

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER 22/08/2025

BRIEFING	BG TCG Update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	
DATE	22 August 2025

NIEA update

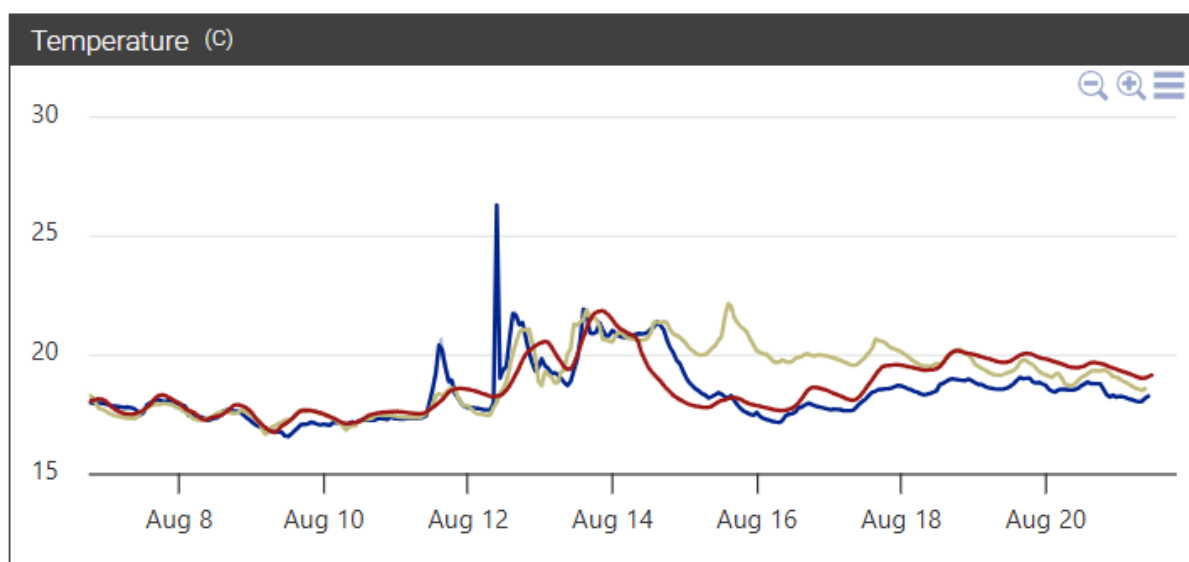
Freshwater Investigations team:

The data represented below is from the 14th to the 21st August 2025. The data is collected in real time at 30 min intervals from three locations across lough Neagh:

Rea's Wood: Blue line

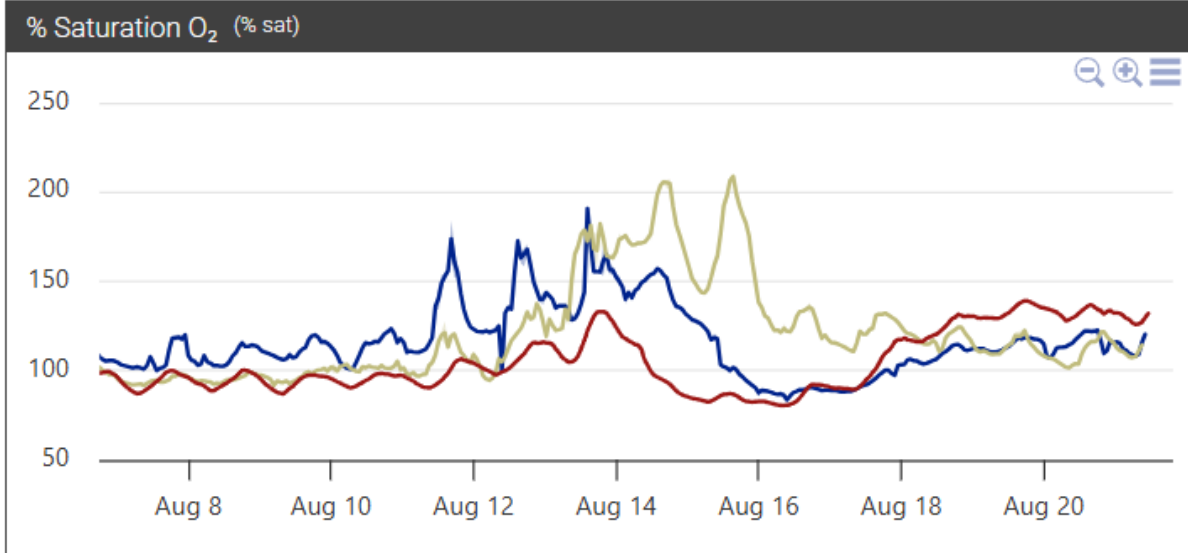
Toome Bridge: Red Line

Washing Bay: Gold Line



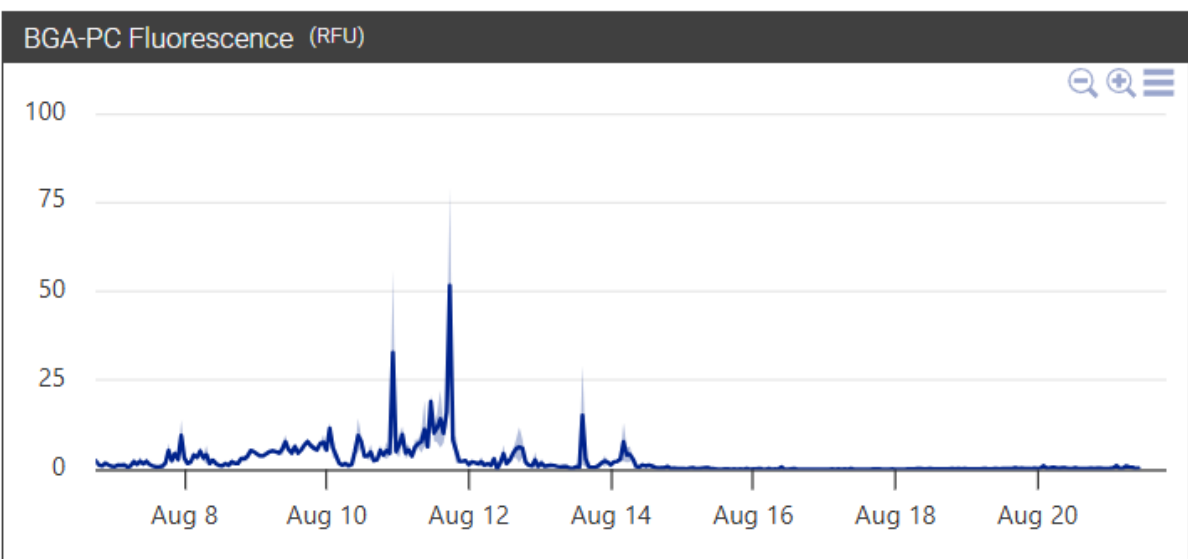
Monitoring Buoy Temperature (°C) – Rea's wood (Blue), Toome Outlet (Red), Washing Bay (Gold)

Surface temperatures remain elevated across the three monitoring locations in line with the recent warm, calm atmospheric conditions which followed the cooler windy conditions observed on the 8th/9th August. **The sharp elevation in surface temperature, recorded at the Rea's wood buoy on the 12th was a result of removal for maintenance and calibration and should be disregarded.**



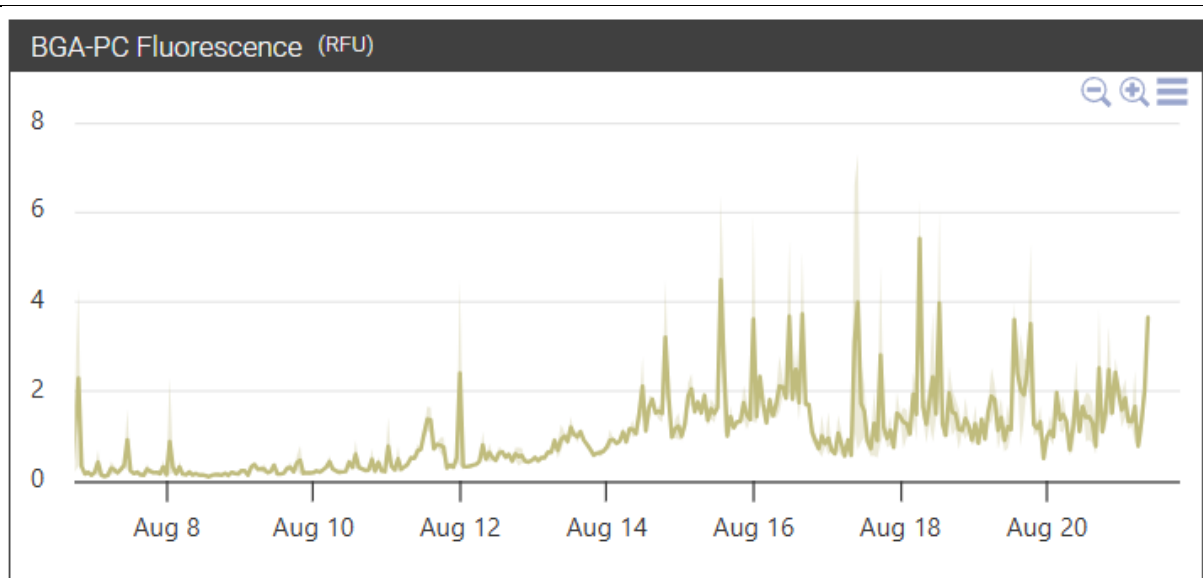
Monitoring Buoy Dissolved Oxygen (%Sat) – Rea's wood (Blue), Toome Outlet (Red), Washing Bay (Gold)

Periods of hyperoxygenation have been recorded at Rea's wood and Washing Bay. Warm temperatures settled conditions, and increased sunlight can lead to excessive macrophyte growth and algal blooms, particularly cyanobacteria, which produce oxygen through photosynthesis during the day. When conditions become more unsettled, mixing occurs, bringing surface DO levels back to more normal and expected levels.



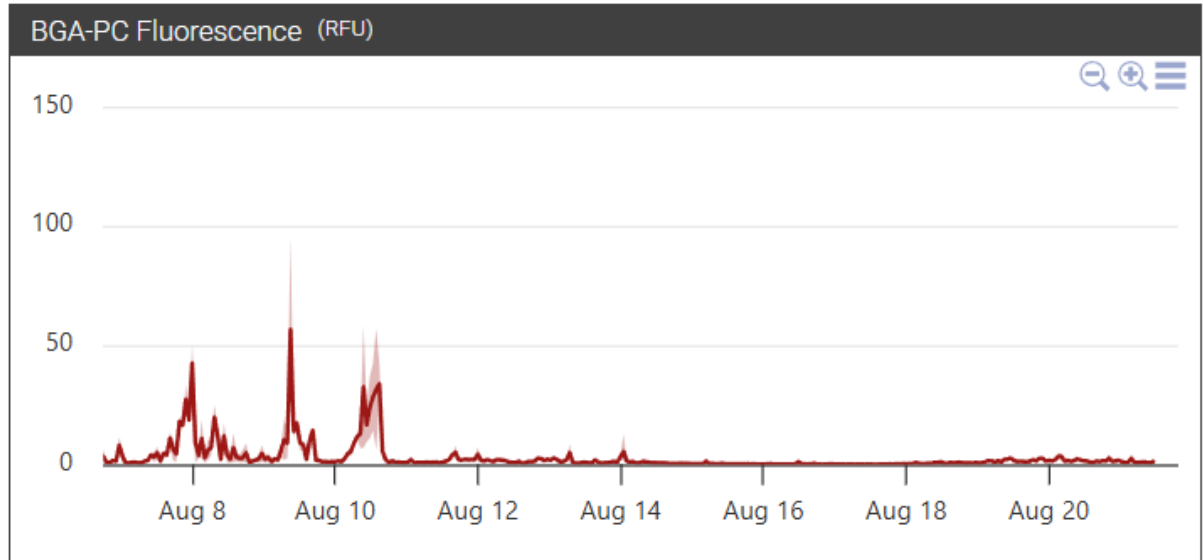
Rea's Wood Buoy -BGA-PC RFU

Notable blooms in Blue green algae have been recorded at Rea's wood over the past two weeks. The data suggest that these levels have decreased in recent days. Eyewitness reports are contrary to this. An explanation for this may be the algae's positioning in the water column. Often the algae floats to the surface for photosynthesis or when it is decomposing and may be concentrated above the depth of the BG sensor on the buoy. Decomposing algae may give the impression that subsurface levels are decreasing while they may appear more concentrated on the surface.



Washing Bay Buoy – BGA-PC RFU

Blue Green algae levels remain present but low at washing bay.



Toome Bridge Outlet Buoy – BGA-PC RFU

A passing bloom of Blue green algae was recorded at the Toome Outlet on the 8-11th of august. Levels have remained low here since. Again, this may be due to the concentration of decomposing algae on the surface with lower levels being recorded subsurface.

FMA Lake Monitoring & Evidence:

Stats up to and including 21/08/2025

139 reports at 66 unique locations

New locations this week	Date
Lough Mourne	21/08/2025

Lough Neagh - Pollan Bay	20/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Shanes Castle	20/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Moore's Point	20/08/2025
River Blackwater - The Argory	18/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Battery Harbour	18/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Washing Bay	18/08/2025
Lower Bann - Mountsandel Wood	18/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Ballyronan	17/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Oxford Island	17/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Kinnego Marina	17/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Lusty Beg Island Marina	16/08/2025
Lower Bann - Hutchinson's Quay	15/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Sandybay Point	15/08/2025

Recent Satellite Imagery

12/08/25



17/08/25

DWI Update:

Seatons Marina	21/8/25	17.3	Below limit of Detection
Reas Wood	21/8/25	133	0.891
Benone	21/8/25	6.105	Below limit of Detection
Portstewart	21/8/25	1small colony	n/a
Downhill	21/8/25	0.005	n/a
Castlerock	21/8/25	Nothing seen	n/a
Portrush1	21/8/25	Nothing seen	n/a
Portrush 2	21/8/25	0.004	n/a

CSAO update

The Lough Neagh Platform viewer development continues. The viewer has re-entered user testing. Issue resolution will commence Monday 25th Aug. Focus remains on having a releasable product for the 10th September. A release to stakeholders is required before release to the general public. This planning for the stakeholder even is underway.

DAERA have entered an OFWAT challenge fund partnership led by Southwest Water limited, an English water company. DAERA has agreed to provide data to the project and assist “in-kind”. DAERA will neither give or receive funding from this project nor will DAERA be undertaking any developmental work. DAERA will hold a position on the technical advisory group guiding the research.

The data that DAERA will supply is readily available to the public. Some of it is available through the DAERA website, other aspects through FOI, and additional details will also be viewable on a public facing data platform that will be launched in August 2025. The sharing of data meets the NI Data strategy and Open Government Licensing approaches and DAERA has no concerns regarding this.

DAERA/NI Water data sharing agreement is planned to be in place by 4th Sept. CSAO will be in contact next week seeking input and comments

AFBI update

Long-term time-series monitoring in lough Neagh has continued, observing abundant Microsystis in open water the previous week, and noticeable quantities in Lough Erne this week.

Phytoplankton biomass (as chlorophyll-a) at the surface is the highest value of the year so far.

AFBI Buoy has been unable to telemeter data but is still operating remotely. It has been worked on extensively, including a change of position to help determine network connectivity issues, but lack of support for outdated modems means a change of hardware is required. Likely to use *In-situ* for the short to medium term which means meteorology will be absent.

Preparation work to secure the acoustic survey vessel ahead of the SHIELD project has begun.

Monthly shoreline survey with Fluoroprobe has been undertaken.

Salar Engine Failure and hydraulics modifications have been addressed.

Media requests have been served by Dr Yvonne McElarney.

AFBI and MCCIP CoCo (Coastal Communities WG) proposal is moving towards delivering public facing information focusing on the downstream (Estuarine and Coastal) impacts of the algal blooms. Requires cross-agency coordination for messaging.

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ AFBI

Date:
22/08/2025

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER 28/08/2025

BRIEFING	BG TCG Update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	NIEA/EMFG
DATE	28/08/25

FMA – Freshwater Investigations:

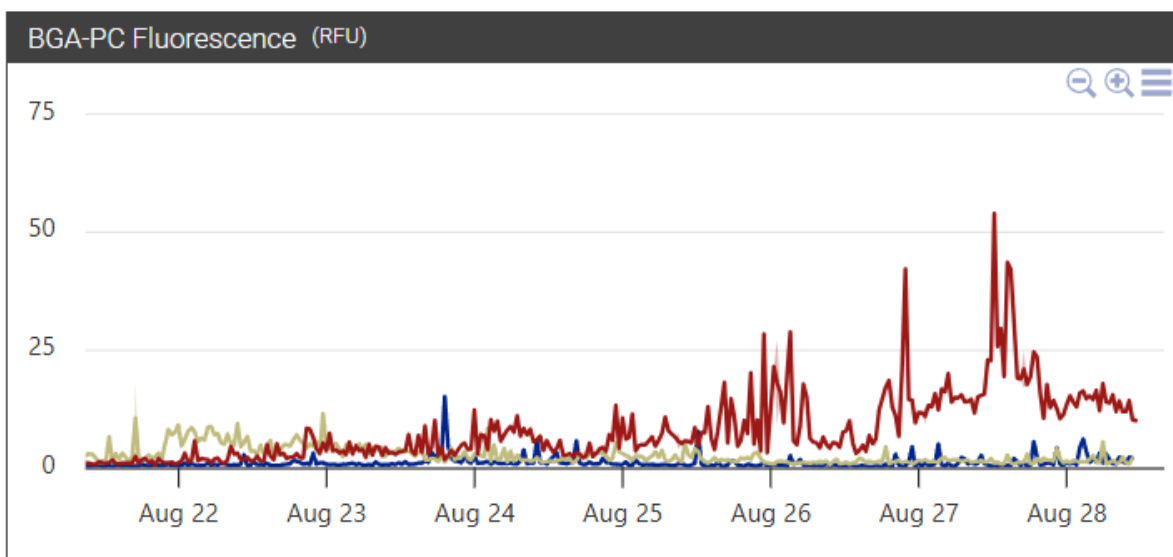
The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends.

Rea's Wood (North-East) – Blue line

Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Red line

Washing Bay (South-West) – Gold line

These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Recent data indicate a decline in sub-surface blue-green algae concentrations at both Rea's Wood and Washing Bay over the past week. This reduction may be attributed to the natural decomposition process, during which algae rise to the surface. This can result in the visual appearance of a dense surface bloom, even as sub-surface levels diminish.

