

# NON-RETICULATED WATER IN FOOD BUSINESSES

Food businesses must ensure the water they use for activities conducted on their premises is safe. This especially applies to businesses that do not have access to a town water supply.

## Non-reticulated water and food safety

Non-reticulated water is any water supply not piped into a business by a water utility or local council. It includes:

- rainwater,
- groundwater (e.g. bore water), and
- surface water.

The hazards of non-reticulated water will depend on the water source. Disease-causing microorganisms may be present, such as *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium*, viruses and *E. coli*. It might also contain harmful chemicals.

## Legal requirements on water supplies

Under the Food Standards Code, food businesses must use drinkable water for activities conducted on their food premises. Where

businesses do not have access to a potable water source, they must be able to demonstrate that the water they use is safe.

## How to manage a private water supply

If you have a private water supply you should ensure:

- water is collected from a suitable source,
- there are no microbial or chemical contaminants in the surrounding environment (this might require a stocktake),
- water is treated, if necessary, to make it safe, e.g. remove solids and microorganisms,
- roofs or gutters used to collect rainwater are kept free from leaves and bird droppings,
- the first water collected during a rainfall is discarded to reduce the

amount of microorganisms entering the tank,

- equipment used to collect and store water is suitable and well maintained,
- equipment is positioned to avoid contamination,
- pests and rodents cannot enter the equipment, and
- water is monitored regularly.

## More information

- Visit the NSW Food Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry)
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

## Other contacts

- NSW Health, *Private water supply guidelines* (visit [www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Publications/private-water-supply-guidelines.pdf](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Publications/private-water-supply-guidelines.pdf))
- Victorian Department of Human Services, *Guidelines for the use of non-potable water in food business*



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More resources at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)



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[www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/Guidelines%20for%20the%20use%20of%20non-potable%20water%20in%20food%20businesses](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/Guidelines%20for%20the%20use%20of%20non-potable%20water%20in%20food%20businesses))

- enHealth Council, *Guidance on use of rainwater tanks* (visit [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0D71DB86E9DA7CF1CA257BF0001CBF2F/\\$File/enhealth-raitank.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0D71DB86E9DA7CF1CA257BF0001CBF2F/$File/enhealth-raitank.pdf))

Your local council or public health unit may also be able to provide you with further advice.

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



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