



DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

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31 March 2020

To: Day to Day Contacts of Water and Sewerage Companies and Water Companies in England and Wales

Dear Sir/Madam

The Drinking Water Inspectorate has been made aware that the Cryptosporidium Reference Unit (CRU) is only able to accept slides associated with an outbreak or emergency. This is due to staff shortages at the laboratory where they carry out the genotyping.

The following message from Rachel Chalmers of the CRU is explanatory:

I am very sorry but due to the rapidly changing COVID-19 response, the Cryptosporidium Reference Unit will, until further notice, only accept slides for genotyping that are associated with an ongoing event/outbreak, or potential public health emergency (e.g. boil advice has been issued or is likely to be issued). Such slides can be sent irrespective of the number of oocysts on the slide.

The water company should contact the CRU before the slides are sent, to discuss the on-going situation, ensure likely outcomes are made clear, and that the time required to obtain a result is agreed.

Laboratories should retain all *Cryptosporidium*-positive slides so that if an initial detection develops into a public health emergency (e.g. boil advice has been issued), slides can then, if necessary, be sent for genotyping.

All enquiries regarding this letter should be made to Daniel Giblin by email to daniel.giblin@defra.gov.uk.

This letter is being sent electronically to day to day contacts. Please acknowledge receipt by email to dwi.enquiries@defra.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcus Rink', written in a cursive style.

Marcus Rink
Chief Inspector of Water