



DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Southern Water Services Ltd fined for drinking water offences.

At Southampton Magistrate's Court today Southern Water Services Ltd was fined £480,000 and additional costs of £50,000 were agreed out of court.

On 14 August, the company pleaded guilty to the supply of water unfit for human consumption and to the use of a non-approved product during an event where a failed operation to cap and abandon a 24 inch pipe caused discoloured water with an unpleasant taste and odour to be supplied to the Dibden Purlieu and Blackfield areas of Southampton in October 2015.

The charges were brought by the Drinking Water Inspectorate under Section 70 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended) and the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

In response, Marcus Rink, Chief Inspector of Drinking Water said *'This prosecution was brought because of deficiencies in the company's planning of changes to its distribution system that, in the view of District Judge Anthony Callaway, was reckless in its execution and aggravated by time pressures. This was a serious deviation from good practice, and without regard to the impact on consumers in the Southampton area, and warranted intervention by the Inspectorate.'*

Notes to editors :

1. The Drinking Water Inspectorate checks that water companies in England and Wales supply drinking water that does not put consumers at risk, and that is wholesome and acceptable.
2. It is a criminal offence for a water company to supply water that is unfit for human consumption. The Inspectorate investigates all drinking water quality events in England and Wales and will bring prosecutions if it believes that it has reliable evidence that an offence was committed, where the company does not have a defence that it took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence, and when such a prosecution is regarded as being in the public interest.

3. To protect consumers, it is also an offence when making a water supply to use any product that is not approved under the Regulations.

For interviews with an Inspector contact at the conclusion of the case contact
DWI Enquiries: 0300 068 6400