Conversely, elevated algae levels have been recorded at the Toome Outlet in recent days, suggesting that blooms are beginning to exit Lough Neagh. As these blooms move downstream along the Lower Bann, there is potential for increased risk to water quality and public health along the river and at coastal locations in the coming days and weeks.

FMA Lake Monitoring & Evidence:

Stats up to and including 28/08/2025

158 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 78 unique locations

New locations this week	Date
Magilligan – Downhill	26/08/2025
Shaws Lake	24/08/2025
Meenameen Lough	23/08/2025
Lough Nabrickboy	23/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Magho Cottages	22/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Crevenish Castle	22/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Derrymore Point	22/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Gravelly Island	22/08/2025
Lower Bann - Drumaheglis Marina	22/08/2025
Upper Bann/Lough Gullion feeder stream	21/08/2025
Lough Bradan	21/08/2025
Magilligan - Benone	21/08/2025

DWI Update:

Algal levels at the intake to Moyola WTW have reduced from end of last week but remain elevated. Monitoring of the raw and treated water for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB and Microcystin-LR by NI Water is ongoing at all WTW at risk of algae in the source water. There have been no consumer contacts relating to algae in the source water for Moyola WTW in last two weeks, 8 consumer contacts reported for Castor Bay supply. DWI is continuing to monitor this situation. In-house testing of Microcystin-LR by NI Water has reported satisfactory results for the treated water from WTWs abstracting from Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann.

EMFG

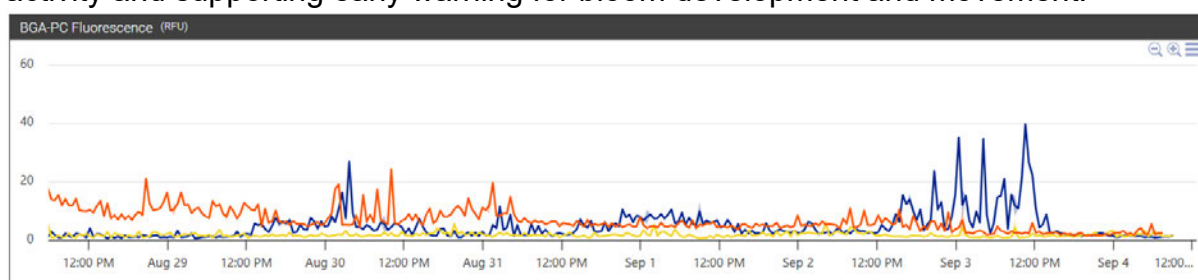
Date	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /l	Test Elisa Microcystin ug/l	Test/Lateral flow Anatoxin ug/l
26/08/2025	Magilligan	0.15	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Downhill	0.01	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Castlerock	0.00	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Seaton's Marina	>5	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portstewart	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portrush Mills (1)	Nothing Seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portrush Mills (2)	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Rae's Wood	>99	0.186	Negative

Updates completed by: NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG	Date:28/08/2025
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OFFICIAL DAERA MINUTES

MEETING TITLE	TCG Blue-green Meeting
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG Meeting #29
VENUE	MS Teams
DATE/TIME	4 th September 2025, 11.00 – 12.00
LIST OF ATTENDEES	(NIEA), (NIEA), (NIEA), (EMFG), (EMFG), (NIEA), (CSAO), (Press Office), (DWI), (NIEA), (NIEA) (NIEA),
APOLOGIES	(EMFG), (NIEA), (EMFG), (EMFG), (EMFG), (NIEA), (NIEA), (AFBI), (NIEA)
KEY POINTS DISCUSSED – provided overview as to set up of BG meeting, Tourism NI interest, due to golf tournament and also bathing water quality. Noted FSA to make an announcement next week. NIEA – more correspondence this week, more likely due to decay phase of algae. - seven-day graph in update, all three buoys are recording low levels, due to stormy weather less BG at Toome, more at Reas Wood. - report total 163 occurrences at 80 locations. Five reports this week, two new locations this week. Monthly phytoplankton sampling, more BG on western shore. FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea's Wood (North-East) – Blue line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Red line Washing Bay (South-West) – Gold line	

These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Recent monitoring data indicate a decline in sub-surface blue-green algae concentrations at Toome Outlet, with levels remaining low at Washing Bay over the past week. The reduced concentrations at Toome may help lower the risk to water quality and public health along the river and at downstream coastal locations in the coming days.

In contrast, elevated algae levels have been observed at Rea's Wood in recent days, suggesting the development of fresh blooms. These blooms are highly mobile and may have migrated towards the shoreline, as indicated by a rapid decrease in concentrations over the past 24 hours. This reduction is likely due to recent inclement weather, which has contributed to increased lake mixing and dispersal of algal material.

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 04/09/2025

163 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 80 unique locations.

New locations this week	Date
Lower Bann - Coleraine Marina	30/08/2025
Upper Bann Feeder, Ballyroney	27/08/2025

EMFG update

██████ – templated updated below. Seatons Marina had a biovolume of 137, limit is 4. Beaches visited, biovolumes below limits, but noted 70/80 Phycocyanin. Magilligan none, Castlerock some BG noted, toxins below limit for all sites and all dates. Paddle board event proposed at Portglenone Marina on 13th September.

██████ - last confirmed report from Portglenone Marina, from a member of the public, was on 12th August.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Biovolume mm3/l</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Reas Wood</u>	<u>8.33</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Seatons Marina</u>	<u>137.46</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Portstewart</u>	<u>0.025</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Downhill</u>	<u>0.003</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Castlerock</u>	<u>0.003</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Portrush 1</u>	<u>0.003</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Portrush2</u>	<u>0.003</u>
<u>01/09/25</u>	<u>Magilligan (Benone)</u>	<u>Nothing seen</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Portstewart</u>	<u>0.008</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Downhill</u>	<u>0.003</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Castlerock</u>	<u>0.014</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Portrush 1</u>	<u>0.002</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Portrush2</u>	<u>0.006</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Magilligan (Benone)</u>	<u>Nothing seen</u>
<u>03/09/25</u>	<u>Barmouth</u>	<u>1.724</u>

All toxins below detection limits for all sites and dates.

SBRI Remote Sensing Phase 2 has started. Supplier inception event planned. Data requests have been made to various teams and organisations to support.

CSAO update

Stage 1 of the Lough Neagh Viewer will be technically complete in mid-September. Organisation of a stakeholder engagement session is planned, and public release will follow. Ministerial direction is being sought around the preferences for release. Stage 2 scoping is planned for later in the year.

AFBI have provided the projects outlining modelling of Lough Neagh and its catchment, and also a project to develop NI based toxin analysis.

■ – a steering group should be set up to monitor projects – good governance.

DWI Update

■ - Deterioration in raw water quality entering Moyola WTW reported to DWI as a drinking water quality event on 29/08/2025, no impact on drinking water quality observed. Moyola WTW is continuing to operate within limits. Levels of algae in raw water intake back down (9000 total algae on 27/08/2025). Toxin levels (MC-LR) all below LoQ in Moyola final water year to date. Noted that Microcystis is not dominant species found at inlet to Moyola works, diatoms prevalent. Likely due to buoyancy of Microcystis and Moyola abstraction is taken at a depth of 3m.

Press Office Update

██████ - quiet after Benone restriction. UTV have asked a question on Lough Neagh action plan, ██████ is working on this response. Newsletter has asked a question on P being added to drinking water.

AFBI

ACTION POINTS/OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE/TARGET DATE:

- **Action Point 1** – ██████ to contact ██████ Mid and East Antrim Council regarding paddle board event due to take place on 13th September at Portglenone Marina. Send info graphic to Paddleboard NI. Issue of cross contamination needs to be raised.
- **Action Point 2** - Discussions to take place with EMFG and DWI regarding most prevalent BGA species, depths of abstraction and different types of algae detected at these.
- **Action Point 3** – ██████ to share results of algal counts with ██████ in DWI.

Date of next meeting 11th September 11:00-12:00

Minutes written by:

██████████

Date:

4th September 2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 06

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 10:30 hrs on 05.09.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 12 Sept @ 10:30hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
163 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 80 unique locations		G	

2 new locations reported since last meeting.- See annex for more detail	
Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group	G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

28/8/2025

Bathing waters will continue to be monitored

Emergency pollution hotline available 24/365

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored but do not anticipate gates being opened

Drinking water quality and consumer contacts will continue to be monitored

05.09.2025

Emergency pollution hotline available 24/365

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored but do not anticipate gates being opened

Continue with bathing water monitoring

Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

Forward Look for this/next week.

28.08.2025

Winds offshore until Thurs when changes forecast onshore

Watch on rainfall and levels of gates at Toome. Heavy rainfall forecast over weekend and next week.

Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels

Next TCG meeting 5.09.25

05.09.25

Expect more press coverage associated with FSA report which is due to issue on 10/09/25

NIW are preparing for potential taste and odour issues when decay of algae begins

Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels

Forward Look >2 weeks.

28.08.25

More focus on recreational use of waterways and drinking water quality as potential for increase in toxins as bloom decays

05.09.25

Councils to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

28.08.25

Media requests received in relation to drinking water and phosphate dosing (plumbosolvency). This issue is accounted for already in nutrient budgeting.

No expected media releases in coming days but w/c 8 Sept FSA media story will be issued.

05.09.25

Expected media interest to increase associated with FSA story on 10 Sept.

**KEY
RISK
1**

Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

**BRAG
Status**

R

Detailed description:

1. Blue green algae is present in low levels at all beaches except Benone
2. Seaton's Marina and Rea's Wood are still red with high biovolume counts
3. Toxicity levels are low at present.

What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: Signage remains in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk			

of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season.

2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Reputational – media in Northern Ireland

Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality

Public health – potential impacts on water users

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Moyola WTW: Deterioration in raw water quality entering Moyola WTW recorded as drinking water quality event on 29/08/2025 however no impact on drinking water quality observed. 2. Potential for taste and odour issues to emerge as move in decay phase of bloom			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland			

Economic – impact on households and businesses
Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR.

In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann.

Daily sampling at Moyola will continue until end Sept

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

28.08.2025 Update

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI

Attached as Annex dated 28 August 2025

DFI Rivers

Lough levels just above statutory minimum. No plans to open gates and release water at present.

FSA

24/25 fish sample results received, internal risk assessment for edible fish completed and comms being made ready for news story to be released w/c 8 September

DoH and DAERA Ministers briefed and meeting with OGD held 27.08.25. Other stakeholders to be updated prior to news story release.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Signs have remained up throughout summer regarding no bathing. Plan to reshare socials

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Queries raised in relation to advice from FSA on fish. FSA advised currently advice is active and on website.

Query on rotting aquatic weeds raised and NIEA to follow up with query.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Query raised on advice for operators on an event being held on 7 Sept. MFD and CCGBC to review in line with IA protocol. MFD advises that the event planned at Coleraine is relocated immediately, as situation for the Lower Bann is unlikely to improve in the coming week.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Signage remains across access points on Lower Bann. Cross communication however with Waterways Ireland who are using as navigation channel.

MUDC

Query raised to FSA regarding upcoming story and request for advance notice on story. FSA advised that stakeholders will be informed before media story release.

FODC

No update to report

Tourism NI

Meeting scheduled with MFD around "Blueways" project and water quality on 29.08.2025

05.09.2025 Update

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 04 Sept 2025

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen 40mm in past week. Do not anticipate opening of gates over next week.

NIW

Water quality challenge at end of August at Moyola WTW due to high turbidity and presence of algae however no impact was experienced by customers.

Diatoms were prevalent species monitored with 35,000counts

In house microcystin samples continue on final water and daily sampling from Moyola will continue until end September.

Question posed on how message that drinking water is safe and whether there has been notable increase in budget to treat water.

NIW are continually in media headlines/Qs from MLAs/FOIs regarding impacts. Recognise that is a challenge in relation to taste/odour however they continue to reinforce message water is fully treated and safe to drink.
Significant investment into treatment including GAC filter media replaced at Moyola/Castor Bay and Dunore Pt.

FSA

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite

PHA

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite

Tourism NI

Exploring ways to convey positive messages to Tourists regarding water quality.
Event planned with outdoor tourism 24.09.25. DAERA MFD presenting on bathing water monitoring and review.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Signs have remained up throughout summer regarding no bathing and will continue to do so.

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

No update to report

MUDC

Signage remains in place. New location reported at Ballysaggart Lough and message conveyed to users.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

No representation at meeting

Mid and East Antrim BC:

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite.
DAERA advised it had been in contact with council in relation to an upcoming Paddle NI event

LCCC

Signage remains in place at Hillsborough Lake

Highlighted three businesses on the shores of Lough Neagh within LCCC area. These include 2 sand extraction companies and a marina.

FODC

No update to report

DAERA

Update by DAERA on the SBRI projects linked to addressing problems associated with BGA

Actions

- Reword Risk 3 and add drinking water to reputational risk – completed
- NIW and DWI to share link to web pages on water quality and Lough Neagh – completed
- DAERA to contact PHA in relation to public health risk associated with different water activities - completed
- DAERA to consider future update to group on wider science and measures taking place – c/f

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER 28/08/2025

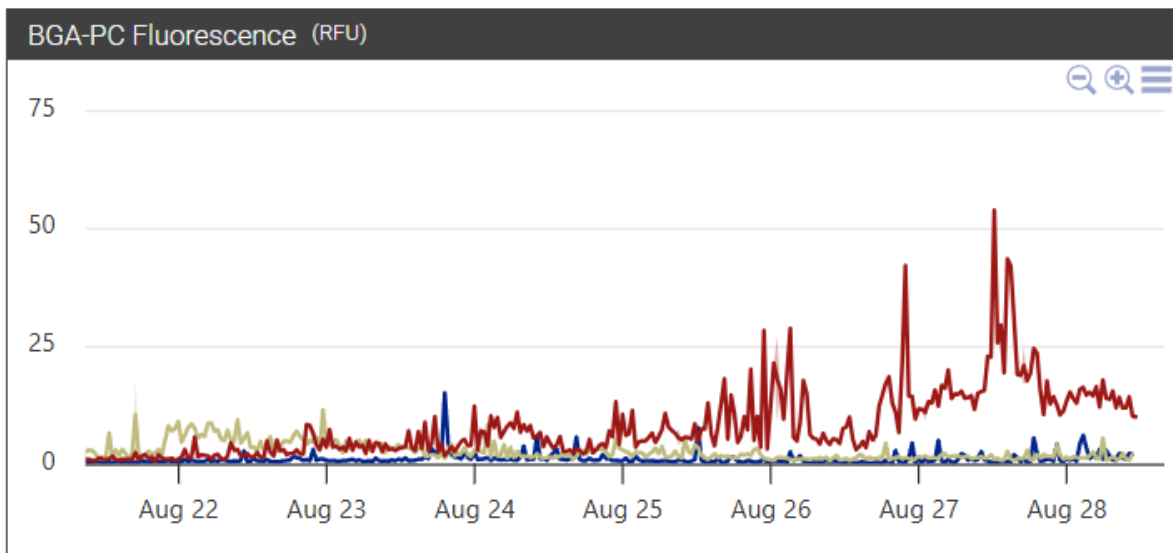
BRIEFING	BG TCG Update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	NIEA/EMFG
DATE	28/08/25

FMA – Freshwater Investigations:

The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends.

Rea's Wood (North-East) – Blue line
Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Red line
Washing Bay (South-West) – Gold line

These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Recent data indicate a decline in sub-surface blue-green algae concentrations at both Rea's Wood and Washing Bay over the past week. This reduction may be attributed to the natural decomposition process, during which algae rise to the surface. This can result in the visual appearance of a dense surface bloom, even as sub-surface levels diminish.

Conversely, elevated algae levels have been recorded at the Toome Outlet in recent days, suggesting that blooms are beginning to exit Lough Neagh. As these blooms move downstream along the Lower Bann, there is potential for increased risk to water quality and public health along the river and at coastal locations in the coming days and weeks.

FMA Lake Monitoring & Evidence:

Stats up to and including 28/08/2025

158 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 78 unique locations

New locations this week	Date
Magilligan – Downhill	26/08/2025
Shaws Lake	24/08/2025
Meenameen Lough	23/08/2025
Lough Nabrickboy	23/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Magho Cottages	22/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Crevenish Castle	22/08/2025
Lough Neagh - Derrymore Point	22/08/2025
Lower Lough Erne - Gravelly Island	22/08/2025
Lower Bann - Drumaheglis Marina	22/08/2025
Upper Bann/Lough Gullion feeder stream	21/08/2025
Lough Bradan	21/08/2025
Magilligan - Benone	21/08/2025

DWI Update:

Algal levels at the intake to Moyola WTW have reduced from end of last week but remain elevated. Monitoring of the raw and treated water for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB and Microcystin-LR by NI Water is ongoing at all WTW at risk of algae in the source water. There have been no consumer contacts relating to algae in the source water for Moyola WTW in last two weeks, 8 consumer contacts reported for Castor Bay supply. DWI is continuing to monitor this situation. In-house testing of Microcystin-LR by NI Water has reported satisfactory results for the treated water from WTWs abstracting from Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann.

EMFG

Date	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /l	Test Elisa Microcystin ug/l	Test/Lateral flow Anatoxin ug/l
26/08/2025	Magilligan	0.15	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Downhill	0.01	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Castlerock	0.00	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Seaton's Marina	>5	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portstewart	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portrush Mills (1)	Nothing Seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Portrush Mills (2)	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection	N/A
26/08/2025	Rae's Wood	>99	0.186	Negative

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG

Date:28/08/2025

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER 04/09/2025

BRIEFING	BG TCG Update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	NIEA/EMFG/CSAO/AFBI
DATE	04/09/2025

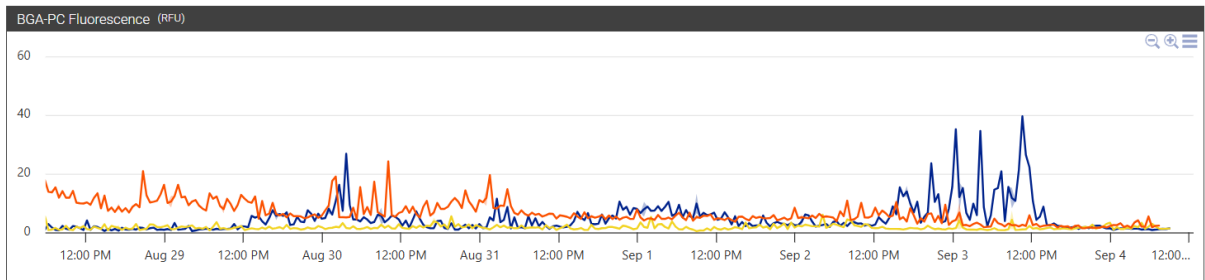
NIEA update

FMA – Freshwater Investigations:

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- Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Blue line
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These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Recent monitoring data indicate a decline in sub-surface blue-green algae concentrations at Toome Outlet, with levels remaining low at Washing Bay over the past week. The reduced concentrations at Toome may help lower the risk to water quality and public health along the river and at downstream coastal locations in the coming days.

