

HISTORIES OF GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FOURTH EDITION

12. Chemical fact sheets

12.1 Chemical contaminants in drinking-water

Cadmium

History of guideline development

The 1958 WHO *International Standards for Drinking-water* did not refer to cadmium. The 1963 International Standards recommended a maximum allowable concentration of 0.01 mg/l, based on health concerns. This value was retained in the 1971 International Standards as a tentative upper concentration limit, based on the lowest concentration that could be conveniently measured. In the first edition of the *Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality*, published in 1984, a guideline value of 0.005 mg/l was recommended for cadmium in drinking-water. This value was lowered to 0.003 mg/l in the 1993 Guidelines, based on the PTWI set by JECFA. This guideline value was brought forward to the third edition of the Guidelines, published in 2004, and was retained in the fourth edition of the Guidelines, published in 2011, but it was based on the PTMI set by JECFA, as the PTWI had been withdrawn.