



JOINT STATEMENT

EUROPEAN PUBLIC WATER OPERATORS COMMIT TO THE CONTINUITY OF WATER SERVICES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 EMERGENCY

As the COVID-19 outbreak affects all of Europe, the continued supply of high quality drinking water and sanitation operations is essential to ensure health of all citizens and continuity of other essential activities.

In this context, the **Management Board and members of Aqua Publica Europea, the European Association of Public Water Operators**, adopt today a joint statement, outlining **common commitments to fulfil public water operators' mission for the continued delivery of quality water whilst also protecting health and securing a coordinated response across Europe.**

The Management Board and members of Aqua Publica Europea:

- 1. Reassure that, in all areas including lockdown areas, public water operators have contingency plans in place that will ensure continuity of the service and quality of water: the consumption of tap water at home is, and will remain, absolutely safe.**
- 2. Fully support measures taken by national governments and city councils to provide economic relief to population in lockdown areas, including suspension or postponement of water billings or other social measures; where such measures have not been taken yet, Aqua Publica Europea members are committed – in coordination with other public authorities - to avoid any action that would limit the access to water in order to protect the health of all citizens.**
- 3. Are engaged to exchange and share approaches and best practices with regard to crisis management also with a view to improving trans-national coordination and best responses: APE members will have their first video-conference on 23 March, and more will follow in the coming days.**

Water is life, even more so in a time of a severe public health crisis. Aqua Publica's members are aware and proud of their public service's mission, and express deep gratitude for the commitment and dedication of their employees who make the realisation of this mission possible every day and night.

At this challenging time, the staff and management of European public water operators stand together as cooperation, commitment and solidarity are crucial elements to contain the outbreak.