In contrast, elevated algae levels have been observed at Rea’s Wood in recent days, suggesting the development of fresh blooms. These blooms are highly mobile and may have migrated towards the shoreline, as indicated by a rapid decrease in concentrations over the past 24 hours. This reduction is likely due to recent inclement weather, which has contributed to increased lake mixing and dispersal of algal material.

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 04/09/2025

163 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 80 unique locations.

New locations this week	Date
Lower Bann - Coleraine Marina	30/08/2025

DWI Update

Deterioration in raw water quality entering Moyola WTW reported to DWI as a drinking water quality event on 29/08/2025, no impact on drinking water quality observed. Moyola WTW is continuing to operate within limits. Levels of algae in raw water intake back down (9000 total algae on 27/08/2025). Toxin levels (MC-LR) all below LoQ in Moyola final water year to date.

EMFG update

Date	Site	Biovolume mm3/l
01/09/25	Reas Wood	8.33
01/09/25	Seatons Marina	137
01/09/25	Portstewart	0.025
01/09/25	Downhill	0.003
01/09/25	Castlerock	0.003
01/09/25	Portrush 1	0.003
01/09/25	Portrush2	0.003
01/09/25	Magilligan (Benone)	Nothing seen
03/09/25	Portstewart	0.008
03/09/25	Downhill	0.003
03/09/25	Castlerock	0.014
03/09/25	Portrush 1	0.002
03/09/25	Portrush2	0.006
03/09/25	Magilligan (Benone)	Nothing seen
03/09/25	Barmouth	1.724
03/09/25	Seatons Marina	10.16

All toxins below detection limits for all sites and dates.

SBRI Remote Sensing Phase 2 has started. Supplier inception event planned. Data requests have been made to various teams and organisations to support.

CSAO update

Stage 1 of the Lough Neagh Viewer will be technically complete in mid September. Organisation of a stakeholder engagement session is planned and public release will follow. Ministerial direction is being sought around the preferences for release. Stage 2 scoping is planned for later in the year.

AFBI have provided the projects outlining modelling of Lough Neagh and its catchment, and also a project to develop NI based toxin analysis.

AFBI update

FBI intend to re-deploy In-Situ instrumentation at the lake central mooring to restore the telemetry failure, and also deploy the oxygen sensors in the deep area of the runs over the next week to ten days.

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/CSAO/AFBI

Date:04/09/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 07

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 10:30 hrs on 12.09.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 19 Sept @ 14:00hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
171 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 83 unique locations		G	

3 new locations reported since last meeting - See annex for more detail	
Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group	G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

05.09.2025

Emergency pollution hotline available 24/365

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored but do not anticipate gates being opened

Continue with bathing water monitoring

Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

12.09.2025

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored but do not anticipate gates being opened

Continue with bathing water monitoring

Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

Forward Look for this/next week.

05.09.25

Expect more press coverage associated with FSA report which is due to issue on 10/09/25

NIW are preparing for potential taste and odour issues when decay of algae begins

Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels

12.09.25

Watch on rainfall and levels at Toome gates, two days' notice will be given if gates are to open.

Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels as algal cells breakdown

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour.

Forward Look >2 weeks.

05.09.25

Councils to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

12.09.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

05.09.25

Expected media interest to increase associated with FSA story on 10 Sept.

12.09.25

AFBI paper on Pharmaceuticals and Drugs in Lakes and Rivers to be published shortly.

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	R
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Detailed description:

1. Blue green algae detected at beaches but below action levels
2. Seaton's Marina and Rea's Wood are still red with high biovolume counts
3. Toxicity levels are low at present.

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate: Signage remains in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Reputational – media in Northern Ireland

Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality

Public health – potential impacts on water users

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2. Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation			

Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR.
In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann.
Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue until end Sept 2025.

Current Position: Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

05.09.2025 Update

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 04 Sept 2025

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen 40mm in past week. Do not anticipate opening of gates over next week.

NIW

Water quality challenge at end of August at Moyola WTW due to high turbidity and presence of algae however no impact was experienced by customers.

Diatoms were prevalent species monitored with 35,000counts

In house microcystin samples continue on final water and daily sampling from Moyola will continue until end September.

Question posed on how message that drinking water is safe and whether there has been notable increase in budget to treat water.

NIW are continually in media headlines/Qs from MLAs/FOIs regarding impacts. Recognise that is a challenge in relation to taste/odour however they continue to reinforce message water is fully treated and safe to drink.

Significant investment into treatment including GAC filter media replaced at Moyola/Castor Bay and Dunore Pt.

FSA

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite

PHA

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite

Tourism NI

Exploring ways to convey positive messages to Tourists regarding water quality.

Event planned with outdoor tourism 24.09.25. DAERA MFD presenting on bathing water monitoring and review.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Signs have remained up throughout summer regarding no bathing and will continue to do so.

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

No update to report

MUDC

Signage remains in place. New location reported at Ballysaggart Lough and message conveyed to users.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

No representation at meeting

Mid and East Antrim BC:

No representation at meeting due to administrative error in meeting invite.

DAERA advised it had been in contact with council in relation to an upcoming Paddle NI event

LCCC

Signage remains in place at Hillsborough Lake

Highlighted three businesses on the shores of Lough Neagh within LCCC area. These include 2 sand extraction companies and a marina.

FODC

No update to report

DAERA

Update by DAERA on the SBRI projects linked to addressing problems associated with BGA

Actions

- Reword Risk 3 and add drinking water to reputational risk – completed
- NIW and DWI to share link to web pages on water quality and Lough Neagh – completed
- DAERA to contact PHA in relation to public health risk associated with different water activities - completed
- DAERA to consider future update to group on wider science and measures taking place – c/f

12.09.2025 Update

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 11 Sept 2025

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen 32mm in past week, still 79mm below max. Possibility that gates will be opened at end of next week.

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and taste and odours in water supply.

Operating as business as usual at present with no increase in taste and odours noted.

FSA

Responding to queries irt news story released on fish monitoring by FSA in 2024/25.

Risk Assessment for feed and rapid risk assessment on fish for human consumption underway.

Continuing monitoring programme for 2025/26.

PHA

Nothing to update.

Tourism NI

No representative at the meeting.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new, site checks and signage regarding no bathing remain.

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

PHA advice on water emergence, and information on testing of non-bathing waters, welcome.

MUDC

Nothing to add, signage remains in place.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Warning signage / advice remains up for Castlerock, Downhill, and Benone strand.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

No representation at meeting.

Location of Paddle NI event moved.

LCCC

Signage remains in place at Hillsborough Lake. Signage added at Ballykeel Lough Erne.

FODC

No change.

Emergency Preparedness Group

Keeping a watching brief and can help share messaging.

Actions

- PHA to consider guidance for public health risk associated with different water activities.
- MFD (CV) to arrange event to inform group of wider workplan irt blue-green algae and to gather feedback on operation of TCG in 2025. Possible venue within Mid-Ulster Council or at FSA building.

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #30
DATE	11th September 2025, 11.00 – 12.00

NIEA update

FMA – Freshwater Investigations:

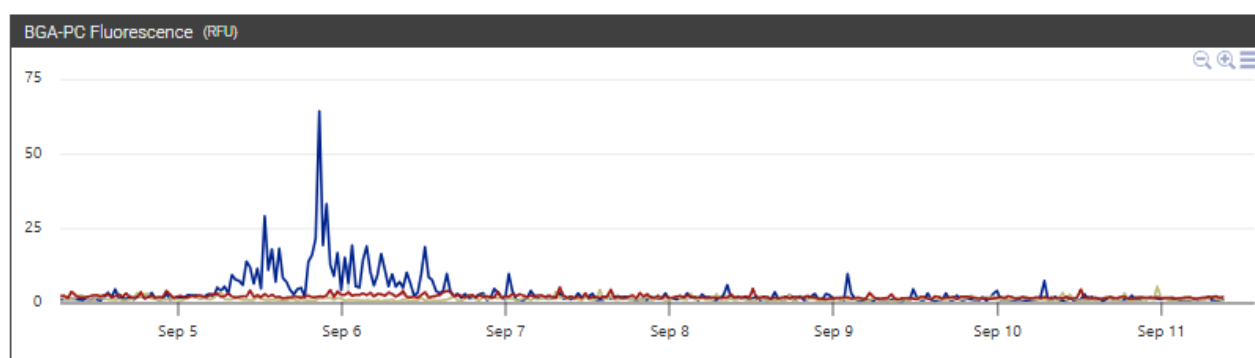
The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends.

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Washing Bay (South-West) – **Gold line**

These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Recent monitoring data indicate low levels of (sub-surface) blue green algae at the Tomme outlet and Washing Bay locations over the past week. The reduced concentrations at Toome may help lower the risk to water quality and public health along the river and at downstream coastal locations.

In contrast, a bloom event was recorded at the Rea's wood location between the 5th and 7th of September. These blooms are highly mobile and may have migrated towards the shoreline, as indicated by a rapid decrease in concentrations at this location over the past few days. This reduction is likely due to recent inclement weather, which has contributed to increased lake mixing and dispersal of algal material.

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 11/09/2025

171 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 83 unique locations.

New locations this week	Date
Lower Bann - Castleroe Wood	07/09/2025
Ballykeel Lough Erne	05/09/2025
Portstewart Harbour	04/09/2025

DWI Update

Algae levels are as expected for this time of year, with Geosmin / MIB levels still elevated. No reports of an increase in taste and odour complaints.

EMFG update

Date sampled/collected	Site	Biovolume mm3/l	Date Analysed	Elisa ug/l	Date Analysed
08/09/2025	MGN	0.008	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	DL	0.008	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	CRK	0.001	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	SM	70	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	PST	0.001	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	PM1	0.002	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	PM2	0.002	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	RW	28	09/09/2025	Positive @ 0.584ug/l	10/09/2025

CSAO update

The Lough Neagh viewer is being finalised this week and will be available for internal DAERA use. Engagement with the members of the Ministerial Stakeholder Forum is provisionally planned on the 3rd Oct.

Two DAERA / AFBI projects are currently commissioned (data gathering and nutrient cycling). A further two have been submitted to DAERA and these will go to thematic boards for approval in September.

Co-funding has been secured with NERC for an eDNA project to assess microbial source tracking in Lough Neagh.

AFBI update

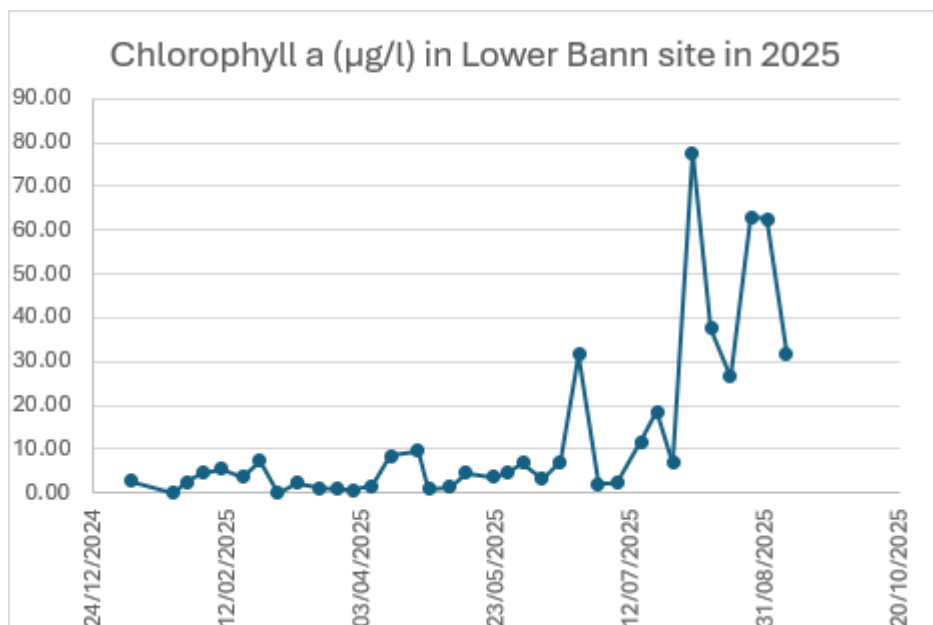
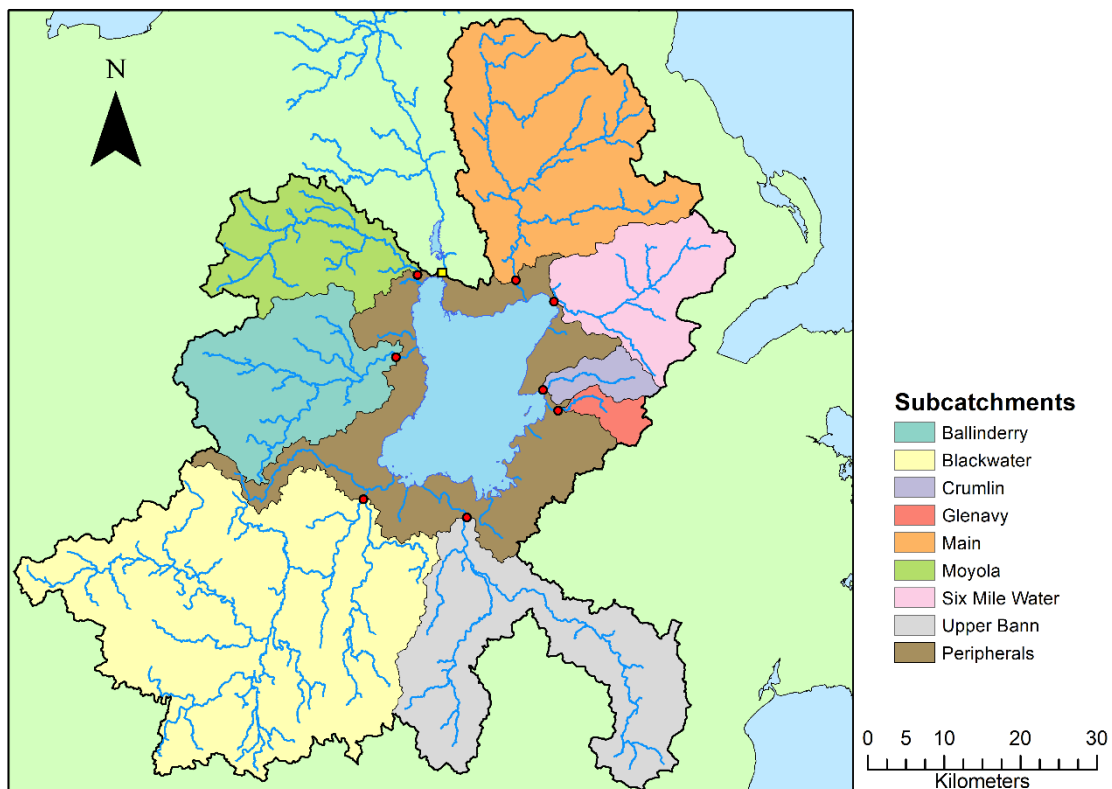
Data from Lower Bann site, one mile away from Lough. Data is similar to last year as toxins are released as cells decompose.

The Lough Neagh buoy is being redeployed today (11/09/25).

At the Lower Bann, lake outflow, chl-a concentrations remain relatively high 32 micrograms per L, on 10/9/25. Lower than the previous weeks' value of 62 micrograms per L.

The yellow dot on the map attached represents the location of the Lower Bann sampling point, at Toomebridge. The team measured the distance for me and its about a half mile from the Lough.

Site	GPS coord	Grid ref	what3words
Lower Bann	298922 390806	H 98922 90806	preoccupied.paddlers.elbow

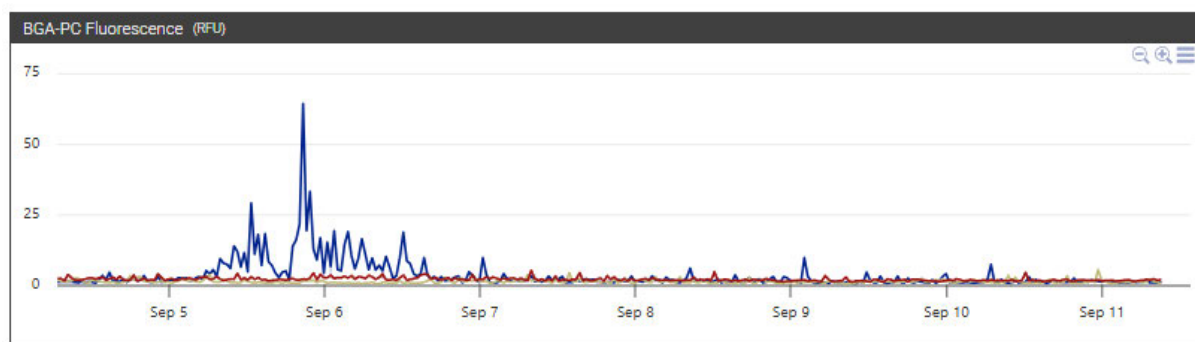


Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFB

Date:
11/09/2025

OFFICIAL DAERA MINUTES

MEETING TITLE	TCG Blue-green Meeting
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG Meet
VENUE	MS Teams
DATE/TIME	11 th September 2025, 11.00 – 12.00
LIST OF ATTENDEES	(EMFG), (NIEA), (NIEA), (EMFG), (NIEA), (CSAO), (DWI), (NIEA), (NIEA), (EMFG), (AFBI), (NIEA), (NIEA),
APOLOGIES	
KEY POINTS DISCUSSED - Actions created last week were not acted upon and is agreed to be moved forward to Actions in todays meeting. – queried about the presentation of data to public and press, what is information is going out, how accurate it is and how it may be misrepresented causing political problems. Wishes not to change the report but thinks data needs to presented with clarity of the layman – a back to basics approach. – states the minister need to sign off on any changes to presentation of data to prevent trouble for the department It is agreed at the end of the season a review must be down regarding the presentation of data to the public and press to prevent misinterpretation of the data that may cause problems. <u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Blue line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Red line Washing Bay (South-West) – Gold line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.	



