

EUSR National Water Hygiene

Accreditation	EUSR
Course duration	Half Day
Certificate valid for	3 Years

Who should attend

The National Water Hygiene scheme is recognised by the UK water industry as a vital part in ensuring the protection of public health and promoting safe drinking water practices. It is a criminal offence to supply water unfit for human consumption.

Created in 2006, the 'Blue Card' replaced all water company specific hygiene schemes and removed the need for workers to undergo separate testing, health screening and to carry multiple cards. Water companies across the UK now mostly mandate the use of the National Water Hygiene card for anyone entering a clean water site or engaged in operations on the clean water network, whether in contact with the water or not.

Milo Purcell, Deputy Chief Inspector of the Drinking Water Inspectorate comments: "It is important for anyone working in contact with the water supply, to learn and fully understand their responsibilities to protecting public health and public confidence in drinking water quality. The Drinking Water Inspectorate expect all those involved to operate to the highest standards of hygiene and safety, ensuring that clean drinking water remains wholesome and there is no deterioration to the quality of supply."

It is increasingly expected that all those handling water for human consumption, including contractors, facilities management organisations, environmental health practitioners, water engineers, plumbers etc. also carry a 'Blue Card' to demonstrate competence and their understanding of safe water hygiene practice.

Any person working on a restricted operations area at sites such as service reservoirs, water pumping stations, water treatment works, wells, springs and boreholes or working on the network of water mains and service pipes must be in possession of a National Water Hygiene card. The same training package is delivered to both direct employees of water companies, and all contractors that work on the restricted operations sites including self-lay organisations working on new developments.

Course information

Overview

The National Water Hygiene training protects the safety of water through good hygiene practices while working on restricted operations as defined in the technical guidance notes:

"Work which may involve direct or potential contact with untreated sources of underground water, with partially or fully treated water within water treatment works or with treated water, or any surface of an operational asset (including those temporarily out of use) which will itself be in contact with potable water at any stage in its distribution to the point where it is made available to consumers."

Course Content

Subjects covered within the training session include:

- The premise that water is a food product and the public expect their water supply to have been treated properly so that it does not cause health problems.
- The importance of personal hygiene and identification of potential sources of contamination.
- Awareness of potential for contamination. Includes Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the need for clean boots.
- Vehicles - vehicles need to be kept clean and tidy and tools need to be separated. Awareness of where the vehicle has been taken before entering a treatment works e.g. fields, sewage treatment works etc.
- Multi-functional working - water and sewerage working is becoming common for some companies and the associated risks must be understood.
- Fuel, diesel and chemical contamination - any of these getting into the water could have detrimental affects.
- Pets could help to spread water borne diseases e.g. dogs, cats, horses etc - ensure that individuals do not wear the same footwear for work.
- Chlorine/disinfection, both in the water itself and other usage i.e. how chlorine is used to wash boots, clean tools and in repairs, and the correct disposal of chlorine solution.
- Awareness and usage surrounding approved products. The right substance for the job
- Awareness of the sampling and audit processes in place by various bodies.

Learner Numbers

In order to ensure the interaction between the learners and the tutor is spread evenly and effectively, and to ensure the courses are fully delivered in accordance with the Scheme rules, the maximum number of learners allowed on a course is twelve.

Assessment

A multiple choice examination paper.

Certification

The registration and card lasts for three years from date of training and provides on-site evidence that an individual has demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge and awareness with regards to hygiene issues. It is also a prerequisite for many other industry competence requirements and EUSR registration schemes.

More details

Health Screening

A standardised health screening questionnaire must be completed by any person required to work on restricted operations. This includes staff working on the water network, water treatment works, taking water quality samples etc, i.e. anyone that the water company considers could come in contact with treated water.

Answers on the form that suggest the individual maybe carrying a water borne disease will require the individual to be referred to their doctor or occupational health department for checks. The trainer will make the final decision on whether to allow the individual to carry out the training course. The individual must pass the health screening before they can be registered for the National Water Hygiene card and will not be issued a card until both the health screening and the test have been passed.

How do I get an EUSR National Water Hygiene 'Blue Card'?

Registration is based on successful completion of a training course. Upon successful completion a cover note will be issued by the trainer and trainees will be registered on the EUSR. Once the necessary paperwork and payment have been received the National Water Hygiene card will be issued within 28 days. The training session is expected to last for approximately half a working day and comprises a trainer lead presentation, a health screening aspect and a multiple choice test. Trainees will be called upon to share their experiences and thoughts throughout to build on the course material and to identify cases of good and bad practice.