United States Environmental Protection Agency

Consumer Confidence Report Rule: A Quick Reference Guide

Overview of the Rule

Title	Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) Rule, 63 FR 44511, August 19, 1998, Vol. 63, No. 160
Purpose	Improve public health protection by providing educational material to allow consumers to make educated decisions regarding any potential health risks pertaining to the quality, treatment, and management of their drinking water supply.
General Description	The CCR Rule requires all community water systems to prepare and distribute a brief annual water quality report summarizing information regarding source water, detected contaminants, compliance, and educational information.
Utilities Covered	Community water systems (CWSs), all size categories.

Public Health Related Benefits

Implementation of the CCR Rule will result in . . .	► Increased consumer knowledge of drinking water sources, quality, susceptibility to contamination, treatment, and drinking water supply management. ► Increased awareness of consumers to potential health risks so they may make informed decisions to reduce those risks, including taking steps toward protecting their water supply. ► Increased dialogue between drinking water utilities and consumers to increase understanding of the value of drinking water and water supply services and to facilitate consumer participation in decisions that affect public health.

Annual Requirements

CWSs must prepare and distribute a CCR to all billing units or service connections.	► *April 1* - Deadline for CWS that sells water to another CWS to deliver the information necessary for the buyer CWS to prepare their CCR (requirement outlined in 40 CFR 141.152). ► *July 1* - Deadline for annual distribution of CCR to customers and state or local primary agency for report covering January 1 - December 31 of previous calendar year. ► *October 1* - (or 90 days after distribution of CCR to customers, whichever is first) Deadline for annual submission of proof of distribution to state or local primacy agency. ► A CWS serving 100,000 or more persons must also post its current year's report on a publicly accessible site on the Internet. Many systems choose to post their reports at the following EPA Web site http://yosemite.epa.gov/ogwdw/ccr.nsf/america. ► All CWSs must make copies of the report available on request.

Multilingual Requirements

- ► CWSs that have a large proportion of non-English speaking residents must include information in the appropriate language(s) expressing the importance of the CCR, or a phone number or address where residents may contact the CWS to obtain a translated copy of the CCR or assistance in the appropriate language.
- ► The state or EPA will make the determination of which CWSs need to include this information.

Small Water System Flexibility

- ► With the permission of the governor of a state (or designee), or where the tribe has primacy, in lieu of mailing, systems serving fewer than 10,000 persons may publish their CCR in a local newspaper.*
- ► With the permission of the governor of a state (or designee), or where the tribe has primacy, in lieu of a mailing and/or publication, systems serving 500 or fewer persons may provide a notice stating the CCR is available upon request.*

*Questions regarding whether the necessary permission has been granted should be addressed to the appropriate state or primacy agency.

Eight Content Requirements of a CCR

- ***Item 1*: Water System Information** – Name/phone number of a contact person; information on public participation opportunities.
- ***Item 2*: Source(s) of Water**.
- ***Item 3*: Definitions** – Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL); MCL Goal (MCLG); Treatment Technique (TT); Action Level (AL); Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL); MRDL Goal (MRDLG).
- ***Item 4*: Detected Contaminants** – A table summarizing reported concentrations and relevant MCLs and MCLGs or MRDLs and MRDLGs; known source of detected contaminants; health effects language.
- ***Item 5*: Information on Monitoring for *Cryptosporidium*, Radon, and Other Contaminants** (if detected).
- ***Item 6*: Compliance with Other Drinking Water Regulations** (any violations and Ground Water Rule [GWR] special notices).
- ***Item 7*: Variances and Exemptions** (if applicable).
- ***Item 8*: Required Educational Information** – Explanation of contaminants in drinking water and bottled water; information to vulnerable populations about *Cryptosporidium*; statements on nitrate, arsenic, and lead.

Optional Information

CWSs are not limited to providing only the required information in their CCR. CWSs may want to include:

- An explanation (or include a diagram of) the CWSs treatment processes.
- Source water protection efforts and/or water conservation tips.
- Costs of making the water safe to drink.
- A statement from the mayor or general manager.
- **Information to educate customers about**: Taste and odor issues, affiliations with programs such as the Partnership for Safe Water, opportunities for public participation, etc.

Communication Tips

- Provide a consistent message. Be as simple, truthful, and straightforward as possible. Avoid acronyms, initials, and jargon.
- Provide links to useful information resources.
- Limit wordiness – write short sentences and keep your paragraphs short.
- Assume that consumers will only read the top half of the notice or what can be read in 10 seconds.
- Display important elements in bold and/or large type in the top half of the notice.
- Do not make your text size too small.
- Give a draft of your CCR to relatives or friends who are not drinking water experts and ask them if it makes sense. Ask customers for their comments when you publish the CCR.
- Use graphics, photographs, maps, and drawings to illustrate your message. Do not distract from your main message with graphics and/or pictures that do not complement your message.
- Consider printing the CCR on recycled paper and taking other steps to make the CCR "environmentally friendly." If you hope to get your customers involved in protecting or conserving water, set a good example for them to follow.
- Use the CCR as an opportunity to tell your customers about all of the things that you are doing well.

Reporting and Recordkeeping

- CWSs must:
  - Mail or directly deliver a copy of the CCR to each of their customers by July 1 annually.
  - Make a good faith effort to get CCRs to non-bill-paying consumers, using means recommended by the state.
  - Send a copy to the director of the state drinking water program and any other state agency that the state drinking water program director identifies when you mail it to customers.
  - Submit to the state a certification, within 3 months of mailing, that the CWS distributed the CCR, and that its information is correct and consistent with the compliance monitoring data previously submitted to the state.
  - Post their CCRs on the Internet (if the CWSs serve 100,000 or more people).
- CWSs may also want to send copies to state and local health departments, as well as local TV and radio stations and newspapers.

For additional information on the CCR Rule

Call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791; visit the EPA Web site at www.epa.gov/safewater/ccr1.html; or contact your state or local primacy agency's drinking water representative. Log onto the CCRiWriter Web site to use EPA's template at www.CCRiWriter.com.