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In contrast, a bloom event was recorded at the Rea's wood location between the 5th and 7th of September. These blooms are highly mobile and may have migrated towards the shoreline, as indicated by a rapid decrease in concentrations at this location over the past few days. This reduction is likely due to recent inclement weather, which has contributed to increased lake mixing and dispersal of algal material.

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Ballykeel Lough Erne	05/09/2025
Portstewart Harbour	04/09/2025

DWI Update

■ – Algae levels are down to what we expect this time of year, with Geosmin / MIB levels at Moyola intake still elevated. Microcystis is not dominant species found at Moyola WTW but was dominant species at Ballinrees WTW last week. No increase in taste and odour complaints year to date.

■ showed pictures of his visit to Moyola works showing their intake of BGA from the water.

EMFG update

Date sampled/collected	Site	Biovolume mm3/l	Date Analysed	Elisa ug/l	Date Analysed
08/09/2025	MGN	0.008	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
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08/09/2025	PM2	0.002	09/09/2025	Below limit of detection	10/09/2025
08/09/2025	RW	28	09/09/2025	Positive @ 0.584ug/l	10/09/2025

■ – suggests to keep monitoring the beaches after the close of the official bathing season because of the interagency monitoring protocol, not linked to the bathing water registry and to record why sampling is ongoing past bathing season.

■ – Will keep sampling beaches past bathing season due to the toxins rising as BGA decomposes.

CSAO update

The Lough Neagh viewer is being finalised this week and will be available for internal DAERA use. Engagement with the members of the Ministerial Stakeholder Forum is provisionally planned on the 3rd Oct.

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Co-funding has been secured with NERC for an eDNA project to assess microbial source tracking in Lough Neagh.

Press Office Update

AFBI

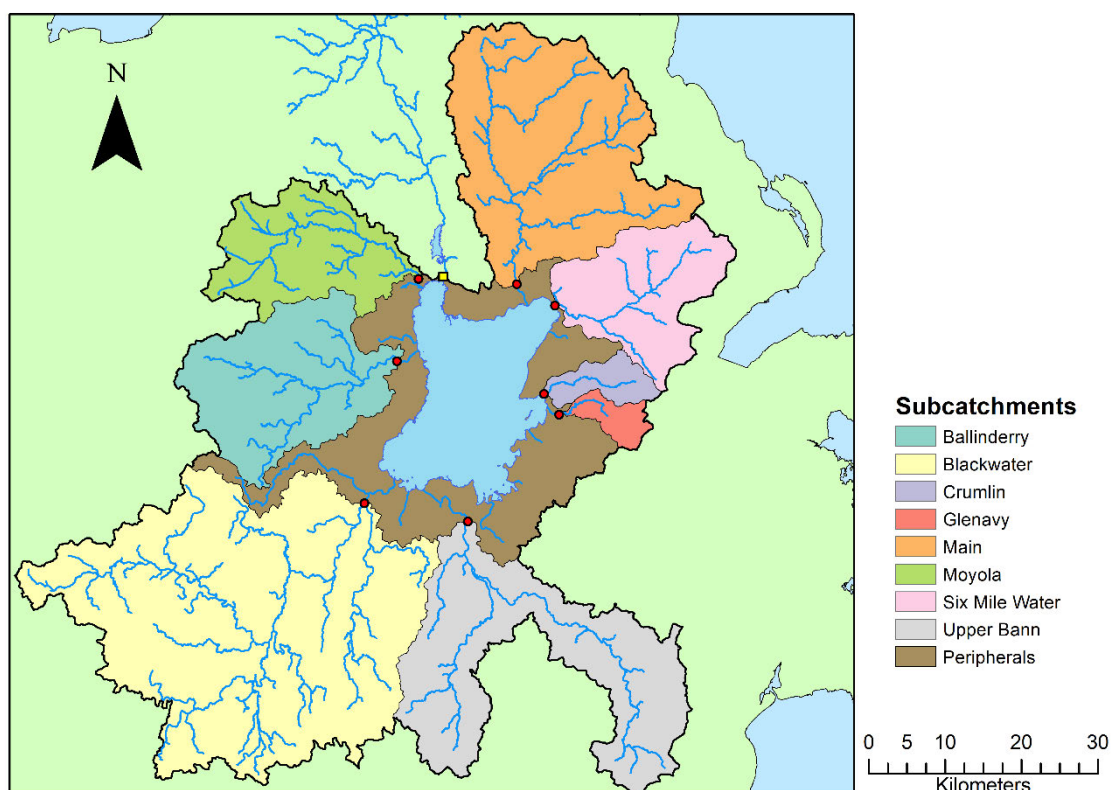
■ – Presented data from Lower Bann site, one mile away from Lough. Data is similar to last year as toxins are released as cells decompose.

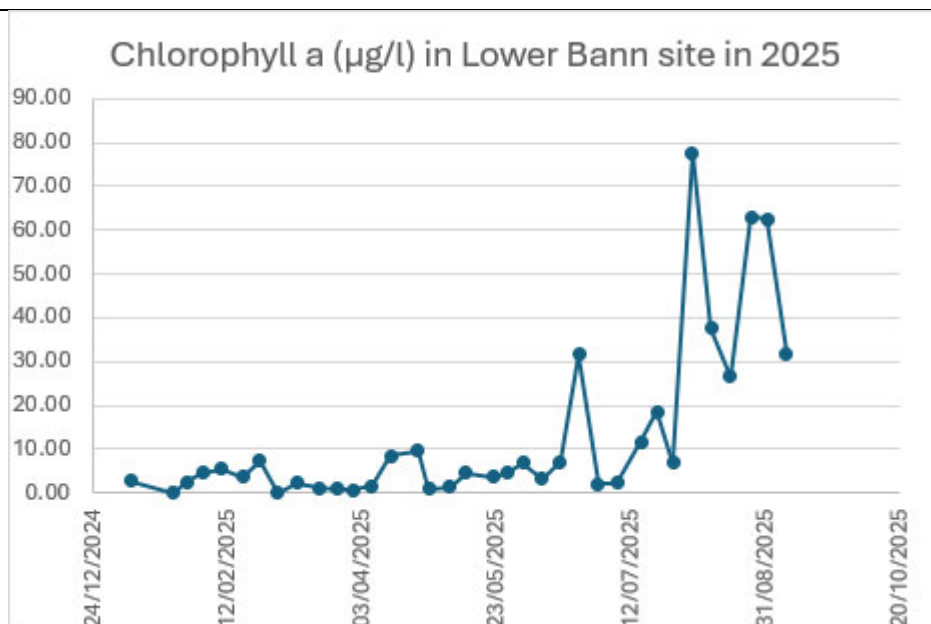
The Lough Neagh buoy is being redeployed today (11/09/25).

At the Lower Bann, lake outflow, chl-a concentrations remain relatively high 32 micrograms per L, on 10/9/25. Lower than the previous weeks' value of 62 micrograms per L.

The yellow dot on the map attached represents the location of the Lower Bann sampling point, at Toomebridge. The team measured the distance for me and it's about a half mile from the Lough.

Site	GPS coord	Grid ref	what3words
Lower Bann	298922 390806	H 98922 90806	preoccupied.paddlers.elbo w





Other Business

■ - Individuals to update briefing paper for external meeting tomorrow. Talkers give succinct summary and respect peoples time. Pick 1 from each team to present update.

■ – Food Standards Agency Report to address toxins in fish in regards to human health, this is an issue that will increase as we go forward. No people in Inland Fisheries or AFBI have been called to attend meeting.

It has been agreed that as an action, individuals from Inland Fisheries and AFBI will be added to the invite list.

ACTION POINTS/OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE/TARGET DATE:

Action Point 1 & 2 carried over from last week

- **Action Point 1** - ■ to contact ■ Mid and East Antrim Council regarding paddle board event due to take place on 13th September at Portglenone Marina. Send info graphic to Paddleboard NI. Issue of cross contamination needs to be raised. – **NOTE – Paddle Board NI relocated this event.**
- **Action Point 2** - Discussions to take place with EMFG and DWI regarding most prevalent BGA species, depths of abstraction and different types of algae detected at these.
- **Action Point 3** – At end of season, review how data is presented to press/public regarding number of reports of BGA and unique locations to prevent misinterpretation of data that may cause political problems.
- **Action Point 4** – Add representatives from Inland Fisheries and AFBI to the invite list for meeting on condition of Lough Neagh to comment on toxins in fish population.
- **Action Point 5** – ■ to arrange visit to Moyola WTW for group.

Minutes written by:

[REDACTED]

Date:

11th September 2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 08

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 14:00 hrs on 19.09.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 26 Sept @ 14:00hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
172 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 83 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

12.09.2025

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored but do not anticipate gates being opened
Continue with bathing water monitoring
Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

19.09.2025

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored
Continue with bathing water monitoring and report to councils if change in signage required
Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

Forward Look for this/next week.

12.09.25

Watch on rainfall and levels at Toome gates, two days' notice will be given if gates are to open.
Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels as algal cells breakdown
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour.

19.09.25

Watch on rainfall and levels at Toome gates and anticipate levels to remain open over next week.
Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels as algal cells breakdown
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour.

Forward Look >2 weeks.

12.09.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

19.09.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

12.09.25

AFBI paper on Pharmaceuticals and Drugs in Lakes and Rivers to be published shortly.

19.09.25

No planned communications over next week

**KEY
RISK
1**

Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

**BRAG
Status**

R

Detailed description:

1. Blue green algae detected at beaches but below action levels
2. Seaton's Marina and Rea's Wood are still red with high biovolume counts **however lower than previous week**
3. **Toxicity levels are low at present.**

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:
Signage remains in place

KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality			

Public health – potential impacts on water users
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann. Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue until end Sept 2025.			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

12.09.2025 Update

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 11 Sept 2025

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen 32mm in past week, still 79mm below max. Possibility that gates will be opened at end of next week.

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and taste and odours in water supply.

Operating as business as usual at present with no increase in taste and odours noted.

FSA

Responding to queries irt news story released on fish monitoring by FSA in 2024/25.

Risk Assessment for feed and rapid risk assessment on fish for human consumption underway.

Continuing monitoring programme for 2025/26.

PHA

Nothing to update.

Tourism NI

No representative at the meeting.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new, site checks and signage regarding no bathing remain.

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

PHA advice on water emergence, and information on testing of non-bathing waters, welcome.

MUDC

Nothing to add, signage remains in place.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Warning signage / advice remains up for Castlerock, Downhill, and Benone strand.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

No representation at meeting.

Location of Paddle NI event moved.

LCCC

Signage remains in place at Hillsborough Lake. Signage added at Ballykeel Lough Erne.

FODC

No change

19.09.25 Actions

Discussion on actions from 12.09.25.

DAERA will carry forward action regarding “wash up” following the TCG

PHA position remains the same and advice is to follow current lines to take regarding avoiding contact with algae for all water-based activities.

PHA will review the Scottish Government and WHO guidance and initiate a group to look at tiered risk approach to different water-based activities. Tourism NI would welcome wider guidance and communication to public around “when we can take part”.

Looking to distinguish between emergence in water and on water activities

Councils and Tourism NI would welcome this approach. MUDC and ABCBC to investigate best route for council representation on the group,

AP PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance

AP ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities.

Updates

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 18 Sept 2025

FSA

Continuing monitoring programme for 2025/26.

DAERA noted thanks to FSA from Minister in relation to the recent meeting regarding the 2024 sampling results

PHA

Nothing further to update

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen and gates at Toome have been opened and as a result river is visually greener. Levels are approx. 91mm. Gates will remain open for at least another week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new

LCCC

No update – provided by email

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

PHA advice on water emergence, and information on testing of non-bathing waters, still welcome.

MUDC

Nothing to update. See action above

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Flood gates open are a cause for concern. Query raised on timescale for results of today's monitoring. Samples will be analysed tomorrow (Sat) and system in place established with CCGC regarding updating and alerting council of any changes to signage.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing further to update

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and taste and odours in water supply.

Operating as business as usual at present with no increase in taste and odours noted.

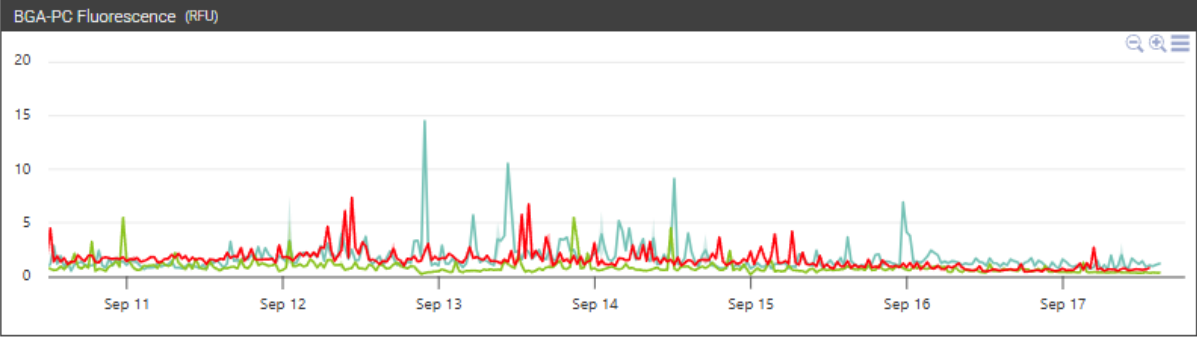
In house monitoring of Geosmin and MIB is in place for the past 2 weeks with nothing of note to raise in results.

NIW have closed abstraction point on Lower Bann in anticipation of gates at Toome being opened. This will protect Balinress treatment works.

Actions

- DAERA to arrange event to inform group of wider workplan irt blue-green algae and to gather feedback on operation of TCG in 2025. **Complete** - Combine event planned on 9 Jan with IA monitoring group venue Clare House Belfast
- PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance for water activities
- ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities.

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #30
DATE	11th September 2025, 11.00 – 12.00
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days (11th -17th Sept) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Blue line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Red line Washing Bay (South-West) – Green line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement. BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU)  Over the past seven days, cyanobacterial (blue-green algae) concentrations have remained consistently low across all three monitoring sites. Notably, the reduced levels observed at the Toome location may contribute to a decreased risk to both water quality and public health along the river corridor and at downstream coastal zones. However, transient, short-duration peaks in algal concentration were detected at both the Toome and Rea’s Wood sites. These fluctuations suggest vertical and/or lateral mobility of algal populations within the water column, likely influenced by hydrodynamic or environmental factors. FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:	

Stats up to and including 18/09/2025

172 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 83 unique locations.

No new locations this week and only 1 confirmed report:

- Lower Bann – Portglenone - 17/09/2025

DWI Update

BAU with monitoring of NI Water's algal monitoring programme and consumer contacts ongoing. No increase in taste and odour complaints reported.

EMFG update

Date sampled/collected	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /l	Date Analysed	Toxin analysis
15/09/25	MGN	Nothing present	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	DL	0.000	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	CRK	0.025	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	SM	17.83	18/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	PST	Nothing present	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	PM1	0.000	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	PM2	Nothing present	17/09/25	Below limit of detection
15/09/25	RW	4.17	18/09/25	Below limit of detection

There will be an extra sampling run on 17/9/25 on the lower Bann and north coast beaches due to the gates being opened at Toome.

Potential for a second check visual check on Friday 19/9/25.

Date	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /l
18/09/2025	MGN	0.014
18/09/2025	DL	0.004
18/09/2025	CRK	0.009
18/09/2025	SM	0.293
18/09/2025	PST	0.056
18/09/2025	PM1	0.000
18/09/2025	PM2	0.001

Increased biovolumes at all beaches except Castlrock and PM1

CSAO update

Nothing to report

AFBI update

AFBI vessel Corystes will be at sea sampling between 28th Sept and 02nd Oct - scheduled in sampling off the mouth of the Bann (North Coast).

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:
18/09/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 09

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 14:00 hrs on 26.09.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 03 Oct @ 10:30hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
176 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 85 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

19.09.2025

Lough levels at Toome to be monitored

Continue with bathing water monitoring and report to councils if change in signage required

Continue to monitor drinking water quality and consumer contacts

26.09.25

Levels at Toome dropped to 3ft today and estimate will be at 1ft on Mon therefore plan to close on Tues subject to rainfall over weekend. Reduction in flow at Cutts will be seen approx 2-3pm on afternoon of closure.

Forward Look for this/next week.

19.09.25

Watch on rainfall and levels at Toome gates and anticipate levels to remain open over next week.

Continue to monitor algae / toxin levels as algal cells breakdown

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour.

26.09.25

Watch on rainfall and levels at Toome gates and anticipate closure of gates on Tuesday next week

Next bathing water samples to be lifted Monday expected results Wed at latest

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look >2 weeks.

19.09.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

26.09.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

19.09.25

No planned communications over next week

26.09.25

No planned communications over next week

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	R
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Detailed description:

1. Downhill and Portstewart Beach closure due to RED alert and Castlerock is at AMBER Alert
2. Above now at green but a second green sample is needed before alerts can be lifted
3. Seaton's Marina at RED alert

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:
Signage remains in place

KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality			

Public health – potential impacts on water users
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann. Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue until end Sept 2025.			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

19.09.25 Actions

Discussion on actions from 12.09.25.

DAERA will carry forward action regarding “wash up” following the TCG

PHA position remains the same and advice is to follow current lines to take regarding avoiding contact with algae for all water-based activities.

PHA will review the Scottish Government and WHO guidance and initiate a group to look at tiered risk approach to different water-based activities. Tourism NI would welcome wider guidance and communication to public around “when we can take part”.

Looking to distinguish between emergence in water and on water activities

Councils and Tourism NI would welcome this approach. MUDC and ABCBC to investigate best route for council representation on the group,

AP PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance

AP ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities.

Updates

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 18 Sept 2025

FSA

Continuing monitoring programme for 2025/26.

DAERA noted thanks to FSA from Minister in relation to the recent meeting regarding the 2024 sampling results

PHA

Nothing further to update

DFI Rivers

Lough levels have risen and gates at Toome have been opened and as a result river is visually greener. Levels are approx. 91mm. Gates will remain open for at least another week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new

LCCC

No update – provided by email

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

PHA advice on water emergence, and information on testing of non-bathing waters, still welcome.

MUDC

Nothing to update. See action above

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Flood gates open are a cause for concern. Query raised on timescale for results of today's monitoring. Samples will be analysed tomorrow (Sat) and system in place established with CCGC regarding updating and alerting council of any changes to signage.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing further to update

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and taste and odours in water supply.

