

“Reliable, effective water storage - who needs it?”

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The answer is obvious. Everyone. The provision of clean, wholesome water at the turn of a tap is second nature or so we would like to think.

Within the UK, with over 100 years of progressive regulation in place, we take for granted that water provided through our taps is of wholesome, potable quality. Though this is generally true, there are still many outdated water storage tank and cistern installations which are unsafe, non-regulation compliant and a potential danger to health.

A typical and not uncommon example is the illustrated open top tank with thick mould growing on the water surface. Located in a loft environment and installed probably no more 15 years ago, time has passed it by. “Out sight, out of mind” or “what you don’t know doesn’t worry you” are phrases that come to mind.



The Water Regulations are not retrospective. Unless a cistern or tank requires maintenance there is no requirement to upgrade the existing product to be regulation compliant. On the other hand, owners of facilities available to the public are required to adopt a responsible “duty of care” policy to ensure health and safety is not endangered.

When any rectification or maintenance work is required to a water tank, it must be brought into full regulatory compliance. That doesn’t mean, just fit a close fitting lid if one doesn’t exist, but conduct a complete overview of the installation, the plumbing work and tank function, to determine its compliant status related to its water classification duty.

For household use, **Water Category 2** would be the norm. whereas for commercial / industrial applications, with more complex plumbing arrangements, it's best to consider **Category 4** as being the minimum requirement.

The following critical elements require to be considered when appraising a tank installation,

- *Tank requires to be insulated.
- *Lid requires to be 'close fitting'.
- *Screened Breather Vent in Lid required.
- *Screened Overflow Pipe required, sized 2 x Inlet F/V diameter and additionally, tanks > 1000 L capacity, a Screened Warning Pipe, sized \geq 19 mm.
- *Provide as necessary backflow protection to the Inlet Supply. Single or Double C/Vs or Air Gap as appropriate for the Fluid Category determined.
- *Outlet Connection at low level and at the opposite end from Inlet
- *Flat and level Tank Support Base capable of taking weight of tank and contents without undue movement.

The ATCM / WRAS Information and Guidance Note due shortly for publication, written in a "practical mans' guide" format, will provide in detail the requirements for cold water tanks and cisterns.

More information related to the work of the Association and its members can be found on the ATCM web site; www.atcmtanks.org.uk

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