

Report from LEPL National Food Agency

Water quality-monitoring system

General:

In the frame of the annual Official Food Safety Control Program The LEPL National Food Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia carries out monitoring on drinking water.

According to the program, during the period of 2010 – 2018, 3480 water samples were being taken by the LEPL National Food Agency (NFA) and tested at accredited laboratories. Results were non-compliant with Technical Regulation on Drinking Water in 1474 cases (42%) and showing that nonconformities are mostly associated with the violations of the microbiological indicators in small-scale water supply lines in villages.

659 product-manufacturing companies and central water supply structures were being inspected by the NFA during 2013 – 2018 (from these 488 were planned, 18 were non-planned and 153 were re-examinations).

In case of non-compliance of water quality with Technical Regulation on Drinking Water, the Agency shall give specific short - and long-term recommendations to the enterprises supplying water to consumers. Information about the risks associated with drinking water as well as the measures to be undertaken shall be communicated to the public.

Stage 1: Macro-planning

Legislation in force regulating drinking water:

- Law of Georgia on Water;
- Law of Georgia – on Food/Feed Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection Code;
- Decree №58 of the Government of Georgia, of January 15th, 2014, on the Approval of
- Technical Regulation on Drinking Water;
- Decree № 719 of the Government of Georgia, of December 26th, 2014, on the Approval of Technical Regulation on Packaged Natural Mineral Water and Spring Water;
- Decree №62 of the Government of Georgia, of January 15th, 2014, on the Technical Regulation on Rules of Chlorification of Drinking and Industrial Water of Centralized and Local Water Supply and Disinfection of Water Supply Lines.

Stage 2: Planning and Designing

The internal control and monitoring for checking compliance of a drinking water with indicators set in the Technical Regulation should be undertaken by water suppliers, in case of which the quantity of determinable indicators and test samples shall be depend on the number of population supplied by water from the particular water supply. Likewise, according to the same Technical Regulation, the plan, frequency, indicators and quantity of test samples for the official drinking water quality control and monitoring plan are to be defined in accordance with rules stipulated by the competent official control authority –

the LEPL National Food Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, in line with the existing legislation.

Stage 3: Licensing and approval

Granting licensing or approval for mega-projects is not the competence of the LEPL National Food Agency. However, NFA registers and controls of mineral water denomination of place of origin; Also, assigning categories to Natural Mineral, Spring and Table Water commodities;

Stage 4-6: Construction, Short-term operation, and Long-term operation

For industrial and drinking water supply of the country, both ground water (72%) and surface waters (28%) are consumed. Ground water includes river water filters – 13.5%, with depth waters – 27%, while 31.5% are spring water sources.

For 70% of country's population water is supplied in centralized fashion, including 95% of urban and 35% of rural population. Up to 1500 water supply line systems have been registered for, of which more than 850 are rural water supply lines, majority of which have began construction in the beginning of 20th century, while this system was also extensively built (rebuilt) in 1950s-1970s. Therefore majority of water supply structure had deteriorated due to age and could not ensure sufficient and constant supply of harmless (from epidemiological standpoint, for human consumption), chemically safe and organoleptically compliant drinking water.

Stage 7: Ex-post assessments

Over the past years, water supply lines throughout the country – in cities, regional centers and villages – have been and are being currently reconstructed which has, to some extent, ameliorated water supply conditions for a host of cities and regions. In 2010 service providers have been expanded and the United Water Supply Company of Georgia of the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia was established (covering the entire country, with the exception of cities of Tbilisi, Rustavi and Mtskheta as well as Autonomous Republic of Adjara). The objective of the company is to carry out an unified policy approach for the entire regional population with regards to water supply, improve provision of drinking water and sanitary services to inhabitants in the region, etc.

Over the years, with review and evaluation of laboratory test results, the situation has been drastically improved in such priority locations such as cities of Kutaisi, Batumi, Rustavi and Poti.