Operating as business as usual at present with no increase in taste and odours noted.

In house monitoring of Geosmin and MIB is in place for the past 2 weeks with nothing of note to raise in results.

NIW have closed abstraction point on Lower Bann in anticipation of gates at Toome being opened. This will protect Balinress treatment works.

Actions

- DAERA to arrange event to inform group of wider workplan irt blue-green algae and to gather feedback on operation of TCG in 2025. **Complete** - Combine event planned on 9 Jan with IA monitoring group venue Clare House Belfast
- PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance for water activities
- ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities.

26.09.25 Actions

Discussion on actions from 19.09.25.

- DAERA has combined TCG feedback along with IA monitoring session for 9 Jan 2026. Invites to follow.
- PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting (23/10/25)a proposal to review the guidance
- ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities – complete names put forward.

Updates

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 26 Sept 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update

PHA

Nothing further to update

DFI Rivers

Levels at Toome dropped to 3ft today and estimate will be at 1ft on Mon therefore plan to close on Tues subject to rainfall over weekend. Reduction in flow at Cutts will be seen approx 2-3pm on afternoon of closure.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new signage remains in place

LCCC

Nothing further to update

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

MUDC

Nothing to update.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Continue to monitor beaches and signs in place at Downhill and Portstewart (National Trust owned).

Castlerock is at AMBER and Portrush Harbour signage is up

Query raised on timescale for results of Monday's monitoring.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing further to update

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and nothing to note

No issues reported in taste and odours in water supply

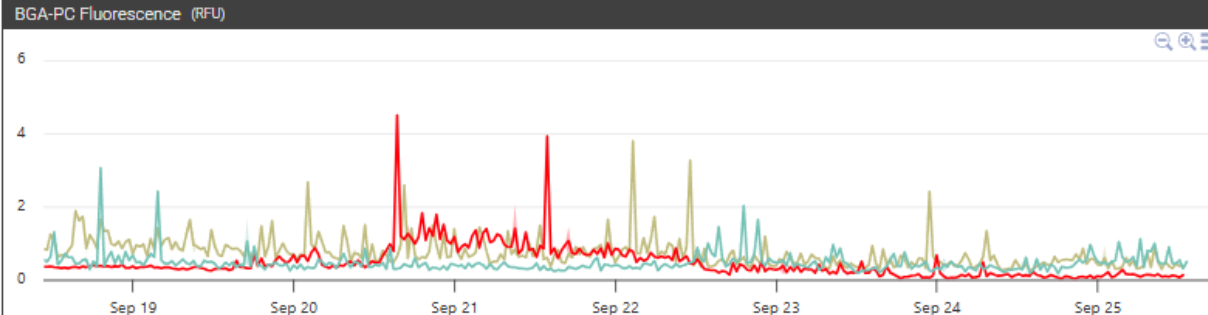
No increases in Geosmin or MIB

Abstraction point on Lower Bann opened Thursday 25 September enabling abstraction to Balinress treatment works.

Actions

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.
- **Next meeting of IA monitoring protocol is 23 October 2025** - PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance for water activities
- Invite to IA meeting on 23 October to be sent to Glenn (ABC), Kim (ANBC) and Lisa (MEAC)

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #32
DATE	25 September 2025
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days (18th -25th Sept) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data are collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Green line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Blue line Washing Bay (South-West) – Red line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement. BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU)  Over the past seven days, cyanobacterial (blue-green algae) concentrations have remained consistently low but consistently present across all three monitoring sites. Notably, the reduced levels observed at the Toome location may contribute to a decreased risk to both water quality and public health along the river corridor and at downstream coastal zones. However, transient, short-duration, low level peaks in algal concentration were detected all three locations. These fluctuations suggest vertical and/or lateral mobility of algal populations within the water column, likely influenced by hydrodynamic or environmental factors.	

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 25/09/2025

176 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 85 unique locations.

Two new locations this week:

- Portrush Harbour 23/09/2025
- Altnaheglish Reservoir 23/09/2025

DWI Update

No significant change from last week. BAU monitoring ongoing and no increase in taste and odour consumer complaints reported.

EMFG update

Date	Site	Biovolume mm3/l
22/09/2025	MGN	0.69
22/09/2025	DL	5.81
22/09/2025	CRK	1.26
22/09/2025	SM	378
22/09/2025	PST	8.042
22/09/2025	PM1	0.136
22/09/2025	PM2	0.197
Date	Site	Biovolume mm3/l
25/09/2025	MGN	0.039
25/09/2025	DL	0.019
25/09/2025	CRK	0.145
25/09/2025	SM	46.00
25/09/2025	PST	0.080
25/09/2025	PM1	0.008
25/09/2025	PM2	0.068
25/9/25	RW	24.09

CSAO update

None

AFBI update

None

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:
25/09/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 10

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 10:30 hrs on 02.10.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 10 Oct @ 14:00hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
182 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 89 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

26.09.25

Levels at Toome dropped to 3ft today and estimate will be at 1ft on Mon therefore plan to close on Tues subject to rainfall over weekend. Reduction in flow at Cutts will be seen approx 2-3pm on afternoon of closure.

02.10.25

Lough levels risen rapidly and increased by 100mm. Gates will be open today (Friday) to 0.3m and 0.9m Saturday.
Continue to monitor drinking water quality.
Continue with bathing water monitoring

Forward Look for this/next week.

02.10.25

Waiting to see the effect of the rain and storm Amy on Lough levels but gates likely to remain open next week.
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look >2 weeks.

02.10.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

26.09.25

No planned communications over next week

02.10.25

No planned communications over next week

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	R
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Detailed description:

1. Downhill and Portstewart Beach closures now lifted

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:
Signage remains in place

KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
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Detailed description:

1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals

Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both

- Onshore risks
- Emersion in water

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested
Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:

No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol

KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken			

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann. Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

26.09.25 Actions

Discussion on actions from 19.09.25.

- DAERA has combined TCG feedback along with IA monitoring session for 9 Jan 2026. Invites to follow.
- PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting (23/10/25) a proposal to review the guidance
- ABCBC and MUDC to consider relevant council representation for PHA group on assessing risk assessments for different activities – complete names put forward.

Updates

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 26 Sept 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update

PHA

Nothing further to update

DFI Rivers

Levels at Toome dropped to 3ft today and estimate will be at 1ft on Mon therefore plan to close on Tues subject to rainfall over weekend. Reduction in flow at Cutts will be seen approx 2-3pm on afternoon of closure.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

Nothing new signage remains in place

LCCC

Nothing further to update

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

MUDC

Nothing to update.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Continue to monitor beaches and signs in place at Downhill and Portstewart (National Trust owned).
Castlerock is at AMBER and Portrush Harbour signage is up
Query raised on timescale for results of Monday's monitoring.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing further to update

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and nothing to note
No issues reported in taste and odours in water supply
No increases in Geosmin or MIB
Abstraction point on Lower Bann opened Thursday 25 September enabling abstraction to Balinress treatment works.

Actions

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.
- **Next meeting of IA monitoring protocol is 23 October 2025** - PHA to bring to next Interagency monitoring meeting a proposal to review the guidance for water activities
- Invite to IA meeting on 23 October to be sent to Glenn (ABC), Kim (ANBC) and Lisa (MEAC)

02.10.25 Actions from 26.09.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.

Updates – Limited attendance due to Storm Amy

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 02 Oct 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update

PHA

DFI Rivers

Waiting to see the effect of the rain and storm Amy on Lough levels but gates likely to remain open next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

LCCC

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

MUDC

Nothing further to update.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Glad to see signage lifted mid-week. With the opening of gates today it may impact on beaches however Storm Amy has potential to reduce any impact.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report. Harbours and marinas will be closed due to storm.

Tourism NI

Note of thanks to Claire Young on recent presentation.

NIW

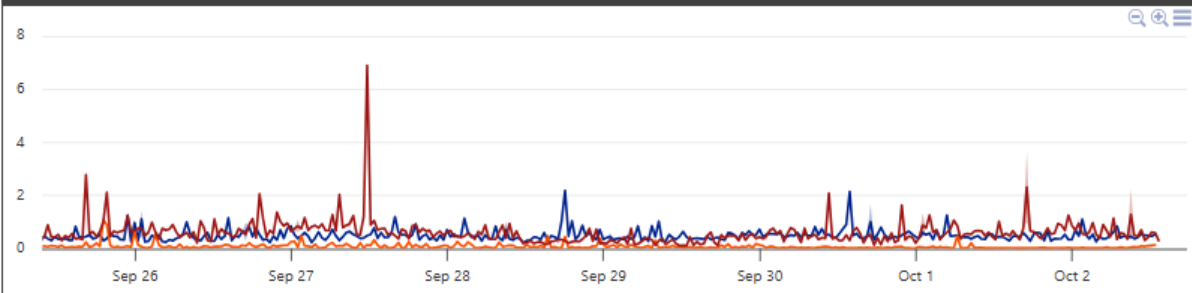
Continuing to monitor algae and nothing to note.

With the opening at Toome gates will review abstraction pumps to Balinress

Actions 02.10.26

- Invite to be issued to group for meeting on 9 January 2026
- Slides from Claire Young presentation to be circulated to group.
- Adam to circulate link to AFBI paper -completed

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #33
DATE	02 October 2025
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days (25th Sept – 2nd Oct) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data is collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Blue line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Brown line Washing Bay (South-West) – Red line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement. BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU)  Over the past seven days, cyanobacterial (blue-green algae) concentrations have remained consistently low but remain present across all three monitoring sites. As noted in the previous TCG BG Update (#32), the reduced levels observed at the Toome location may contribute to a decreased risk to both water quality and public health along the river corridor and at downstream coastal zones. However, transient, short-duration, low level peaks in algal concentration were detected all three locations. These fluctuations suggest vertical and/or lateral mobility of algal populations within the water column, likely influenced by hydrodynamic or environmental factors.	

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 02/10/2025

182 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 89 unique locations.

Four new locations this week:

New locations this week	Date
Ushet Lough	30/09/2025
Castlewellan Lake	29/09/2025
Kiltybane Lough Outflow	29/09/2025
Lough Brickland Outflow	25/09/2025

DWI Update

Monitoring by NI Water ongoing with algae levels generally low and related no taste and odour complaints reported.

EMFG update

Date	Site	biovolume	Test Elisa/Lateral flow Microcystin	Test Elisa/Lateral flow Anatoxin
29/09/2025	MGN (Benone)	0.01	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	DL	0.006	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	CRK	0.004	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	SM	6.228	8.448	N/A
29/09/2025	PST	0.001	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	PM1	0.001	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	PM2	0.001	Below limit of detection	N/A
29/09/2025	RW	4.6	1.707	N/A

CSAO update

The release of the stage 1 of Lough Neagh viewer will take place after a stakeholder engagement 5th November.

AFBI update

GSI vessel will be in place from next Wed. Plans are to undertake bathymetric and sediment surveys over the next year.

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:
02/10/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 11

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 14:00 hrs on 10.10.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Friday 24 Oct @ 15:30 hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
184 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 89 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

02.10.25

Lough levels risen rapidly and increased by 100mm. Gates will be open today (Friday) to 0.3m and 0.9m Saturday.
Continue to monitor drinking water quality.
Continue with bathing water monitoring

10.10.25

Lough Levels have risen to 250mm and is 182mm above the max but starting to drop. Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

Forward Look for this/next week.

02.10.25

Waiting to see the effect of the rain and storm Amy on Lough levels but gates likely to remain open next week.
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

10.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look >2 weeks.

02.10.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

10.10.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice
No meeting planned until 24 Oct. If issues begin to emerge – whats app group can be informed.

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

02.10.25

No planned communications over next week

10.10.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

PR planned on recent paper from AFBI on chemicals within NI rivers and lakes

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. Downhill and Portstewart Beach closures now lifted 2. No visual scums but some residual toxicity being picked up at some sites			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: Signage remains in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description:			

1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):			

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann. Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

02.10.25 Actions from 26.09.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.

Updates – Limited attendance due to Storm Amy

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 02 Oct 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update

PHA

No rep at meeting

DFI Rivers

Waiting to see the effect of the rain and storm Amy on Lough levels but gates likely to remain open next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC:

LCCC

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

MUDC

Nothing further to update.

Causeway Coast and Glens BC:

Gald to see signage lifted mid-week. With the opening of gates today it may impact on beaches however Storm Amy has potential to reduce any impact.

FODC

No change.

Mid and East Antrim BC:

Nothing to report. Harbours and marinas will be closed due to storm.

Tourism NI

Note of thanks to Claire Young on recent presentation.

NIW

Continuing to monitor algae and nothing to note.

With the opening at Toome gates will review abstraction pumps to Balinress

Actions 02.10.26

- Invite to be issued to group for meeting on 9 January 2026
- Slides from Claire Young presentation to be circulated to group.
- Adam to circulate link to AFBI paper -completed

10.10.25 Actions from 02.10.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 09 Oct 2025

CSAO informed group that a Microbial Source Tracking (MST) project is to be launched next week through NERC.

DAERA/SBRI In-lough mitigation measures for Blue-green are now in Phase 2 SBRI with details to be published in next few weeks.

FSA

Nothing further to update. Sampling remains ongoing.

PHA

No rep at meeting

DFI Rivers

Lough Levels have risen to 250mm and is 182mm above the max but starting to drop. Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

No rep at meeting

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

No rep at meeting

MUDC

No rep at meeting

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report

FODC

No rep at meeting

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report – keeping an eye on things

Tourism NI

No rep at meeting

NIW

Update provided by email

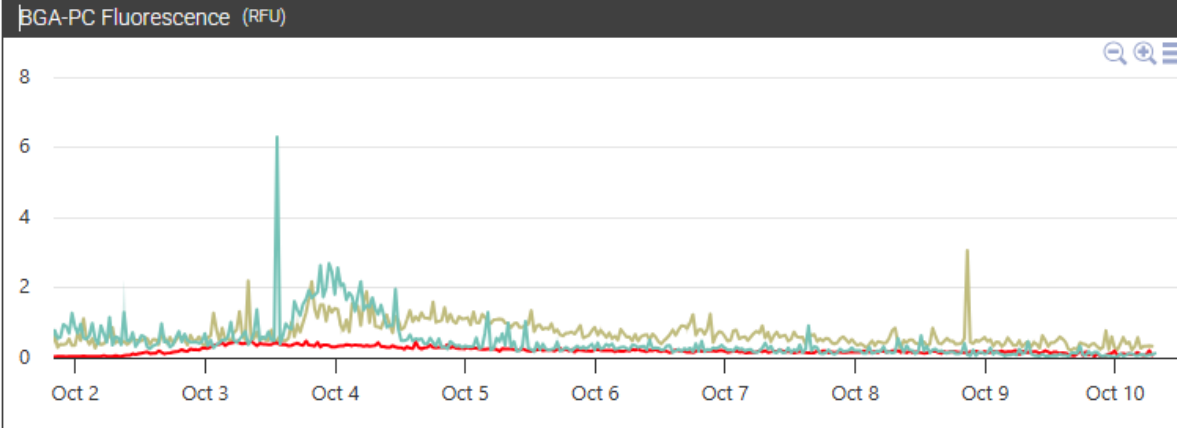
With regards to an update on NI Water / drinking water

- No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results
- No concerns to note with regards to customer contacts for taste and odour related water quality contacts.
- The River Bann abstraction (to Ballinrees reservoir) – pumps were turned off on Friday 3 October following the opening of the Toome Gates. Pumps current remain off.

Actions 10.10.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026
- OL to circulate draft press release and comments back by Tues 14 Oct - completed

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #34
DATE	09 October 2025
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded over the past seven days (2nd Oct – 9th Oct) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data is collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Gold Line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Blue Line Washing Bay (South-West) – Red line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement. BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU)  Over the past seven days, cyanobacterial (blue-green algae) concentrations have remained consistently low but present across all three monitoring sites. As noted in the previous number of TCG BG Updates, the reduced levels observed at the lake outlet at Toome may contribute to a decreased risk to both water quality and public health along the river corridor and at downstream coastal zones. However, transient, short-duration, low level peaks in algal concentration were detected all three locations. These fluctuations suggest vertical and/or lateral mobility of algal populations within the water column, likely influenced by hydrodynamic or environmental factors.	

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 09/10/2025

184 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 89 unique locations.

No new locations this week.

DWI Update

Raw water algal counts generally low, however, Geosmin and MIB levels in raw water remain elevated for most Lough Neagh works. There has been no report of an increase in related taste and odour complaints and MC-LR levels in final waters are all below LoQ.

EMFG update

Seaton's Marina and Rea's Wood are both at amber level with Biovolume count from samples taken on the 06/10/2025.

An additional sampling run this week is taking place today (09/10/2025) as the gates are open at Toome to all clear to manage Lough Neagh level.

EMFG update

Date	Site	Biovolume	ELISA results for Microcystin	Lateral flow results Anatoxin
06/10/2025	MGN	0	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	DL	0	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	CRK	0	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	SM	3.7	Below limit of detection	Negative
06/10/2025	PST	0.003	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	PM1	0.0001	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	PM2	0.007	Below limit of detection	n/a
06/10/2025	RW	1.7	Below limit of detection	Negative

9/10/2025	MGN	0.004	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	DL	0.039	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	CRK	0.062	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	SM	1.319	Positive 10ug/l (~10ppb) ELISA result to follow	Negative
9/10/2025	PST	0.049	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	PM1	0.011	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	PM2	0.003	Result to follow	N/A
9/10/2025	RW	1.380	Negative	Negative

NOTE: The lateral flow kits used to determine Anatoxin-a have expired at the end of last month

CSAO update

No update

AFBI update

No update

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:
09/10/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 12

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 15:30 hrs on 24.10.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Thurs 06 Nov @ 14:00 hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	R	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description	BRAG	
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	R	
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A	
3.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality and bathing at designated bathing sites	R	
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	A	

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
189 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 93 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

10.10.25

Lough Levels have risen to 250mm and is 182mm above the max but starting to drop. Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

24.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor bathing water sites - ANBC to reshare socials regarding restrictions at Rea's Wood

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look for this/next week.

10.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

24.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor bathing water sites

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look >2 weeks.

10.10.25

Councils to continue to keep abreast of planned outdoor activity and to liaise with DAERA for advice

No meeting planned until 2 Oct. If issues begin to emerge – whatsapp group can be informed.

24.10.25

No meeting planned next week. If issues begin to emerge – whats app group can be informed.

