

THE DRINKING WATER TEAM: HIGH-QUALITY DRINKING WATER FROM COMMUNAL SOURCES

Water is the elixir of life par excellence – yet we rarely consciously perceive it. The work of the Drinking Water Team shows how much effort and technology are required to ensure that every drop reaches the households of the Commune of Betzdorf in a clean and safe manner. With its regular quality controls and maintenance, the team guarantees a reliable water supply for citizens.

EN The communal responsibilities for drinking water supply include the continuous provision of water at the quality level prescribed by law, the management and maintenance of distribution networks, the monitoring of water quality at every stage, and the protection of water resources from pollution. In the Commune of Betzdorf, Michel MARTINS DIAS and his colleague Steve MAAS are responsible for the performance of these important tasks. “We look after the water supply from the drinking water tanks to the consumer, install the meters, maintain the shut-off valves and carry out analyses,” explains team leader DIAS.

Seven drinking water reservoirs

The Commune of Betzdorf has a total of seven water reservoirs spread across the entire communal area. They are fed by three sources, two of which are surface sources and one of which is an underground source. “The two surface sources fill reservoirs in Mensdorf and Berg, which supply parts of Mensdorf and Roodt-Syr, as well as the village of Berg itself and the whole of Betzdorf. The remaining amount required is supplied to us by the SIDERE water utility company,” explains Michel DIAS.



When it comes to hygienic water quality, the drinking water service in the Commune of Betzdorf does not compromise. “A highly effective UV system is used, which reliably destroys all bacteria. Even the water we obtain from SIDERE, which must already be in perfect condition, is subjected to this process once again for absolute safety. In addition, we carry out all the analyses prescribed by the water authorities. It is fair to say that the drinking water in the Commune of

Betzdorf is of impeccable quality,” says team leader DIAS.

Pipeline system: damage detection and repair

One of the two-person team’s key tasks is to maintain the communal water pipe system. This includes regularly flushing the pipes and connecting households to the water network. Last but not least,

the Drinking Water Team also has to deal with any damage to the pipes. "We always strive to repair everything ourselves wherever possible. Our colleagues from the communal highways department dig us access when damage occurs, and then we spring into action. Our technical equipment allows us to intervene selectively: we only call on the help of partner companies when particularly heavy machinery is required," says the team leader. The team is particularly proud of its ability to detect damage at an early stage and to locate it as accurately as possible. This is made possible by an automatic alarm system which is triggered when average values are exceeded over a longer period of time. By gradually closing section valves and household connections, it is then possible to determine the exact location of the damage in the pipe system, so that digging and repairs can be carried out as precisely as possible.

Water losses in private households are detected promptly

The importance of the Drinking Water Team's work becomes particularly apparent when unusually high water consumption is detected in private households. The new electronic water meters, which Michel DIAS and Steve MAAS have now installed in around 200 households in Betzdorf, indicate when normal consumption is exceeded dramatically and on a permanent basis. "If, for example, a faulty toilet is running, it may only look like a small trickle, but over days or even weeks and months, this adds up to a large amount of water flowing away unused and can cause extreme costs for the consumer," warns Michel DIAS. Leaks in pipes in the garden can also occur, as can water losses due to malfunctioning automatic filling of heating systems or rainwater tanks with defective magnetic valves. If abnormally high water consumption is detected, the team contacts the household in question and searches for the causes.

Any possible damage from the main pipe to the meter will be repaired by the Drinking Water Team at the Commune's expense. Every effort will be made to minimise inconvenience to the residents



affected. "Despite their concern about a leak, people are generally understanding and grateful for our necessary efforts. In the extremely rare event that the water supply is interrupted for a longer period of time, a temporary connection will be installed/built to provide the household with a makeshift supply.

Energy and enthusiasm day after day

The two staff members of the Drinking Water Team enjoy their work very much. Michel DIAS, a trained electrician, has been working for the Commune of Betzdorf for seven years. "The profession of communal water master, which exists in Germany, does not yet exist in Luxembourg. That is why, like me, the communal staff members responsible for water supply come from other professions. His technical training is an asset to the team leader. "While people generally think that water just comes out of the tap, they do not realise the extent of the technology involved in water supply, from water meters to pump control. Our work for the Commune is varied: laying pipes,

installing or replacing meters, identifying and repairing damage, cleaning water reservoirs properly... every day brings new and interesting tasks."

Steve MAAS, who joined the Commune at the beginning of this year, is a trained mechatronics engineer and shares his supervisor's enthusiasm for his work. "I am responsible for the technology, Michel for the electrical systems. We complement each other perfectly."

The drinking water supply for the citizens of Betzdorf is therefore in the best of hands!