

Regulatory Framework for Opening, Operating and Closing a Business

Disclaimer: Any information rendered in this document is for general references only and should not be considered as legal advice. Users are strongly advised to seek independent legal advice if they are in doubt of their legal position.

Utility Services – Water

| No. | Regulatory Framework | Link |
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| Regulations for Efficient Deployment of Water Connections and Quality of Supply | | |
| <i>Regulatory Monitoring</i> | | |
| 1. | Existence of a regulatory agency overseeing the water sector - The Water Authority | ➤ Water Supplies Department Website |
| 2. | Role of the water regulator in monitoring the quality and reliability of water services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regulator sets performance standards to ensure service quality and the reliability of water services • The regulator monitors adherence to performance standards to ensure service quality and the reliability of water services | ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| <i>Utility Infrastructure Sharing</i> | | |
| 3. | Requiring joint planning and construction (for example, for the deployment of electrical poles, overhead or underground cables, water pipes, telephone wires), including provisions on common excavation permits, joint excavation, 'dig once' policies | ➤ Cap. 131 Town Planning Ordinance ➤ Cap. 28 Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance |

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| 4. | Setting time limits for agencies involved in water connections to take decisions on approvals or issue consents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cap. 131 Town Planning Ordinance ➤ Cap. 28 Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance |
| Regulations on Safety of Water Connections | | |
| <i>Professional Certifications</i> | | |
| 5. | Specifying the qualification requirements for the party carrying-out the water installation works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum number of years of experience • Education requirement (e.g., University degree) • Registered member of the national association of engineers • Pass a qualification exam | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regulation 33, Cap. 102A Waterworks Regulations |
| <i>Inspection Regimes</i> | | |
| 6. | Mandating that internal water installations are carried out by a licensed professional/company | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 7. | Mandating that the company that carried out internal water installations inspect/certify the quality of installation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 8. | Mandating that a final inspection is carried out by a third party to ensure the quality of internal water installations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |

| No. | Regulatory Framework | Link |
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| 9. | Mandating that external water installations are carried out by a licensed professional/company | ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 10. | Mandating that a final inspection is carried out by a third party to ensure the quality of external water installations | ➤ Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| Liability Regimes | | |
| 11. | Stipulating the professional or company that performed installation works (besides the project investor or owner) be held liable by law in case faults are discovered after water installation | ➤ Sections 14(4) and 35, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| Environmental Regulations for Sustainable Provision and Use of Water Services | | |
| Sustainable Provision and Use of Water | | |
| 12. | Setting requirements and standards for water quality to ensure that utilities supply clean water | ➤ Section 37, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 13. | <p>Applicable tests to ascertain water quality standards are met for end user consumption (i.e. tests that are conducted at consumer tap):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement to carry out aesthetic tests (e.g., taste, odor, appearance) • Requirement to carry out microbiological parameters tests • Requirement to carry out physical-chemical tests • Requirement to carry out radiological tests | ➤ Section 37, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |

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| 14. | Existence of deterrence or enforcement mechanisms imposed on utilities (e.g., fines or penalties) to promote compliance with water quality standards | ➤ Section 37, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 15. | Setting environmental standards and requirements for utilities for efficient water supply to promote water-saving | ➤ Section 37, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 16. | Existence of deterrence or enforcement mechanisms imposed on utilities (e.g., fines, penalties) to promote compliance with water supply efficiency standards | ➤ Section 37, Cap. 102 Waterworks Ordinance |
| 17. | Existence of non-financial incentives for businesses to adopt demand-side water management practices | ➤ Water Conservation Website |
| <i>Sustainable Wastewater Practices</i> | | |
| 18. | Existence of wastewater treatment requirements that require wastewater to be treated before it is discharged to water bodies or land | ➤ Cap. 358 Water Pollution Control Ordinance |

Public Services that Facilitate Trade

[Including services provided by government bureaux and departments, and other public organisations]

Disclaimer: There are other digital public services that aim to facilitate business and compliance in Hong Kong. Please refer to the webpages of individual bureaux / departments / public organisations for details.

Utility Services - Water

| No. | Public Services | Link |
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| Monitoring Reliability and Sustainability of Service Supply and Safety of Connections | | |
| <i>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to Monitor Quality, Reliability, and Sustainability of Utility Supply and Their Transparency</i> | | |
| 1. | Performance targets to monitor reliability of water supply available online | ➤ Performance Targets and Achievements |
| 2. | Monitoring of water quality with indicators available online | ➤ Drinking Water Quality |
| 3. | Key Performance Indicators to monitor the environmental sustainability of water supply available online | ➤ Water Treatment |
| <i>Monitoring Safety of Water Connections in Practice</i> | | |
| 4. | Contractor/company that performed internal water installations works conduct inspection/ issue certificate of compliance/check quality of internal installation works | ➤ Section 4.3, Water Supplies Department publication: Guide to Application for Water Supply |
| 5. | Quality check or final inspection by a third-party (other than the one that did installation) conducted in practice to ensure the quality and safety of internal water installation works | ➤ Section 4.3, Water Supplies Department publication: Guide to Application for Water Supply |

| No. | Public Services | Link |
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| 6. | External water installation works are typically carried out by a licensed professional/company in practice | ➤ List of Approved Suppliers of Materials and Specialist Contractors for Public Works |
| Transparency of Utility Services | | |
| <i>Transparency of Tariffs and Tariff Setting</i> | | |
| 7. | Changes in water tariffs communicated to the public at least one billing cycle in advance | ➤ Water & Sewage Tariff |
| 8. | Formula prescribing how end-user water tariff levels are determined publicly available online and in customer bill | ➤ Water & Sewage Tariff |
| 9. | Current wastewater tariffs for industrial and commercial customers available online | ➤ Water & Sewage Tariff |
| <i>Publication of Connection Requirements</i> | | |
| 10. | Connection requirements for new commercial water connections available online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required documents • Required procedures • Connection cost | ➤ Requirements on Plumbing Works and Submissions |
| <i>Transparency of Planned Outages</i> | | |
| 11. | Planned water outages made publicly available and notified to the customers | ➤ Water Suspension Notices |

| No. | Public Services | Link |
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| <i>Complaint Mechanisms and Transparency of Complaint Process</i> | | |
| 12. | Complaint mechanism at the level of the water utility | ➤ Water Supplies Department Internet |
| 13. | Complaint mechanism independent from the water utility to escalate the complaints | ➤ The Office of the Ombudsman website ➤ 1823 website (or app) |
| 14. | Information available online to guide customers to file a complaint about water service supply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the entity in charge of managing the complaints • Documents necessary to make a complaint • Criteria / scope of complaint mechanism (i.e., what issues can be reported) • Steps necessary to make a complaint | ➤ The Office of the Ombudsman website ➤ 1823 website (or app) |
| Interoperability of Utility Services | | |
| <i>Interoperability at the Utility Level</i> | | |
| 15. | Existence of an online platform or a website with the information about the planned works on utility networks that are carried out in Hong Kong | ➤ Excavation Management |

| No. | Public Services | Link |
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| 16. | Existence of an online system and an agency in charge of coordination to facilitate collaboration between agencies for excavation permit applications and approvals | ➤ Excavation Management |
| <i>Electronic Applications and Payments</i> | | |
| 17. | E-services for commercial water connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make new applications electronically • Track applications online • Pay the fee for a new water connection electronically • Pay for the water monthly tariffs electronically | ➤ Water Supply for New Buildings ➤ Payment Methods |