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

10.10.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

PR planned on recent paper from AFBI on chemicals within NI rivers and lakes

24.10.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. Downhill and Portstewart Beach closures now lifted 2. Toxicity and biovolume levels are exceeded at Rea's Wood			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: Signage remains in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A

Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both • Onshore risks • Emersion in water What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated. 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann. Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

10.10.25 Actions from 02.10.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- DAERA to send invite to attendees on group for event planned 9 Jan at Clare House Belfast.

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 09 Oct 2025

CSAO informed group that a Microbial Source Tracking (MST) project is to be launched next week through NERC.

DAERA/SBRI In-lough mitigation measures for Blue-green are now in Phase 2 SBRI with details to be published in next few weeks.

FSA

Nothing further to update. Sampling remains ongoing.

PHA

No rep at meeting

DFI Rivers

Lough Levels have risen to 250mm and is 182mm above the max but starting to drop. Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

No rep at meeting

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

No rep at meeting

MUDC

No rep at meeting

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report

FODC

No rep at meeting

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report – keeping an eye on things

Tourism NI

No rep at meeting

NIW

Update provided by email

With regards to an update on NI Water / drinking water

- No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results
- No concerns to note with regards to customer contacts for taste and odour related water quality contacts.
- The River Bann abstraction (to Ballinrees reservoir) – pumps were turned off on Friday 3 October following the opening of the Toome Gates. Pumps current remain off.

24.10.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 23 Oct 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update. No one from FSA was in attendance and this update was submitted in writing.

PHA

No rep at meeting

DFI Rivers

Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

No rep at meeting

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

MUDC

Nothing to report

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report

FODC

Nothing to report

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing to report

NIW

No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results

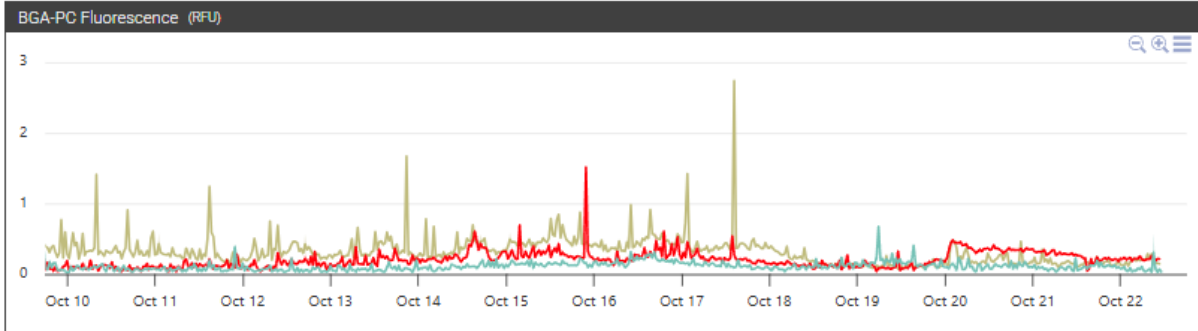
No concerns to note with regards to customer contacts for taste and odour related water quality contacts

Actions 24.10.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026
- ANBC to reshare socials regarding restrictions at Rea's Wood



OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #35
DATE	23 October 2025
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded since the last BG TCG update (10nd Oct – 22nd Oct) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data is collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea’s Wood (North-East) – Gold Line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – Blue Line Washing Bay (South-West) – Red line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.  Blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) levels have remained consistently present but low across all three monitoring locations, despite recent weather events and a decline in average water temperature. The persistence of detectable BG algae concentrations under these conditions suggests that the potential for bloom recurrence remains, and continued monitoring is warranted to assess future risk. FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence: Stats up to and including 23/10/2025. 189 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 93 unique locations. No new locations this week.	

DWI Update

Algae levels low with Geosmin and MIB still present in some raw waters; Microcystin-LR levels all below <0.1 ug/l; and no reports of an increase in taste and odour complaints.

EMFG update

Date	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /L	Test Elisa/Lateral flow Microcystin ug/L
20/10/2025	MGN	No Cyanobacteria detected	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	DL	No Cyanobacteria detected	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	CRK	0.017	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	SM	3.586	9.745 ug/L
20/10/2025	PST	No Cyanobacteria detected	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	PM1	No Cyanobacteria detected	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	PM2	0.000	Below limit of detection
20/10/2025	RW	32.079	37.07

Significant increase of cyanobacteria in Reas Wood; mostly *Microcystis* and some colonies of *Anabaena*. Small amount of *Microcystis* in Castlerock and Portrush Mill 2.

Seatons Marina contained *Microcystis*, *Anabaena*, *Aphanizomenon* and *Oscillatoria*

CSAO update

No update

AFBI update

No update

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:
23/10/2025

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 13

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 14:00 hrs on 06.11.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

The Sit-rep will be kept up to date with updates provided at key points as agreed and a further meeting held on **Thurs 20 Nov @ 10:30 hrs**

Overall DOC Assessment		
Overall Delivery Confidence	A	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.		
New	Description	BRAG
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	A
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	A
3a.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on bathing at designated bathing sites	A
3b.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality	G
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	G

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	

191 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 95 unique locations -See annex for more detail	G
Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group	G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

24.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor bathing water sites - ANBC to reshare socials regarding restrictions at Rea's Wood

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

06.11.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor bathing water sites

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look for this/next week.

24.10.25

Gates to remain open for next week.

Continue to monitor bathing water sites

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

06.11.25

Gates to remain open however they may be lowered over next week

Continue to monitor bathing water sites

Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

Forward Look >2 weeks.

24.10.25

No meeting planned next week. If issues begin to emerge – whats app group can be informed.

06.11.25

No meeting planned next week. If issues begin to emerge – whats app group can be informed.

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

24.10.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

06.11.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	A
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Detailed description:

1. 27 October Advice Against Bathing was issued for Portstewart and removed 4 November after 2 clear sample runs.
2. Notice also lifted from Reas Wood which was in effect from July

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:
Signage remains in place

KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3a	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season.			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 3b	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken			
KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	G

Detailed description:

- 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated.
- 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Reputational – media in Northern Ireland
Economic – impact on households and businesses
Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:
The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation
Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR.
In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann.
Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

24.10.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 23 Oct 2025

FSA

Nothing further to update. No one from FSA was in attendance and this update was submitted in writing.

PHA

No rep at meeting

DFI Rivers

Gates are expected to remain open over the next week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

No rep at meeting

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report

MUDC

Nothing to report

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report

FODC

Nothing to report

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing to report

NIW

No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results

No concerns to note with regards to customer contacts for taste and odour related water quality contacts

Actions 24.10.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026
- ANBC to reshare socials regarding restrictions at Rea's Wood

06.11.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 06 Nov 2025

FSA

Sampling still continues.

PHA

No further update

DFI Rivers

Gates still remain open and plan to lower over the coming week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

Nothing to report

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report – via email

MUDC

Nothing to report

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report. Discussion had around previous weeks closure.

FODC

Nothing to report

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing to report

NIW

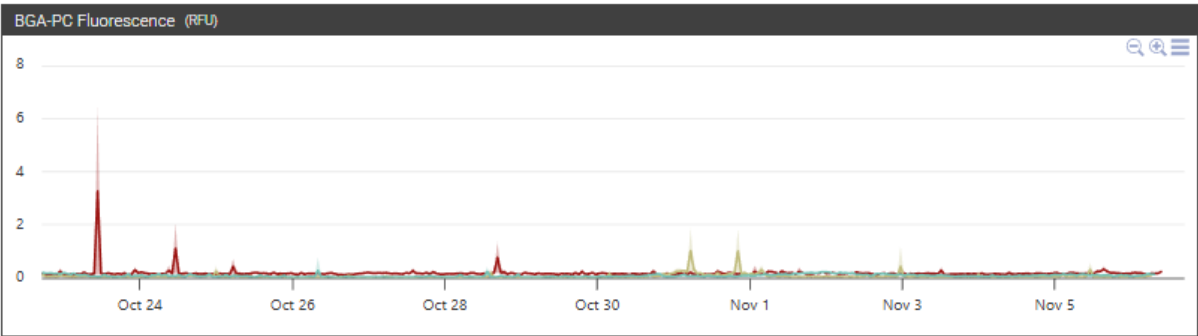
No concerns raised by customers to taste and odour related water quality

No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results with MIB levels low and 95% less than levels reported in 2024.

Action 06.11.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #36
DATE	06 November 2025
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigations: The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded since the last BG TCG update (23rd Oct – 06th Nov) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data is collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends. Rea's Wood (North-East) – Red line Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) –Gold Line Washing Bay (South-West) – Blue Line These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.  Blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) levels have remained consistently present but low across all three monitoring locations. As decomposition occurs, BGA position in the water column may vary, therefore, there is potential that passing floating scums may be missed by instrumentation (30-50cm deployment depth). FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence: Stats up to and including 06/11/2025. 191 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 95 unique locations. No new locations this week. <u>DWI Update</u>	

Algae, mostly diatoms, still evident in raw waters at Castor Bay and River Bann intake for Ballinrees WTW; low levels of Geosmin also present in some raw waters; Microcystin-LR levels all below <0.1 ug/l; and no reports of an increase in taste and odour complaints. NIW's in-house analysis of Geosmin, MIB, and MC-LR now paused to allow work on accreditation of the methods.

EMFG update

Samples Collected on the 27/10/2025 and tested on 28/10/2025 via Elisa. The results are as follows:

Date	Site	Biovolume MM3/L	Test Elisa/Lateral flow Microcystin
27/10/2025	MGN	None present	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	DL	None present	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	CRK	0.188	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	SM	2.185	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	PST	2.350	0.32 ug/L
27/10/2025	PM1	0.025	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	PM2	0.040	Below limit of detection
27/10/2025	RW	0.843	Below limit of detection

Date	Site	Biovolume mm ³ /L	Toxins ug/L
03/11/2025	MGN	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	DL	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	CRK	0.033	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	SM	0.123	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	PST	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	PM1	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	PM2	Nothing seen	Below limit of detection
03/11/2025	RW	0.033	Below limit of detection

Microcystis present but in small colonies.

Advice against bathing issued at Portstewart on 27 October on the basis of 'visible, thick scum' on that date. This was lifted after 2 clear samples on 4 November.

CSAO update

Nothing further to update

AFBI update

Algae still present in 5M, 10M and composite Lough Neagh samples, but none visible to the naked eye in surface sample as of 05/11/2025.

Previous Lough Neagh surface sample chlorophyll result from 22/10/2025 was 1.8µg/L, down from 5.8µg/L on 08/10/2025. This week's Lough Neagh chlorophyll results are being processed today (06/11/2025).

Chlorophyll-a for Lower Bann was 4.8µg/L on 27/10/2025, down from 5.4µg/L on 20/10/2025.

Updates completed by:**NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI****Date:****06/11/2025**

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 14

All new information should be noted RED

Information correct as of 10:30 hrs on 20.11.2025

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident has moved from risk to Open Golf championship and is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

This is the final Sit-rep for 2025 season.

Overall DOC Assessment			
Overall Delivery Confidence	G	Significant bloom in Lough Neagh impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water, and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.			
New	Description		BRAG
1.	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh and impacting bathing water site at Rea’s Wood and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast		G
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water		G
3a.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on bathing at designated bathing sites		G
3b.	Potential for reputational damage for NI associated with impacts on drinking water quality		G
4.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues		G

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 10.30am on 10.07.2025 and membership extended to wider stakeholder group	X	
2	LTT to be drafted, agreed and circulated		x
3	LTT and briefing to be prepared for DAERA Minister		x
DOC Status Update		BRAG	
Contact details shared and WhatsApp group to be set up for on call across all agencies including press teams over the weekend		G	
192 cases of BGA in 2025 reported to date across NI from 96 unique locations -See annex for more detail		G	

Whatsapp group to be updated to include wider membership of the multiagency group

G

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.

06.11.25

Gates to remain open for next week.
Continue to monitor bathing water sites
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

20.11.25

Gates remain open at Toome
NIW taste and odour monitoring has reduced to normal frequencies
Monitoring and reporting within DAERA has transitioned to BAU

Forward Look for this/next week.

06.11.25

Gates to remain open however they may be lowered over next week
Continue to monitor bathing water sites
Continue to monitor risk to drinking water, including taste and odour

20.11.25

Gates remain open at Toome
NIW taste and odour monitoring has reduced to normal frequencies
Monitoring and reporting within DAERA has transitioned to BAU
BGA Multiagency TCG to step down and work transition to BAU

Forward Look >2 weeks.

06.11.25

No meeting planned next week. If issues begin to emerge – whats app group can be informed.

20.11.2025

BGA Multiagency TCG to step down and work transition to BAU

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases

06.11.25

No planned communications over next week re BG algae.

20.11.2025

None planned and transition to BAU

KEY RISK 1	Significant bloom present in Lough Neagh impacting bathing water sites and recreational locations around the Lough and Lower Bann to coast	BRAG Status	G
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Detailed description:

1. Biovolumes still present but in very low volumes at some sites. Eliza test method is below limit of detection across all sites.

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Tolerate:
Signage remains in place

KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3a	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. If BGA results in the closures of north coast bathing waters, or significant visual presence at north coast, there is a significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season.			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:

The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation

Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped

Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken

KEY RISK 3b	POTENTIAL FOR REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE FOR NI ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND BATHING AT DESIGNATED BATHING SITES	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Raw and Final drinking water closely monitored by NIW Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken			
KEY RISK 4	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	BRAG Status	G

Detailed description:

- 1.Levels of algae in source waters are as expected for this time of year, with levels of taste and odour compounds elevated.
- 2.Potential for taste and odour issues in the treated water to emerge as decay phase of bloom progresses

What are the specific impacts, including metrics?

Reputational – media in Northern Ireland
Economic – impact on households and businesses
Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water
Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays

What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):

Treat:
The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation
Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR.
In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water for WTW sourcing from Lough Neagh and Lower Bann.
Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue

Current Position:**Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)****06.11.25**

One action to be carried over from previous week

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 06 Nov 2025

FSA

Sampling still continues.

PHA

No further update

DFI Rivers

Gates still remain open and plan to lower over the coming week.

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing to report

LCCC

Nothing to report

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing to report – via email

MUDC

Nothing to report

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report. Discussion had around previous weeks closure.

FODC

Nothing to report

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing to report

Tourism NI

Nothing to report

NIW

No concerns raised by customers to taste and odour related water quality

No concerns with recent raw water and treated drinking water quality results with MIB levels low and 95% less than levels reported in 2024.

Action 06.11.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

20.11.25

One action to be carried over from previous week

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex dated 20 Nov 2025

DFI Rivers

Gates still remain open at 120mm above maximum with full flow out of lough

NIW

See update provided by DWI in annex

FSA

No further update with sampling continuing.

PHA

Nothing further to update

Mid and East Antrim BC

Nothing further to report

Antrim and Newtownabbey BC

Nothing further to report

LCCC

Nothing further to report

Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon BC

Nothing further to report

MUDC

Nothing further to report

Causeway Coast and Glens BC

Nothing further to report.

FODC

No update

Tourism NI

Nothing to report via email

Action 20.11.25

- Council reps to send names to DQ for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026
- DAERA to complete closure report for TCG
- DAERA to complete a submission to DAERA Minister

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #37
DATE	20 November 2025

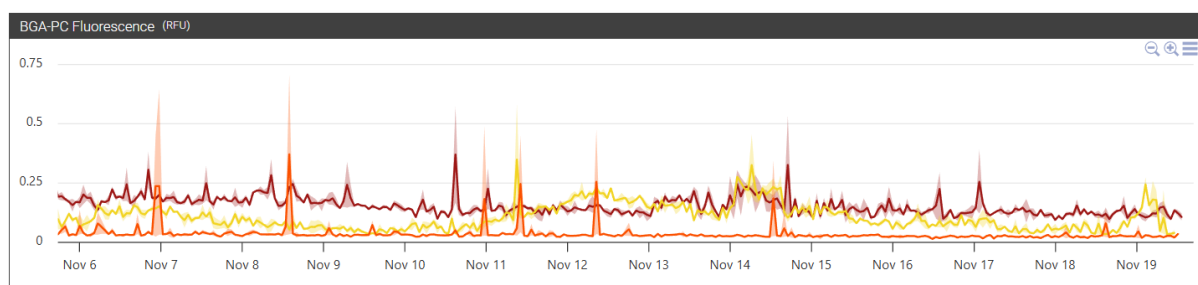
NIEA update

FMA – Freshwater Investigations:

The graph below presents Blue Green-Phycocyanin concentrations recorded since the last BG TCG update (06th Nov – 10th Nov) at three buoy monitoring stations on Lough Neagh. Data is collected in real time at 30-minute intervals, providing high-resolution insight into spatial and temporal trends.

Rea's Wood (North-East) – **Purple Line**
 Toome Bridge (North-West Outlet) – **Red line**
 Washing Bay (South-West) – **Yellow Line**

These locations represent key monitoring points across the lough, capturing variability in algal activity and supporting early warning for bloom development and movement.



Phycocyanin concentrations remained consistently detectable but at very low levels across all three monitoring sites during the latest sampling period. This pattern aligns with seasonal expectations, as cyanobacterial blooms typically diminish under colder, lower-light conditions.

FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence:

Stats up to and including 20/11/2025.

192 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 96 unique locations.

No new locations this week but 1 new location since last TCG update:

- Mill Lough - 07/11/2025

DWI Update

Algae levels in raw water sources notably reduced, mostly diatoms. Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR levels all <LoQ. Taste and odour monitoring reduced to normal frequencies. NI Water's in-house analysis of Geosmin, MIB, and MC-LC paused to allow method validation in advance of next season.

EMFG update

Date	Site	Biovolume Mm ³ /L	Test Elisa/Lateral flow Microcystin Ug/L
17/11/2025	MGN	0.029	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	DL	0.020	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	CRK	0.002	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	SM	0.004	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	PST	0.005	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	PM1	Nothing Present	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	PM2	Nothing present	Below limit of detection
17/11/2025	RW	0.007	Below limit of detection

Small amount of *Microcystis* present in bathing waters at Downhill, Portstewart, Castlerock, Magilligan and Reas Wood.

CSAO update

Nothing further to update

AFBI update

Staff have been out on Lough all week and no evidence of scum or floating matter. Science monitoring programme will continue throughout winter

Updates completed by: NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI	Date: 20/11/2025
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From:
To:

[Redacted]

Subject: RE: Multiagency BGA TCG - sitrep
Date: 28 November 2025 13:59:00
Attachments: [Closure report for BGA Multiagency TCG.DOCX](#)
[image001.jpg](#)

All

Please see attached closure report for the BGA Multiagency TCG.

