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**Half of UK Homeowners Install Water Fittings Without Knowing Legal Responsibilities, NSF Research Reveals**

***A new study reveals a troubling compliance paradox and dangerous misconceptions within the UK water regulatory framework.***

**OXFORD, July 23, 2025** – Nearly half of UK homeowners have installed water fittings in the last five years, yet 52% have never heard of the UK Water Supply Regulations 1999, according to new research from [NSF](https://www.nsf.org), a leading global public health organisation. The nationally representative survey of 2,000 UK adults reveals a dangerous knowledge gap that poses serious risks to public health and water safety. This lack of awareness is particularly concerning, given that homeowners as well as installers or plumbers are legally responsible for ensuring compliance with these regulations, creating a potentially dangerous disconnect between knowledge and responsibility.

The [research](https://nsfinternational.widen.net/s/jhwqxn5bsj/nsf_infographic_research_key_findings_uk_water_regulations_2025?utm_campaign=wat_all_all_emea_202507_wp_water_regulations_compliance_paradox&utm_source=co_marketing&utm_medium=press_release), conducted in June 2025, exposes a troubling "compliance paradox" in the UK water regulatory framework: while manufacturers can legally produce non-compliant products and merchants can legally distribute them, the legal responsibility for compliance falls on installers and property owners, many of whom lack the necessary technical knowledge to assess compliance.

"This research reveals a fundamental disconnect between knowledge and responsibility that creates significant public health risks," said Samantha Duffy, Senior Manager, Global Water Programs EU and UK at NSF. "When 80% of homeowners have never checked their water fittings for compliance, and only 7% fully understand the regulations, we have a serious problem that needs addressing."

Key findings from the research include:

* 49% of UK homeowners have installed water fittings in the last five years
* 52% had never heard of the UK Water Supply Regulations 1999
* Only 46% were aware that homeowners are legally responsible for non-compliant installations
* 30% incorrectly believe all water fittings sold in the UK are automatically compliant
* One in ten are buying water fittings from low-cost international online retailers

The consequences of non-compliance can be severe, with potential risks including contamination of drinking water, health risks to occupants, property damage, invalidation of insurance, and legal prosecution of both installers and homeowners.

"What's particularly concerning is that those with the greatest technical capacity to ensure compliance, manufacturers and merchants, have the least legal obligation to do so," explained David Platt, Director of Water, EMEA at NSF. "Meanwhile, those least equipped to evaluate compliance, installers and property owners, bear the greatest legal burden. This creates a dangerous gap in our water safety system."

NSF's REG4 certification program helps address this gap by validating compliance with UK Regulation 4(1)(a), ensuring the safety and quality of water fittings and components. The certification provides a clear standard that all stakeholders can rely on to ensure compliance and protect public health.

The research calls for a redistribution of responsibilities across the supply chain, with manufacturers and merchants taking greater responsibility for ensuring compliance, while also improving education and awareness among installers and property owners.

For more information about NSF's research or REG4 certification, visit [nsf.org.](http://www.nsf.org/) NSF’s whitepaper “UK Water Fittings Regulations: Addressing the Knowledge Gap and Compliance Paradox” is [available here](https://nsfinternational.widen.net/s/rzrtxcl8hz/nsf-whitepaper-uk-water-regulations-compliance-paradox-2025?utm_campaign=wat_all_all_emea_202507_wp_water_regulations_compliance_paradox&utm_source=co_marketing&utm_medium=press_release).

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**NSF**

[NSF](https://www.nsf.org/) is an independent, global services organization dedicated to improving human and planet health for more than 80 years by developing public health standards and providing world-class testing, inspection, certification, advisory services and digital solutions to the food, nutrition, water, life sciences and consumer goods industries. NSF serves 40,000 clients in 110 countries and is a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Center on Food Safety, Water Quality and Medical Device Safety.

**About the research**

The independent research was conducted by Opinium Research between May 30th and June 3rd, 2025, with 2,000 UK adults, weighted to be nationally representative.