



## SECTION 3-15: POTABLE WATER POLICY

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### 3-15-00 POLICY

The purpose of this section is to define Office of Research Facilities' (ORF's) policy on availability of potable water. Currently, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Principles of Federal Appropriations Law states that "appropriated funds are not available to pay for bottled water for the personal use of employees." GAO has made an exception to use appropriate funds in the situation where a building's water supply is unhealthy or not available.

This policy applies to all NIH-owned and leased buildings in Bethesda, MD; Poolesville, MD; Baltimore, MD; Hamilton, MT; and Research Triangle Park, NC.

ORF will ensure the following for installation, modification, testing and maintenance of all potable water systems.

1. Potable water shall be readily available to all building occupants. All drinking water sources shall meet current EPA standards of potability, lead, and copper level regulations prior to occupancy.
2. The primary source of potable water within NIH facilities shall be drinking fountains.
3. The International Building Code and International Plumbing Code requirements must be met.
4. As per International Plumbing code: Drinking fountains shall conform to ASME A112.19.1M, ASME A112.19.2M or ASME A112.19.9M and water coolers shall conform to ARI 1010. Drinking fountains and water coolers shall conform to NSF 61, Section 9. General requirements for drinking fountains shall be one (1) per 100 occupants, as per the International Building Code for Business Occupancy. Assembly spaces and other Occupant Uses shall abide by the building code for their specific use requirement. A high and low drinking fountain shall be provided to meet Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) requirements. International Building Code and International Plumbing Code requirements for minimum number of fixtures per occupancy classification shall apply but under no circumstances shall the total number of installed drinking fountains be less than two (2) (one high and one low) per classified space and no less than two (2) (one high and one low) per floor.
5. For leased facilities, the lessor shall provide the NIH Contracting Officer the results of water potability, lead, and copper testing as specified by NIH and performed by an EPA or State certified water testing laboratory prior to occupancy. In the event water contamination is detected during the term of the lease, in a space certified contamination free by the offeror, the lessor shall be required to provide, at no cost to NIH, an approved secondary source of drinking water (e.g. bottled water) to NIH tenant immediately and take appropriate action to ensure that the source of contamination is eliminated. The secondary source of drinking water must be supplied to the facility until the water quality is acceptable to the Contracting Officer.
6. Kitchenettes and Break Rooms with sinks are acceptable sources for potable water, BUT they may not replace the building code drinking fountain requirements.



## A. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all NIH-owned and leased buildings whether there are active renovation or alteration projects ongoing or not. All design and construction projects (including new construction, renovations and alternations) within the above mentioned facilities shall also conform to this policy.

This policy is enforceable at the time of policy adoption. There are no grandfather clauses to exempt any NIH-owned or leased building from this policy.

## B. REPONSIBILITIES

Each NIH Institute/Center (IC) is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy in the building areas that it occupies. Any discrepancies to this policy should be made known to the appropriate facility manager.

Project Officers shall be responsible for conveying the policy requirements stipulated herein to their customer.

## C. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, “potable water systems” shall include drinking fountains and all associated piping, valves, fittings, and other appurtenant devices necessary for a complete and operational system.

### 3-15-10 PROCEDURES

#### A. PLANNING & DESIGN

All potable water systems shall be designed, installed, commissioned and maintained per industry codes and standards, NIH Facility Development Manual (FDM) and NIH Design Requirements Manual (DRM).

DRM:

<https://www.orf.od.nih.gov/PoliciesAndGuidelines/BiomedicalandAnimalResearchFacilitiesDesignPoliciesandGuidelines/Pages/default.aspx>

FDM:

<http://orfweb.od.nih.gov/policies/Documents/NIH%20FDM%20ver3.pdf>

The Facilities Development Manual outlines specific roles, responsibilities of staff and procedures that are to be followed in facilities planning, acquisition through construction, commissioning and occupancy of all facilities at NIH. The policies and procedures outlined in the manuals specifically address guidelines and mandatory requirements for ‘Who, When and How?’ involving all phases in life cycle of a facility (i.e., managing design, reviews, submittal, approval, permitting, quality assurance, inspection, testing, acceptance, document distribution, retention and updates, evaluation and compliance for CRA and ILSM etc.)

Planning, design, and upgrade services are accomplished through contracted professional A/E firms with the requisite project-related experience. Review and approval of those design documents for construction are accomplished by experienced and qualified individuals in Division of Property Management (DPM), Division of Technical Resources (DTR), OHPE, CCOFM and DFM.



## B. CONSTRUCTION & COMMISSIONING

All new potable water system installation work is required to adhere to the latest applicable codes and standards for installation, testing, inspection and certification by qualified contractors including, but not limited to, local water authorities having jurisdiction, International Plumbing Code, International Building Code and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) requirements. Contractor is required to submit the required documentation, listed below, prior to start of work. Submittals for approval shall include:

1. Scope of work to be performed
2. Drawings indicating existing piping, new work, and point of connection.
3. Qualification of installing, testing and inspection contractor/personnel performing the work including applicable trade certifications.
4. All new potable water systems shall be flushed out and tested prior to placing the system in operational use. All system flushing and testing shall be the responsibility of the contractor. Test results shall be provided to the NIH Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS) Community Health Branch (CHB) for review and acceptance.

Field inspections, testing and approvals are conducted per ORF policies and procedures outlined in the FDM and are adhered to by the designers, qualified contractors, trained operations and maintenance staff.

## C. MAINTENANCE, TESTING, AND INSPECTION

All potable water systems shall be tested upon initial installation and when concerns are reported to the facility manager regarding taste, color, odor, or contamination. It is the responsibility of the facility manager to investigate all such reports and to report such findings to DOHS. It shall be the responsibility of DOHS to determine whether water quality sampling and testing is warranted. Testing requirements shall include potable water systems served by well water. Furthermore, additional testing may be required for buildings served by well water at the discretion of the NIH ORF Division of Environmental Protection (DEP).

## D. TEMPORARY USE OF BOTTLED WATER

When properly functioning potable water systems, as described in this policy, are not available the temporary use of bottled water shall be investigated by the facility manager in collaboration with DOHS and ORF Division of Property Management (DPM). If the temporary use of bottled water is deemed necessary, the number and placement of bottled water dispensers shall be no less than one (1) per 100 occupants and no less than one (1) per floor. Where multiple bottled water dispensers are located on the same floor, the number of bottled water dispensers shall not exceed one (1) per 75 occupants and shall be evenly placed across the space being served, where possible.

The final approval for the temporary use of bottled water shall be made by the DPM Director. For all such cases where temporary bottled water use is granted, a feasibility study shall be initiated to determine the proper means to remedy the situation in order to limit the duration of bottled water use.

Issues of water quality shall be the only justifiable reason to grant the temporary use of bottled water. The lack of available handicap-accessible drinking fountains shall not warrant the temporary use of bottled water. Accessibility issues such as this shall be remedied by means that fall outside of the scope of this policy.



### 3-15-30 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Annual water quality reports shall be compiled and made public by the local water authority having jurisdiction. On an annual basis, these reports shall be reviewed the NIH ORF DEP. All records of maintenance, installation, removal, or relocation of potable water systems shall be maintained by the building facility manager.