



ANNOUNCEMENT: C-17 #7
OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING
BUREAU OF CERTIFICATION

ISSUE DATE: 11/1/2017
EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately
SUNSET DATE: Ongoing

SUBJECT:	Applicability of the Pennsylvania Safe Drinking Water Act
TO:	Bureau of Certification Staff; Child Care Center and Group Child Care Home Operators
FROM:	Suzann Morris Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development & Early Learning

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzann Morris", is written over the bottom right portion of the table.

PURPOSE:

To alert certified child care centers and group home providers, located in buildings with water supplied from an on-site well or spring or other source of water rather than a water company or a municipal water system, that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be expanding its efforts to implement the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is working with DEP to help assure that providers impacted meet the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. Child-care providers must cooperate with DEP as a requirement of meeting DHS regulations at 55 Pa.Code Chapter 3270.69 (child care centers) and 3280.69 (group child care homes) regarding safe water for individuals in the building.

BACKGROUND:

Recently there has been a greater nationwide awareness about the importance of safe water and the impact on children. The DEP is expanding its efforts to alert child care providers about the importance of safe water. DEP is responsible for implementing the Safe Drinking Water Act and associated Safe Drinking Water regulations (25 Pa. Code, Chapter 109).

DISCUSSION:

The main considerations for determining if a child care provider's water system must be reviewed for compliance with the SWDA are the number of connections to the water system, the number of individuals being served and the number of days per year that the water system is used.

The SDWA and regulations define a public water system as a system that provides water to the public for human consumption, regularly serves an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year or has at least 15 service connections.

If a child care provider's building is supplied water from an on-site well or spring or other source of water (not a water company or municipal authority) and the building regularly provides water for human consumption to an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year or has at least 15 water connections, the building is defined as having a public water system.

However, if a child care provider's building is supplied water by a water company or municipal authority then the building's water supply does not meet the definition of a public water system. The entity providing water to the child care building is the regulated public water system.

PA's Chapter 109 Safe Drinking Water regulations are based on the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and regulations. These regulations establish national limits on contaminant levels in drinking water to ensure the water is safe for human consumption. The regulations then specify testing frequencies for the contaminants as well as establish requirements for operation and maintenance of the public drinking water system components.

Currently, Pennsylvania has approximately 8,500 public water systems. About 2,000 of these systems are municipal/community water systems. These are systems that serve residential areas such as cities, towns, sub-developments, and manufactured housing communities. The other 6,500 public water systems are non-residential systems. These public water systems serve facilities such as schools, restaurants, campgrounds, businesses with 25 or more employees, places of worship and child care facilities. Any facility supplied by an on-site water supply such as a well that provides water for consumption to an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year must have the water supply tested.

DEP has reviewed the list of certified child care facilities in Pennsylvania. Over the next year, DEP will send a letter and survey to child care facilities that possibly fall under the definition of Public Water Source. The survey will ask for information to determine where your facility obtains its water. You must complete the survey to the best of your ability and return it to the return address provided by DEP. If DEP needs more information, they will follow up with you including a site visit as needed. If your facility meets the definition of a public water system you will need to work with DEP to comply with the Safe Drinking Water regulations. Child-care providers must cooperate with DEP as a requirement of meeting DHS regulations at 55 Pa.Code Chapter 3270.69 (child care centers) and 3280.69 (group homes) regarding safe water for individuals in the building.

For more information on the definition of a public water system, please refer the DEP Fact Sheet "Identifying Public Water Systems". Contact DEP at 717-787-9633 to obtain a copy of the Fact Sheet.

For more information on public water system requirements, please visit the DEP Bureau of Safe Drinking Water website at:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/BureauSafeDrinkingWater/Pages/default.aspx>

NEXT STEPS:

OCDEL will provide additional written announcements about meeting the Safe Drinking Water Act as more information becomes available about child care providers' requirement to meet the DEP regulations.

Comments and Questions Regarding this Announcement Should be Directed to Melissa Graeff at (717-346-0026).