

World Plumbing Day 2026:

Safe water needs regulated plumbers – and a new generation of professionals

Brussels, 11 March 2026



On the occasion of **World Plumbing Day**, GCP Europe — representing Europe’s plumbing, heating and ventilation contractors — highlights the essential role plumbers play in protecting **public health, safe drinking water and hygienic buildings**.

Access to clean drinking water is one of the foundations of modern societies. However, the quality of drinking water does not depend only on treatment plants and public networks. It also depends on **how water systems are installed, maintained and operated inside buildings**. Plumbers therefore play a crucial role as **guardians of drinking water safety and public health**.

1. Safe drinking water requires qualified plumbing professionals

Improperly designed or installed plumbing systems can lead to serious health risks, including contamination, bacterial growth, or temperature-related hygiene problems.

Ensuring that plumbing installations are carried out by **qualified professionals** is therefore essential to protect drinking water quality and public health.

For this reason, GCP Europe stresses that **plumbing should be recognised and regulated as a qualified profession worldwide**, similar to other safety-critical professions such as electricians.

Professional regulation helps ensure:

- high standards of training and certification
- safe and hygienic drinking water systems
- consumer protection and trust

- fair competition between qualified professionals

Key message:

👉 *Plumbing should become a regulated profession worldwide to guarantee safe drinking water and protect public health.*

2. A vital profession that deserves greater recognition

At the same time, Europe and many other regions are facing a **growing shortage of skilled plumbing professionals**.

Yet plumbing is a **highly valuable and future-proof profession** that combines technical expertise, environmental responsibility and public service.

Plumbers contribute directly to:

- safe drinking water systems
- energy-efficient buildings
- sustainable water management
- climate and environmental objectives

Moreover, plumbing is a profession that offers:

- stable and well-paid employment
- strong entrepreneurial opportunities
- practical and technological skills
- resilience to automation and artificial intelligence

Key message:

👉 *Greater awareness must be raised about the advantages of the plumbing profession to attract the next generation of skilled workers.*

Statement

*“Safe drinking water cannot be taken for granted. It depends on the expertise of qualified plumbers who design, install and maintain the systems inside our buildings every day,” says **GCP Europe Vice President and Chair of the Plumbing & Water Quality Task Force Michael Mattes**.*

“To protect public health and ensure sustainable water systems, plumbing must be recognised worldwide as a regulated profession. At the same time, we must do much more to promote plumbing as a modern, AI-resilient and essential career for the next generation.”

About GCP Europe

GCP Europe represents the interests of plumbing, heating and ventilation contractors across Europe, representing hundreds of thousands of companies and millions of professionals delivering essential services for buildings, infrastructure and public health.

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