultural or forestry activity may be having on your drinking water supply please contact your local environmental health service for more advice.

No. In the areas where water drains into your private water supply it is worthwhile ensuring that there are no agricultural or forestry activities that could impact on the quality of your drinking water. Remember that regular visits may be required to assure yourself that everything is okay.

14. Are there animals or birds (wild or domestic) on the land beside the stream/river/loch/reservoir? Yes/No

Yes. If there are animals or birds on the land that drains into the source of your private water supply then there is an increased risk that their droppings will also be washed into your supply. If you want to find out about measures that can be taken to protect the quality of drinking water for you and your family or visitors to your home or business then contact your local environmental health service for more advice.

No. It is important to remember that animals and birds may move about. Domestic (farm) animals may be moved around from pasture to pasture; wild animals may only come near your source during certain times of the day or seasons of the year; while migratory birds will only appear at certain times of the year. Remember, it is important to keep checking what animals or birds are around and if large numbers appear you should consider if additional protection for your drinking water supply will be required. If in doubt you can contact your local environmental health service for more advice.



15. Do you know of any discharges from sewage works or septic tanks into the stream/river/loch/reservoir? Yes/No

Yes. If there are discharges from sewage works or septic tanks into the stream, river, loch or reservoir that you are taking your drinking water from, it may be contaminated with human sewage. If you suspect that this may be the case seek advice from your local environmental health service on what you can do to protect your drinking water supply.

No. Make sure that you check the land that drains into the stream, river, loch or reservoir that feeds your private water supply. It is important that you watch for any new building that may introduce sewage discharges into the water you use for your drinking water supply. If you have any concerns that human sewage may be contaminating your drinking water you should contact your local environmental health service.

Section F – I don't know where my private water supply comes from.

16. If your private water supply does not fit into any of the categories given in Question 1, or you don't know where the source is, contact the environmental health service of your local authority for more advice and assistance in protecting your drinking water supply.

Section G

If you answered "No" to any of the questions above you may wish to contact your local environmental health service for more advice on how to protect your drinking water supply. If you now want to find out more about your private water supply or would like a full risk assessment to be undertaken, or a water sample to be taken from your supply, you should contact your local environmental health service.

You can now complete the summary section opposite and send this part of the form to your local environmental health service. Please indicate on the form if you are requesting further advice, a sample to be taken or a full risk assessment. For Type B supplies if you return the form there is no obligation to proceed should you choose not to.





Summary of responses to self-assessment risk assessment

Summary of responses to self-assessment risk assessment

Name

Address (including post code)

Daytime contact telephone number (including full STD code)

Email address (if applicable)

Convenient time/day to be contacted

Section & Question No		Submit response or delete where appropriate	Section & Question No		delete where appropriate
A	1		D	10	Yes / No
	2	Yes / No		11	Yes / No
	3	Yes / No		12	Yes / No
B	4	Yes / No	E	13	Yes / No
	5	Yes / No		14	Yes / No
	6	Yes / No		15	Yes / No
C	7	Yes / No			
	8	Yes / No			
	9	Yes / No			

I would / would not like advice on how to protect my private water supply.

I would / would not like to request that a sample be taken from my private water supply.

I would / would not like a full risk assessment undertaken for my private water supply.

Return this form to:

