

Minimum requirements for water reuse

2018/0169(COD) - 29/01/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Simona BONAFÈ (S&D, IT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for water reuse.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows.

Purpose

The proposed Regulation lays down minimum requirements for reclaimed water quality and monitoring, and the obligation to carry out specified key risk management tasks, for the safe reuse of treated urban waste water in the context of integrated water management.

Its aim is to guarantee that reclaimed water is safe for its intended use, thereby ensuring a high level of protection of human and animal health and the environment. Member States shall ensure that water resources used for drinking water purposes are not contaminated with reclaimed water.

Obligations of reclamation facility operators as regards water quality

Reclamation facility operators shall also ensure that at least the risk management measures set out in the Water Reuse Risk Management Plan are fully implemented within the reclamation facility. After the point of compliance, the quality of water shall no longer be the responsibility of the reclamation facility operator, and shall become the responsibility of the next actor in the chain.

Obligations of reclaimed water distribution operators, reclaimed water storage operators and end-users

Reclaimed water (i.e. urban wastewater that has undergone treatment in a reclamation facility) shall be used to irrigate food crops, processed food crops and non-food crops. Member States may allow reclaimed water to be used in other ways, such as industrial water reuse and for amenity-related and environmental purposes, provided that human health, animals and the environment are thoroughly protected.

The Commission shall establish guidance documents to assist the competent authorities in the implementation of the requirements relating to control and monitoring of the production, distribution, storage and use of the reclaimed water.

Risk management

For the purpose of ensuring safe production, distribution, storage and use of reclaimed water, the competent authority shall oversee risk management in consultation with the following actors: (i) the reclamation facility operator; (ii) the reclaimed water distribution operator; (iii) the reclaimed water storage operator.

Risk management methods used by the reclamation facility operator, the reclaimed water distribution operator and the reclaimed water storage operator shall be based on internationally recognised methodologies.

Application for a permit to produce, distribute and store reclaimed water

Any production, distribution or storage of reclaimed water destined for a use specified in section 1 of Annex I, shall be subject to a permit.

A reclamation facility operator shall submit an application for the permit, or for a modification of an existing permit, to the competent authority of the Member State in which the reclamation facility operates or is planned to operate.

Compliance check

In the event of non-compliance, the competent authority shall require the reclamation facility operator, the reclaimed water distribution operator, or the reclaimed water storage operator, as applicable, to take any necessary measures to promptly restore compliance and immediately inform the end-users affected.

Information awareness-raising campaigns

Member States shall set up information and awareness raising campaigns targeting potential end-users, including citizens, and concerning the safety of water reuse and the savings of water resources resulting from water reuse. Information campaigns shall be set up for farmers to ensure that they use reclaimed water on crops in an optimal manner, and thereby avoid any adverse health or environmental effects from such use.

Evaluation

The Commission shall, by five years after the date of entry into force of this Regulation, carry out an evaluation of this Regulation. It shall assess the feasibility of:

- extending the scope of this Regulation to reclaimed water intended for further specific uses, including reuse for industrial purposes;
- expanding the requirements of this Regulation to cover the indirect use of treated waste water;
- laying down minimum requirements applicable to the quality of treated waste water for the purpose of aquifer recharge.