

# New Requirements to safeguard Finnish Drinking Water

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# Background

- Waterborne outbreaks (57 outbreaks in 1998-2007)
  - Untreated groundwater
  - managements and operational errors in some cases
- Small waterworks
- 9/11 episode resulted in
  - Working group of emergence situation in water services
  - Recommendations
    - competence requirements for waterworks employees
    - prepare for immediate disinfections



# Legislation

- Revision of Health Protection Act (285/2006)
  - Scope of the revision
    - Waterworks employees that may impact water quality in their work
    - Water supplier which serve drinking water more than 50 people or 10 m<sup>3</sup> per day have to ensure that their employees have passed the test described in the act.
    - Certification is valid for five years
- Decree of Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
  - Description of the testing procedure and areas of competence
    - Who make organize the test, who must pass the test, what is needed to know etc.

# Who may organize the test and how to pass it?

- By the tester authorized by STTV
- Questions are made by STTV
  - Each question include 3-4 statements from which only one is correct
- Tester needs to be competent and experienced in the field of drinking water quality and technology / bachelor decree (or similar)
  - Associations, companies and training institutions
- Preparatory training or any decree are not needed for employees who will attempt to test



# What is need to know?

- Objective of the testing procedure
  - Improve employees understanding of hygienic risks and their management from the catchment to the consumer's tap
- To pass the test, employees have to have knowledge:
  - Water intake
  - Treatment
  - Distribution systems
  - Water quality legislation
  - Operational and surveillance monitoring
  - Water chemistry and microbiology
  - Maintenance



# Timetable

- The testing protocol was implemented at the beginning of 2007
- All employees mentioned in the scope of Health Protection Act should pass the test before end of June 2008
- By the end of 2008 over 6000 employees has passed the test



# Preparedness to launch disinfection

- Revision of the drinking water quality decree (461/2000)
  - Improve the readiness for disinfection in waterworks
  - Waterworks will need to be able to launch disinfection within six hours after the contamination in raw or drinking water is observed
  - Disinfection methods are not specified
    - Chlorine, UV-light, ozone etc.
  - Not necessary for utilities to own the disinfection devices by themselves
  - A revision is expected to enter into force in the spring 2009
    - Two years transition period for utilities