

Drinking Water Inspections – Ask the Expert



When it comes to specific requirements, like the clause regarding drinking water, there are some technicalities – especially if you are based in the province of Québec where they use a different distribution system. What do new OHS updates say about these provisions?

QUESTION

In previous OHS laws, a workplace “copy of report of required drinking water test results” is mandatory, but they do not specify if this pertains to general office environments. Are there special requirements, and why is it phrased like this rule only applies to the province of Québec?

ANSWER

Here are what OHS Regulations: 147. Control says: In any establishment supplied with drinking water by a distribution system exempted from the application of Division I of Chapter III, “Quality control of drinking water”, of the Regulation respecting the quality of drinking water (chapter Q-2, r. 40), the employer must have a sample of that water analyzed for the control of total coliform bacteria and *Escherichia coli* bacteria before the water is put at the disposal of the workers for the first time and, subsequently, once a month.

EXPLANATION

The provisions of this Division do not apply to a distribution system that supplies only one of the following users:

- (1) 20 persons or less;
- (2) one or more enterprises;
- (3) 20 persons or less and one or more enterprises

Québec is the only province this applies to because the references are to provincial rather than federal law. However, I'm not an expert in environmental laws.