

DWI Ref: AE1-21-5067

Enforcement Ref: DWI/Revoke/Notice/NIW/2025/003

Date: 19 December 2025

Aisling McHugh
 Company Secretary
 Northern Ireland Water Ltd
 Westland House
 40 Old Westland Road
 BELFAST
 BT14 6TE

Drinking Water Inspectorate
 NIEA headquarters
 17 Antrim Road
 Tonagh
 Lisburn
 Co Antrim
 BT28 3AL

Tel: 028 9056 9282

Dear Aisling,

REVOCATION OF A REGULATION 31(4)(b) NOTICE ISSUED UNDER REGULATION 31(6) OF THE WATER SUPPLY (WATER QUALITY) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2017 – DRUMAROAD WTW AND ASSOCIATED WATER SUPPLY AREA

Contravention of the Regulatory Standard for Aluminium (200µg/l)

Water Treatment Works (WTW)	Water Supply Zones (WSZs)
W3801 Drumaroad	ZS0103 Belfast Ballyhanwood* ZS0104 Breda North* ZS0105 Breda South* ZS0108 Belfast Purdysburn* ZS0401 Drumaroad Bangor ZS0404 Drumaroad Ards ZS0405 Drumaroad Ards West ZS0406 Drumaroad Portaferry ZS0407 Drumaroad Bangor West ZS0408 Drumaroad Bangor East ZS0404 Drumaroad Ards ZS0409 Drumaroad Ards West ZS0501 Drumaroad Lisburn ZS0504 Lisburn South** ZS0601 Drumaroad Ballynahinch ZS0602 Drumaroad Downpatrick

* Can be a blend of Drumaroad, Dunore Point and Castor Bay WTWs water

**Can be a blend of Drumaroad and Castor Bay WTWs water

The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) has actively monitored the progress NI Water has made in relation to the requirements of the Regulation 31(4) Notice DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001, namely to:

“Install and have operational, a treatment system at Drumaroad Water Treatment Works that is proven to be effective in the removal or reduction of Aluminium to achieve a final water result that meets the maximum regulatory limit of Aluminium of 200 µg/l”.

The above work was to be completed by 30 April 2025. Following the completion of filter media pilot trials, NI Water identified several actions as necessary to comply with the Notice. These were detailed as eight recommendations in the Pilot Plant Study Report provided to DWI on 17 April 2024.

DWI monitored NI Water’s progress with the innovation project to deliver the pilot plant study recommendations through the Compliance Programmes Review Meetings held on 07/10/2021 and 27/01/2022, 25/05/2022, 06/10/2022, 26/01/2023; 25/06/2023; 12/10/2023; 01/02/2024; 30/05/2024; and 22/10/2024.

In the period 31 October 2024 to 25 November 2024, there were a number of water quality events relating to aluminium at Drumaroad WTW (Events 42/24, 44/24, and 45/24). At a meeting on 25 November 2024, and a subsequent site visit on 26 November 2024, NI Water advised DWI that a separate PLC upgrade project was ongoing at the site alongside the innovation project. This PLC project had commenced in July 2023 and was scheduled to complete by 31 March 2025. It was noted that having the two projects running simultaneously on site would potentially increase the risk of further water quality events. Consequently, it was agreed that the innovation work to meet the requirements of the Notice would be paused pending the completion of the PLC project.

An updated progress report on the status of the eight recommendations to be delivered in relation to the Regulation 31(4)(b) Notice (DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001) was provided to DWI at the Compliance Programmes Review meeting on 13 February 2025. On 10 April 2025, NI Water provided DWI with a further update on progress with work at the site and advised:

- The PLC upgrade project was completed on schedule with the planned programme, with beneficial use for the whole site achieved by 28 March 2025.
- As the Innovation project to deliver the eight recommendations required to comply with the Regulation 31(4)(b) Notice had been paused, NI Water would not be able to meet the compliance date of the Notice, 30 April 2025.

To enable completion of the eight recommendations as detailed in the updated progress report, an extension to the Regulation 31(4)(b) Notice, DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001, to 30 September 2025 was requested and granted, DWI/Notice/NIW/2025/001.

On 30 September 2025, DWI received an e-mail from NI Water which stated:

“NI Water have completed the capital investment as defined in the Treatability recommendations. I have attached a copy of the progress report on the 8 recommendations that were to be delivered and completed by 30 September 2025, all recommendations are now complete. Following completion of the capital investment as defined in the treatability recommendations. I am requesting that the Regulation 31(4) Notice for Drumaroad WTW



(Aluminium) can be considered for closure. I have attached a copy of aluminium results for 2025 year to date”.

The aluminium results provided (samples from 2 January to 25 September 2025) for all Final Water and Service Reservoir samples demonstrated compliance with the regulatory standard. However, results of six of the 480 samples in Drumaroad WSZs reported were in breach of the regulatory standard for aluminium including one regulatory contravention in Drumaroad Ballynahinch WSZ and five Customer Complaint operational samples, one of which was in breach of the Health Notification Value.

The Inspectorate accepts NI Water’s findings that these breaches were due to localised disturbance of built-up mains deposits from historical aluminium water quality events.

It is important NI Water reviews the risk of mains deposits impacting the drinking water quality in the Drumaroad WTW distribution network and continues to fulfil its duty to supply water that meets the regulatory standard for aluminium.

The Drinking Water Inspectorate is now satisfied that the evidence provided by NI Water demonstrates that the new treatment process meets the requirements of the Notice. Please find attached a Revocation Notice issued under Regulation 31(6) which rescinds DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001, as amended by DWI/Notice/NIW/2025/001.

Enquiries

Any enquiries about this letter should be addressed to: berni.corr@daera-ni.gov.uk or Tel: 028 9056 9479

Acknowledgement

NI Water is required to acknowledge receipt of this notice to: DWI@daera-ni.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Bernadette Corr
Interim Chief Inspector of Drinking Water
Drinking Water Inspectorate

cc: David Reid, NIEA
Richard Crowe, NIEA
Gareth Greer, NIEA
Colin Armstrong, DAERA
Ciaran MacCann, URNI
Alison Clydesdale, Department for Infrastructure
Kathryn Baker, Department of Health
Karen Smyth, CCNI
Gary Curran, NI Water
Dymphna Gallagher, NI Water
Alison McMullan, NI Water



The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 Regulation 31(6): Revocation Notice

Reference: DWI/Revoke/Notice/NIW/2025/003

1.0 To: **Northern Ireland Water Limited**

At: **Westland House, 40 Old Westland Road, Belfast, BT14 6TE**

2.0 **The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs** is satisfied that the e-mail received from **Northern Ireland Water Limited** on the 30 September 2025 states that:

- 2.1 "NI Water have completed the capital investment as defined in the Treatability recommendations.
- 2.2 I have attached a copy of the progress report on the 8 recommendations that were to be delivered and completed by 30 September 2025, all recommendations are now complete.
- 2.3 Following completion of the capital investment as defined in the treatability recommendations I am requesting that the Regulation 31(4) Notice for Drumaroad WTW (Aluminium) can be considered for closure".

3.0 The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, is satisfied that the above listed works meet the requirements of DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001, issued on 8 July 2021 and amended by DWI/Notice/NIW/2025/001, issued on 27 May 2025.

4.0 Through Regulation 31(6) of The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs hereby revokes:

DWI/Notice/NIW/2021/001 (as amended)

7.0 Signed (On behalf of the Department of Environment, Agriculture and Rural Affairs):



Bernadette Corr
Interim Chief Inspector of Drinking Water
Drinking Water Inspectorate

Date of Issue: 19 December 2025

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