



Introduction

This document has been developed by your WHA Technical Committee to advise Members of best practice when decommissioning and recommissioning dispensers in the event of a temporary shutdown of premises.

The issues

Dispensers left unused during periods of shutdown could develop issues with water quality. However, if they are left switched on, it should be possible to bring them back into use at short notice following the advice below. (Extra power usage from leaving the dispenser on will be minimal.)

If a dispenser is switched off and drained down without sanitising it could allow biofilm to dry out and stick firmly to the surface, forming a crust which may prove difficult to remove. In this case sanitisation should be carried out before the dispenser is brought back into use.

If the customer wishes to turn off the water to POU dispensers, members **MUST** ensure that the manufacturers' instructions are followed as with some models it may not then be possible to leave the cooler on.

Safety

Customers should be assured that leaving coolers unused for a period is likely only to create quality and not safety issues.

Advice to customers in case of shutdown

Some customers may normally have 2-week periods of annual shutdown, and will already have appropriate procedures in place.

For other customers, where some staff are still working, but cooler use is greatly reduced, suggest that customers maintain the water quality by running water through both taps of each dispenser at least once a week (up to 5L, depending on model).

Where a complete shutdown is proposed:

- Ask whether it is possible that someone (caretaker, security guard) could run water through dispensers weekly as above
- **Shutdown less than 3 weeks:** Just before re-use
 - Bottled water dispensers: Remove the bottle, drain the dispenser through the taps, fit a new bottle and flush 2L water through both taps. Sanitise taps and dispensing area with food-safe sanitiser spray or wipes
 - Mains-fed dispensers: Flush approx. 5L water through both taps. Sanitise taps and dispensing area with food-safe sanitiser spray or wipes
 - Hot water dispensers: Switch the dispenser back on and allow it to reach temperature. Once up to temperature, drain the tank and allow to re-fill



WHA

Water Dispenser &
Hydration Association

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- **Shutdown more than 3 weeks:**

- Bottled water and mains fed dispensers (left switched on): Follow the advice above, but arrange sanitisation as soon as possible. Note: Check the 'BBE' date on any bottles of water in stock
- Hot water dispensers: Follow the advice above. If the service date has passed, this should be carried out as soon as possible

Advice to Schools: As above, but every effort should be made to sanitise dispensers before students return.