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
PSO Freshwater Monitoring and Assessment
NIEA Water Management Unit
17 Antrim Road
Tonagh
Lisburn BT28 3AL
Ext [Redacted]

Direct Line: [Redacted]
Email: [Redacted]@daera-ni.gov.uk



From: [Redacted]
Sent: 21 November 2025 12:42
To: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

Subject: CM: Multiagency BGA TCG - sitrep

Good afternoon

Please find final SITREP#14 from meeting held 20 Nov 2025.
All risks have been set to green as per discussions at meeting. Please provide any comments/amendments by COP Wed 26 November for finalising.

The following actions arose from the meeting

Actions 20.11.25

- Council reps to send names to [REDACTED] for attendance at Clare House Blue Green Monitoring Review meeting on 9 January 2026
- DAERA to complete closure report for TCG
- DAERA to complete a submission to DAERA Minister

The Chair expressed his appreciation for the valuable contributions made by all organisations. The collective knowledge and expertise within the group have led to improved coordination, reduced duplication of effort, and greater transparency among stakeholders. It was agreed that this would be the final meeting of the group for the 2025 season, with activities now transitioning back to business as usual (BAU).

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*PSO Freshwater Monitoring and Assessment
NIEA Water Management Unit
17 Antrim Road
Tonagh
Lisburn BT28 3AL
Ext [REDACTED]*

Direct Line: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@daera-ni.gov.uk



BLUE GREEN MULTIAGENCY TACTICAL COORDINATION GROUP (BGA TCG)

CLOSURE REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of this closure report is to ensure BGA Multiagency TCG closure is justified, and that the acceptance is confirmed by the Multiagency Representatives. The report shows the group has achieved its goals for the 2025 blue-green algae season.

Rationale for Closure of BGA Multiagency TCG

Actions

- A Monitoring Protocol was co-developed and agreed by all those involved in monitoring Lough Neagh - DAERA Marine and Fisheries, NIEA, AFBI, Food Standards Agency, NI Water, and also included the Public Health Agency.
- The Department's Interagency Protocol groups were initiated in May 2025.
- The **internal** BGA Group convened its first meeting on 30 May 2025.
- Following a risk analysis facilitated by TEO, the BGA **Multiagency** TCG was then activated on 10 July 2025 and considered the key risks to the Golf Open in Portrush as a result of the blue green algae present in Lough Neagh and the Lower River Bann moving down the river to the North Coast beaches.
- The BGA **Multiagency** TCG considered operational and tactical issues reported by each partner which included, DAERA, NIEA, AFBI, NIW, DfI Rivers, PHA, FSA, Tourism NI and local councils ANBC, CCGC, MEAC, MUDC, LCCC, ABCC and FODC and co-ordinated responses and communications throughout the 2025 season.
- The BGA **Multiagency** TCG met regularly over July and August 2025 with meetings ramping up to weekly from 22 August 2025 as the number of blue-green reports increased along shores of Lough Neagh and wider NI waters presenting a risk to drinking water and designated bathing water sites.
- Reports of BGA have reduced in recent weeks with one report confirmed in the period 6-20 November 2025. The total up to 20 November 2025 is 192 reports across 96 locations. The number of reports and locations are comparable to 2024 with 222 reports confirmed across 90 locations.

Benefits

- Improved coordination across organisations has reduced duplication of effort and ensured actions were aligned across organisation.
- Streamlined communications and joint planning has allowed quicker action during the incident and subsequent seasonal challenge as the blooms began to decay.
- Shared responsibility across multiple organisations and agencies has ensured transparency and assisted in building trust amongst statutory authorities, councils, stakeholders and the general public.

Risks

- No risks remain open - all are assigned Green on the Sitrep.

Next steps

- A review of the 2025 BGA season is planned for 9 January 2025 with members of the BGA Multiagency TCG and IA monitoring protocol groups in attendance.

Transition to BAU

- The group members will transition to BAU and processes are in place to monitor and report occurrences of BGA at a local level.

Sign off and Approval**Approval of Closure**

Signed & Dated (Chair of TCG group):



24 November 2025

Multi-Agency Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG)

Review –June 2026

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. PURPOSE AND ROLE

EMFG and the NIEA have agreed to set up a multi-agency group to deal with the ongoing blue green algae issues. The main focus will be to prioritise work; to co-ordinate activities; to agree external and internal LTTs to inform the public and staff; and to ensure appropriate resourcing is in place. Meetings will cover the impact of blue green algae for inland and coastal areas.

The first season of consistent blue green algal blooms across the whole of Lough Neagh was in 2023 and during that year, NIEA and EMFG held Operational Task Team meetings throughout the incident, from early July through to October. During the 2024 season, NIEA and EMFG continued this work during the season through a Tactical Co-ordination Group with AFBI. In June 2025, TEO hosted a workshop to look at the risks posed from persistent harmful algae blooms, and as a result of this workshop and risk assessment, TEO recommended that the TCG be broadened to incorporate other organisations. This TOR reflects those recommended changes.

The TOR will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Multi-agency Blue Green Algae Operational Group will comprise of the following officers:

Name	Organisation
On call officer	WPGNI
	Tourism NI ()
	Tourism NI ())
	NI Water ()
	NI Water ()
	NI Water ()
	PHA ()
	PHA ()
	FSA ()
	FSA ()
	FSA ()
	CCBGC ()
	CCBGC ()
	CCBGC ()
	CCBGC ()
	MEABC ()

	MEACBC ()
	MEABC ()
	MEABC ()
	ANBC ()
	ANBC ()
	ABCC ()
	ABCC ()
	LCCC ()
	MUDC ()
	MUDC ()
	FODC ()
Co- Chair	DAERA EMFG
Co-Chair	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA EMFG
Secretariat	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA NIEA
	DAERA EMFG
	DAERA CSAO
	AFBI
DAERA Press team	DAERA press team
	Dfl Rivers
	Dfl Rivers

****Note – Bathing Water Operators will be contacted separately during an incident**

N.B. G6s to adjust attendance as required.

3. MEETINGS

Meetings will be held every two weeks (max. 30mins) to maintain an overview of the situation relating to blue-green algae in Lough Neagh and at other locations across Northern Ireland to ensure EMFG and NIEA are joined-up and have consistent messaging. The frequency and duration of the meetings will be kept under review.

During a serious incident, meeting will be held more frequently as needed.

4. AGENDA

The outline agenda is:

- Welcome
- Minutes and actions of previous meeting

- SITREP – updated by each organisation – EMFG, AFBI, NI Water, FSA, PHA
- Issues arising
- Communications – LTTs
- AOB

5. RECORD OF MEETING

A short update briefing will be completed in advance of each meeting using the template provided by the secretariat. The secretariat will issue notes and actions of the meetings by the end of the next working day to the membership and other attendees.

A copy of the weekly briefing note will be shared with members of the Blue-Green Algae Monitoring Group when agreed and finalised.

6. REPORTING

A weekly update on numbers of BGA reports will be prepared in advance of the weekly meeting and circulated as a SITREP before the Group meets. DAERA will also issue this as part of the WBR/BI update each Friday morning.

Director WRED NIEA and Director MFD EMFG will update CE NIEA and Deputy Secretary EMFG. Representatives from other organisations will brief up the line accordingly.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Director WRED NIEA and Director MFD EMFG will co-chair the meeting. G6s NIEA and EMFG will deputise, as required. Key areas of responsibility:

Freshwater protection and regulation	WRED NIEA
Blue green algae	WRED NIEA
Bathing waters management	MFD EMFG
Bathing waters monitoring & analysis	MFD EMFG

For completion by other agencies

8. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

Documentation will be retained on Content Manager (AE2-24-66099) to ensure an adequate audit trail. The secretariat will set-up a Content Manager container for the Group with access for WRED NIEA and MFD EMFG.

9. EIR/FOI REQUESTS

The TCG will alert all member organisations to EIR/FOI requests and will respond to these observing the policies of the individual organisations.

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant blooms impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations including fishing activities across water bodies in NI.

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 001-2026

Information correct as of 23.06.26 15:30

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in water bodies across NI affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

Overall DOC Assessment		
Overall Delivery Confidence	A	Significant blooms impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations and fishing activities across water bodies in NI
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.		
New	Description	BRAG
1.	Blooms present in multiple locations within NI water bodies impacting bathing waters and recreational locations	R
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	R
3.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	G
4.	Decline in public confidence associated with impacts on Drinking Water Quality, bathing at identified sites, tourism and quality of fisheries	A

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1	TCG group stood up at 15:30 on 25.06.2026	X	

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.
Observation and continued monitoring
Forward Look for this/next week.
Gates at Toome are currently open. Closure is anticipated early next week.
Forward Look >2 weeks.
Next meeting planned 9 July. If issues begin to emerge email to be issued to members requesting meeting to be arranged

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases			
25.06.26 No planned communications over next week re BG algae.			
KEY RISK 1	BLOOMS PRESENT IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS WITHIN NI WATER BODIES IMPACTING BATHING WATERS AND RECREATIONAL LOCATIONS	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1.Blue green algae confirmed at 31 unique locations across NI waters. 10 new locations confirmed w/c 22 June and more expected over next week with continued weather. Full details of locations listed in Annex. Present in popular recreational lakes such as Craigavon, Castlewellan and a number of shore locations along Lough Neagh. 2.Rea's Wood has signage in place advising against bathing which is currently at amber status for toxins and red status for biovolume. Remainder of bathing water sites are green.			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics?			

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):			
Tolerate: Signage in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL RISK OF IMPACT ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY THROUGH TASTE AND ODOUR ISSUES	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. Potential changes in taste, odour, or visible water quality leading to increase in customer complaints Levels of algae in raw waters are as expected for this time of year no complaints			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses			

Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water Daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue			
KEY RISK 4	DECLINE IN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY, BATHING AT IDENTIFIED SITES, TOURISM AND QUALITY OF FISHERIES	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: Socio-economic consequences to include 1. A significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2.If taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is significant reputational damage for NIW associated with confidence in supply to NI customers 3.Potential impact on quality and sustainability of angling affecting NI fishing industry and local communities			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex A dated 25 June 2025

DFI Rivers

Gates currently open at 0.3m. Closure potentially Mon/Tues next week for a period of weeks.

FSA

26/27 monitoring programme has started and similar to previous year with same species and analysis.

25/26 sample results expected end July and aim to have updated risk assessment/advice

PHA

PHA in England have been in contact regarding NI approach

EPGNI

Currently messages around water safety and heatwave have been pushed out.

Tourism NI

Raised issues regarding impact from general algae on tour operators and agreed to find out more regarding locations

NIW by email

Levels of algae in raw waters are as expected for this time of year no complaints

Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR.

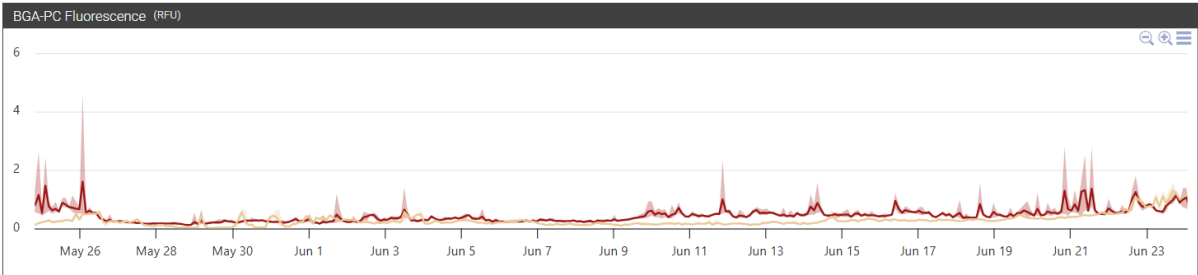
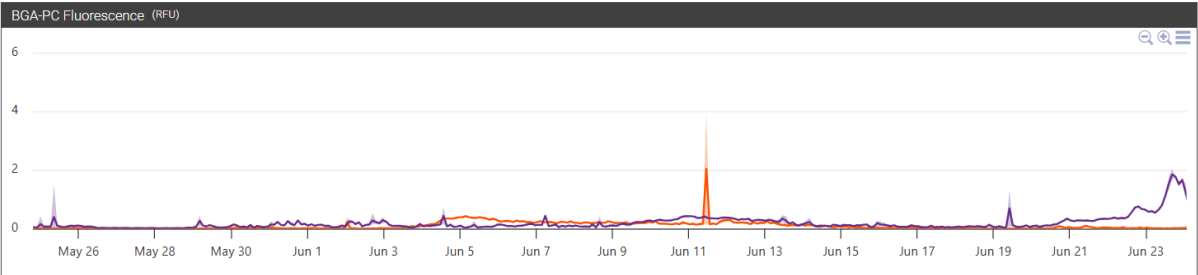
In-house Microcystin-LR Testing and daily sampling at Moyola WTW will continue

Actions 25.06.26

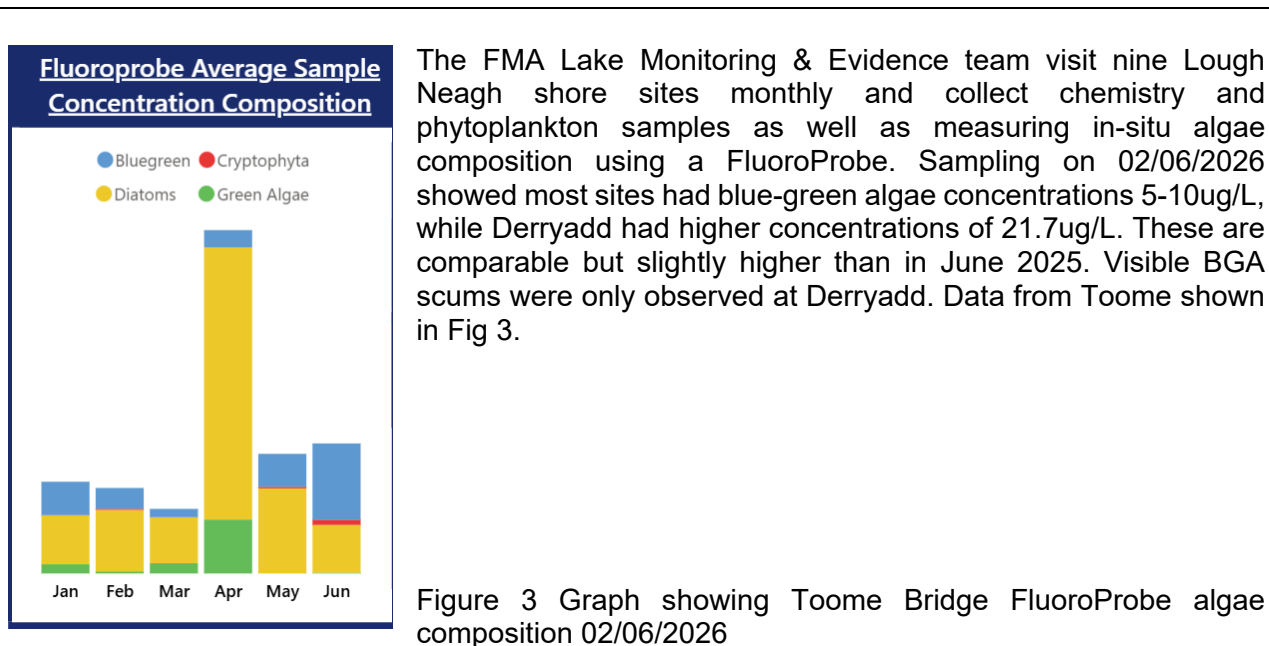
- EPGNI to contact NMDC regarding representation on group – Complete
- DAERA to circulate BG FAQs and Infographic – Complete
- DAERA to update key issues and risk based on discussion regarding impacting wider waterways in NI and also impact on fishing industry – Complete
- EPGNI to circulate wider safety messaging campaign – Complete
- Next meeting set for 9 July at 3pm - Complete

Annex A

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #1
DATE	25th June 2026
<u>NIEA update</u> FMA – Freshwater Investigation Team: Telemetered monitoring buoys are currently deployed at four locations: Rea’s Wood and Washing Bay (Lough Neagh), and Toome Outlet and Seaton’s Marina (Upper River Bann). The instrumentation record blue-green algae (RFU), temperature (°C), dissolved oxygen (% saturation), and turbidity (NTU) at approximately 50 cm below the surface at 30-minute intervals. Data collected over the past month (Figures 1 and 2) indicate the presence of blue-green algae at all monitoring locations; however, concentrations remain low, with no evidence of significant or sustained bloom events. At Toome (Figure 2), a minor increase in blue-green algae has been observed since 21st June. This suggests that algal material is beginning to pass out of Lough Neagh and move downstream along the River Bann, although concentrations remain low.  Figure 1 Showing BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU) at Reas Wood and Washing Bay, Lough Neagh  Figure 2 Showing BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU) at Toome outlet and Seaton's Marina, Lower Bann FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence: Stats up to and including 25/06/2026 - 68 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 31 unique locations.	

Confirmed BGA Locations 2026	Latest Confirmed Report
Lower Holywood Reservoir	24/06/2026
Copeland Reservoir	24/06/2026
Castlewellan Lake	24/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Antrim Boat Club	24/06/2026
Clay Lake	23/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Oxford Island	23/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Rea's Wood	23/06/2026
Upper Conlig Reservoir	22/06/2026
Upper Ballysallagh Reservoir	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Deep point	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Antrim Bay	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - White Horse Flats	22/06/2026
Brantry Lough	20/06/2026
Upper Lough Macnean	18/06/2026
Church Road Reservoir	16/06/2026
Race Course Lough, County Fermanagh	15/06/2026
Lower Bann - Seatons Marina	08/06/2026
Lower Conlig Reservoir	05/06/2026
Portmore Lough	04/06/2026
Lough Neagh – Derryadd	02/06/2026
Unnamed pond, Loughmallon Road	29/05/2026
Lough Neagh – Ardboe	27/05/2026
Six Mile Water	26/05/2026
Hillsborough Park Lake	25/05/2026
Tunny Cut	11/05/2026
Craigavon Lakes	06/05/2026
Lough Aghery	05/05/2026
Lough Neagh – Ballyronan	05/05/2026
Lough Neagh - Battery Harbour	24/04/2026
Black Glen Lake, Castlerock	09/04/2026
Lough Neagh - Washing Bay	08/04/2026



Five offshore Lough Neagh sites are also visited monthly and water column profiles collected. Blue-green algae was visible in the water column at all five sites but no thick surface scums were observed. Algae composition throughout the water column is dominated by green algae and diatoms (Fig. 4) but notable peaks in blue-green algae were observed at the surface of ‘The Run’ (deep point) south of Toome Bay.

