

The Consumer Council for Water Briefing on Fracking

Summary View

Our research shows that consumers' number one priority is the provision of a clean, safe and reliable water supply.

CCWater acknowledges that there may be potential economic benefits from properly regulated fracking. However health protection issues surrounding the water supply are obviously paramount to customers.

Managing Potential Implications

Consequently, we expect the relevant regulatory authorities to take all the necessary measures to ensure the local water supply remains safe.

To aid this process, we believe water companies should be made statutory consultees in the licensing process, as they are best placed to identify any potential risk to the water supply in their area.

There is some uncertainty over the amount of water used for exploratory drilling and the fracking process. This is a particular concern given parts of England have been designated areas of serious water stress. CCWater feels water resources should be considered during in the licensing process.

In addition to the potential risks to groundwater supplies, there may be possible issues relating to the storage and disposal of contaminated effluents and discharges. CCWater expects water and sewerage companies to be consulted with regard to the waste product that may be discharged into the existing drainage network or water sources.

In the event of fracking operations leading to any adverse effects which require corrective action on water quality or quantity or on effluent disposal, we would expect these costs to be met by the fracking operator and not by water customers.

What CCWater is doing

CCWater will continue to monitor the debate and consult with other key stakeholders such as Water UK and the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). We are also regularly attending the All Party Parliamentary Group for Unconventional Oil and Gas.

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