

# Managing the Regulatory Environment

## ADA's Guidelines for Practice Success™ (GPS™)

### ADA Do's and Don'ts for Maintaining Dental Unit Water Lines

#### DO'S

- Check with your state's dental board to determine whether it has regulations or standards regarding maintenance of dental unit water lines.
- Make sure staff is trained and knowledgeable about water lines maintenance procedures and any products used.
  - Staff should read product labels for any disinfectants used in dental unit water lines.
  - All clinical staff should know the appropriate water quality for performing routine procedures versus that needed when performing oral-surgical procedures since their requirements do vary.
- Create and use a checklist to help ensure that all steps related to water line safety are being followed.
  - A sample checklist is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on page 10 of its resource [Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care](#).
- Make sure the practice's water line treatment schedule includes water quality monitoring.
- Follow recommendations for monitoring water quality provided by the manufacturer of the dental unit or waterline treatment product.
  - Many practices use water quality indicators, which are typically easy to use, inexpensive, and provide accurate results.
  - If using the municipal water supply for the dental unit water supply, another option is to use mail-in testing kits which involve shipping water samples to a laboratory for analysis.
- Assign someone on the team the daily responsibility of monitoring local alerts to find out whether any boil water orders have been issued.
- Always follow manufacturers' guidelines for product and equipment set-up, use, cleaning, storage, etc.
  - Change filters and treat water lines with shock treatment according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- The doctor should always sign the task list as documentation that testing of the water lines occurred.

#### DON'TS

- Don't rely on flushing alone to remove biofilm buildup from water lines.

**Resource:** CDC [Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care](#)

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