

## HISTORIES OF GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FOURTH EDITION

### 12. Chemical fact sheets

#### 12.1 Chemical contaminants in drinking-water

##### Petroleum products

##### ***History of guideline development***

The 1958, 1963 and 1971 WHO *International Standards for Drinking-water* and the first, second and third editions of the *Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality* did not refer to petroleum products in general, although guideline values had been established for individual petroleum hydrocarbons (e.g. benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene, xylenes) and individual polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon contaminants of petroleum products (e.g. benzo[*a*]pyrene) in early editions of the Guidelines. In the first addendum to the third edition of the Guidelines, published in 2006, it was concluded that it was not appropriate to set a formal health-based guideline value for petroleum products in drinking-water because a number of the most soluble aromatic hydrocarbons would be detectable by taste and/or odour at concentrations below those concentrations of concern for health, particularly for short-term exposure. This assessment was brought forward to the fourth edition of the Guidelines, published in 2011.