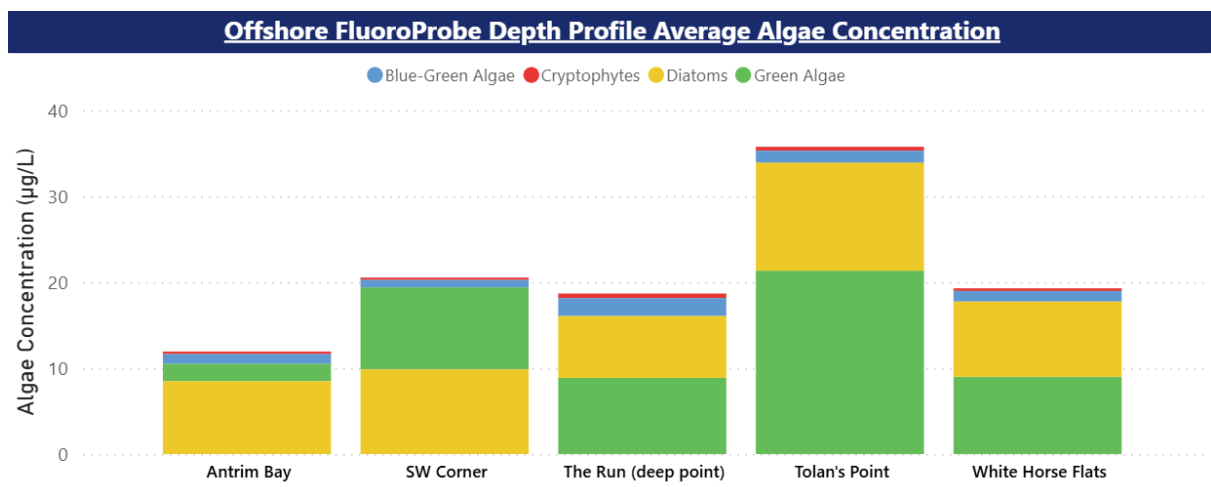


Figure 4 Graph showing Lough Neagh offshore monitoring station average FluoroProbe water column algae composition 22/06/2026

DWI Update: No reports of consumer complaints of drinking water quality issues relating to blue green algae in 2026 to date. Data from NI Water’s weekly monitoring of algae counts, Geosmin/MIB and Microcystin-LR is being monitored.

EMFG update

The table below shows the toxin and biovolume results for samples collected on the 22/06/2026, from the north coast beaches, Rea’s wood, Lough Beg and Seaton’s Marina. All sites remain at green status, except for Rea’s Wood, which is currently at amber status for toxins and red status for biovolume.

It is also noted that small amounts cyanobacteria were present in all beach samples for biovolume, except for Castlerock, where none were observed.

Date collected	Date tested	Site	Biovolume mm3/l	Test Elisa - Microcystin ug/L	Status
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Rea's Wood	5.91	0.663	RED
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Newferry (Bann) Lough Beg exit	0.439	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Seaton's Marina	0.1834	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Benone Beach (Magilligan)	0.00213	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Downhill beach	0.00007	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Castlerock	None	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Portstewart	0.00018	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Portrush 1	0.00012	<LOD	Green
22/06/2026	23/06/2026	Portrush 2	0.00192	<LOD	Green

CSAO update

The next phases of the Lough Neagh data dashboard are progressing. Phase 2 containing additional NIEA investigative data (above) is expected to launch in Aug/Sept 2027.

A final draft of the DAERA / NI Water investigative monitoring data sharing agreement has been developed and awaits sign off. This will ensure NI W chemistry and algal data from 3 abstraction points being made available to DAERA. Data will be publicly shared as phase 3 of the data dashboard.

CEH Microbial Source Tracking sampling will occur across the Neagh catchment in early Aug. CSAO are working across DAERA and with Press Office to agree lines for any potential media coverage.

AFBI update

Long-Term Monitoring

- Chlorophyll levels in the lake increasing, from winter levels of 1-5ug/l to 12-20ug/l in the last few weeks.
- Amount of visible BGA is increasing, however there have been no concentrated mats of algae seen yet.
- Reports of BGA at Ardboe/the battery on 22/06/26 from LNFCS.
-

SHIELD Lakes Project

- Reports and images of BGA at Oxford Island 23/06/26 from PhD student.
- MBES survey being re-initiated in July following procurement of new (replacement) sonar head.

- Bathymetric re-gridding of existing data underway, and datums being verified with UKHO
- Vessel maintenance/repairs hopefully completed – vessels going back into the water this month.
- Green Growth / SHIELD data buoy for Whitehorse flat has arrived and is being commissioned – cross-calibrations being considered alongside NIEA buoys.
- Shoreline Camera network sites being scoped for monitoring water colour in near-real time.

SHIELD Analytical Chemistry Project

- An LC-MS/MS method for the analysis and quantitation of numerous classes of cyanotoxins including MCs, NOD, ABPs, CYN and ATX-A has been developed.
- Method has been used to analyse samples from LN last year (2025) and this year also to correlate with DAERA's in-house testing and confirmatory analysis performed by CEFAS.
- Method at validation stage and hope to have this and the accreditation completed later in the year (October/November) with the aim of this replacing CEFAS for confirmatory analysis next year (2027).
- Samples tested this year from Castlewellan lake, Bantry Lough and LN (Rae's Wood, Seaton's Marina and Lough Beg).
 - Detection and quantification of ABPs and MCs in various samples, with levels of ~ 15 µg/L for the ABPs in one sample from LN.
 - Same cyanobacterial species producing two different MCs in different locations.
 - Detection of other possible MCs in samples but cannot confirm identity due to lack of reference standards.
 - This unidentified variant has the highest level, up to 10 µg/L.
- Plan to assess some samples on a HRMS system in Agilent later in the summer to identify the above unknown MC(s) and or other freshwater toxins.

Updates completed by:

NIEA/ DWI/ EMFG/ CSAO/ AFBI

Date:

25/06/2026

Blue Green Algae Tactical Co-ordination Group – Significant blooms impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations including fishing activities across water bodies in NI.

SITUATIONAL REPORT Number: 002-2026
Information correct as of 09.07.26 15:00

This Situational Report (Sit-Rep) will focus on the strategic issues of the incident. It is understood that blue-green algae is a recurring issue since 2023 with varying impacts across Northern Ireland.

This specific incident is to consider the key risks from harmful algal blooms (HAB) in water bodies across NI affecting drinking water sources, impacting on human, animal and ecological health and impacting individual's livelihood and denying recreational access.

The extended Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) will consider operational and tactical issues reported by each partner, but the strategic issues will not be obscured by operational detail.

The Annex to the main body of the Sit-Rep will detail the operational monitoring and technical information that will be used to make decisions on the risk.

Overall DOC Assessment		
Overall Delivery Confidence	A	Significant blooms impacting raw drinking water sources, bathing water and recreational locations and fishing activities across water bodies in NI
Key Issues – Please detail your key issues or imminent risks only, that may require escalation.		
New	Description	BRAG
1.	Blooms present in multiple locations within NI water bodies impacting bathing waters and recreational locations	R
2.	Potential risk to public health from bathing and pets from contact with BGA - Onshore risks - Emersion in water	R
3.	Potential risk of impact on drinking water quality through taste and odour issues	G
4.	Decline in public confidence associated with impacts on Drinking Water Quality, bathing at identified sites, tourism and quality of fisheries	A

Items for Escalation –			
	Description	CCG	
		For info	For action
1			

Forward Look for next 1-2 days.			
Observation and continued monitoring			
Forward Look for this/next week.			
Observation and results from 09/07/26 monitoring to be circulated. Emergency response in place within DAERA and NIEA over bank holiday weekend. Reports through NIEA hotline 0800 80 70 60			
Forward Look >2 weeks.			
Next meeting planned 23 July. If issues begin to emerge email to be issued to members requesting meeting to be arranged			

Expected Media Attention – Please confirm if the DOC has any items that will have expected media releases			
09.07.26 No planned communications over next week re BG algae.			
KEY RISK 1	BLOOMS PRESENT IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS WITHIN NI WATER BODIES IMPACTING BATHING WATERS AND RECREATIONAL LOCATIONS	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1.Blue green algae confirmed at 37 unique locations across NI waters. 6 new locations confirmed since last meeting in June with locations on Lower Bann first reported 1 July. More reports are expected over next week with continued weather. Full details of locations listed in Annex. 2.Rea's Wood has signage in place advising against bathing which is currently at amber status for toxins and red status for biovolume. Lower Bann at Newferry is Amber for Biovolumes. Remainder of bathing water sites are green. Today's results will be ready Friday 10/7/26			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics?			

Impacts to bathers and other water users. Risk to pets entering the water or coming in contact with the BGA Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer):			
Tolerate: Signage in place			
KEY RISK 2	POTENTIAL RISK TO PUBLIC HEALTH FROM BATHING AND PETS FROM CONTACT WITH BGA	BRAG Status	R
Detailed description: 1. Potential public health impacts to water users and animals Knowledge gap for operators on guidance to be followed for both - Onshore risks - Emersion in water			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Contact with BGA can cause skin irritation and illness if ingested Highly toxic to pets with significant risk of death			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Tolerate: No ability to remove at present. Notification provided against bathing and signage to be erected as agreed under the Interagency Monitoring Protocol			
KEY RISK 3	POTENTIAL RISK OF IMPACT ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY THROUGH TASTE AND ODOUR ISSUES	BRAG Status	G
Detailed description: 1. Potential changes in taste, odour, or visible water quality leading to increase in customer complaints Levels of algae in raw waters are as expected for this time of year no complaints			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – impact on households and businesses			

Public health – potential impact on supplies of drinking water Toxin levels have potential to increase as algae decays
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Monitoring ongoing for algal counts, Geosmin, MIB, and Microcystin-LR. In-house Microcystin-LR Testing by NI Water

KEY RISK 4	DECLINE IN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY, BATHING AT IDENTIFIED SITES, TOURISM AND QUALITY OF FISHERIES	BRAG Status	A
Detailed description: Socio-economic consequences to include 1. A significant risk of reputational damage for Northern Ireland in relation to tourism and economic impact and impact on local beaches during the peak season. 2. <u>If taste and odour issues occur in drinking water, public confidence in Northern Ireland's public water supply may be adversely affected.</u> taste and odour issues develop within the drinking water there is loss of public confidence in public drinking supply to NI customers 3. Potential impact on quality and sustainability of angling affecting NI fishing industry and local communities			
What are the specific impacts, including metrics? Reputational – media in Northern Ireland Economic – Impacts on tourism and local businesses and drinking water quality Public health – potential impacts on water users			
What is being done about it? (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer): Treat: The Interagency Monitoring Protocol is in operation Reports being closely monitored and movement of BGA reports mapped Press teams to liaise with each other on comms so cohesive approach is taken			

Current Position:

Science, evidence and observations to date – (NIEA, MFD, AFBI, and others as required)

DAERA/NIEA/AFBI/CSAO

Attached as Annex A dated 09 July 2026

DFI Rivers

Gates currently closed and will remain closed over next 10 days as flow is low.

NMDC

Provided update on recent sampling at Castlewellan Lake which is used heavily for recreation. Samples were green status but caution signs remain in place.

MEADC

Advice was sought regarding the Newferry location, including whether precautionary signage should be erected. DAERA expects to have the most up-to-date monitoring results available on 10 July 2026, and the Bathing Waters Team will issue an email notification once the results have been received and reviewed.

MUDC

Advised that access to Newferry is also available via MUDC. Requested that the monitoring results be circulated following completion of the assessment and confirmation of the outcome.

Tourism NI

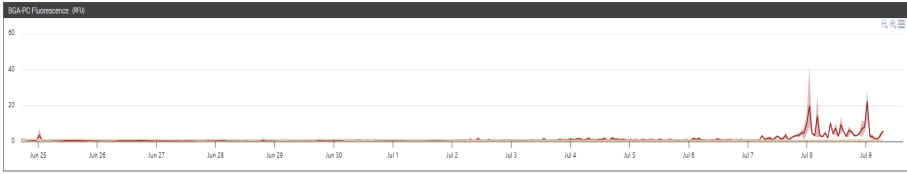
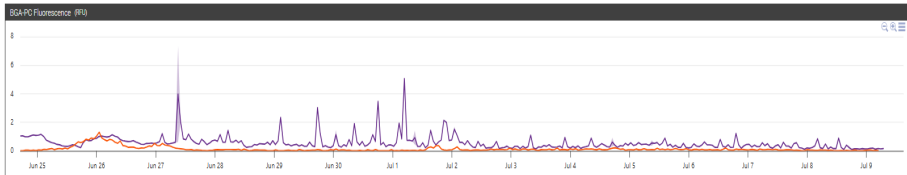
Raised concerns regarding public perception of NI waterways and highlighted the importance of clear and consistent communication of signage.

Actions 09.07.26

- Invite for event 7 August - CEH Microbial Source Tracking has been issued. Contact Patrick Murphy if require further invite.
- DAERA Bathing Waters Team to circulate results of sampling completed 9 July 2026 to MEADC and MUDC once confirmed.

Annex A

OFFICIAL DAERA BRIEFING PAPER

BRIEFING	TCG Blue-green update
DIVISION/BRANCH REFERENCE	TCG BG update #2
DATE	09 July 2026
<u>NIEA update</u> Telemetered monitoring buoys are currently deployed at four locations: Rea's Wood and Washing Bay (Lough Neagh), and Toome Outlet and Seaton's Marina (Upper River Bann). The instrumentation record blue-green algae (RFU), temperature (°C), dissolved oxygen (% saturation), and turbidity (NTU) at approximately 50 cm below the surface at 30-minute intervals. Data collected since 25 June (Figures 1 and 2) indicate the presence of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae - BGA) at washing bay and at Seaton's Marina. However, recorded concentrations have remained low, with no evidence of substantial or persistent bloom development during this period. Data from the Toome Outlet (Figure 2) indicate the export of low concentrations of BGA from Lough Neagh. These observations are consistent with evidence of bloom formation in the north-eastern sector of the Lough, particularly in the vicinity of Rea's Wood (Figure 1). Since 7 July, a significant cyanobacterial bloom has developed near the Rea's Wood buoy, with BGA-PC measurements exceeding 20 RFU. In the presence of the correct wind conditions, this bloom has the potential to migrate shoreward and may result in the formation of shoreline accumulations and surface scums in affected areas.  Figure 1 Showing BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU) at Reas Wood and Washing Bay, Lough Neagh  Figure 2 Showing BGA-PC Fluorescence (RFU) at Toome outlet and Seaton's Marina, Lower Bann FMA – Lake Monitoring and Evidence Stats up to and including 09/07/2026 - 84 confirmed reports of blue green algae from 37 unique locations.	

Confirmed BGA Locations 2026	Latest Confirmed Report
Castlewellan Lake	08/07/2026
Lower Bann - Bracknamuckley Forest	08/07/2026
Craigavon Lakes	08/07/2026
Lough Island Reavy	08/07/2026
Lower Bann - Newferry	03/07/2026
Lower Bann - Portglenone	01/07/2026
Castlewellan Lake	01/07/2026
Hillsborough Park Lake	30/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Kinnego Marina	25/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Derrycrow	25/06/2026
Lower Holywood Reservoir	24/06/2026
Copeland Reservoir	24/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Antrim Boat Club	24/06/2026
Clay Lake	23/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Oxford Island	23/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Rea's Wood	23/06/2026
Upper Conlig Reservoir	22/06/2026
Upper Ballysallagh Reservoir	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Deep point	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Antrim Bay	22/06/2026
Lough Neagh - White Horse Flats	22/06/2026
Brantry Lough	20/06/2026
Upper Lough Macnean	18/06/2026
Church Road Reservoir	16/06/2026
Race Course Lough, County Fermanagh	15/06/2026
Lower Bann - Seatons Marina	08/06/2026
Lower Conlig Reservoir	05/06/2026
Portmore Lough	04/06/2026
Lough Neagh - Derryadd	02/06/2026
Unnamed pond, Loughmallon Road	29/05/2026
Lough Neagh - Ardboe	27/05/2026
Six Mile Water	26/05/2026
Tunny Cut	11/05/2026
Lough Aghery	05/05/2026
Lough Neagh - Ballyronan	05/05/2026
Lough Neagh - Battery Harbour	24/04/2026
Black Glen Lake, Castlerock	09/04/2026
Lough Neagh - Washing Bay	08/04/2026

The FMA Lake Monitoring & Evidence team will visit nine Lough Neagh shore sites for chemistry and in-situ algae composition and five offshore sites for water column profiles from the week commencing 13/07/2026.

DWI Update: No increased reports of consumer complaints of drinking water quality issues relating to blue green algae in 2026 to date. Data from NI Water's weekly monitoring of algae counts, Geosmin/MIB and Microcystin-LR is being monitored.

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EMFG update

All sites sitting in green for both this week and last week, except for Newferry (sentinel site) which is Amber for this week.

Team is out again today (09/07/2026). Results available tomorrow (10/07/2026) afternoon.

Sample collection date: 29th June 2026

Microcystins & Anatoxin-a ELISA carried out 30th June 2026

Biovolume analysed on 30th June 2026

ELISA MOS: TH/RR

Biovolume MOS: NH

The results are as follows

Date collected	Date tested	Site	Biovolume mm3/l	Test Elisa - Microcystin ug/L	Test Elisa - Anatoxin-a ug/L	Status
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Rea's Wood	0.10049	<LOD	<LOD	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Newferry (Bann) Lough Beg exit	0.130	<LOD	<LOD	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Seaton's Marina	0.09261	<LOD	<LOD	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Benone Beach (Magilligan)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Downhill beach	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Castlerock	0.00010	<LOD	N/A	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Portstewart	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Portrush 1	0.002	<LOD	N/A	Green
29/06/2026	30/06/2026	Portrush 2	None	<LOD	N/A	Green

Sample collection date: 6th July 2026

Microcystins & Anatoxin-a ELISA carried out 7th July 2026

Biovolume analysed on 8th July 2026

ELISA MOS: TH/RR

Biovolume MOS: AK

The results are as follows:

Date collected	Date tested	Site	Biovolume mm3/l	Test Elisa - Microcystin ug/L	Test Elisa - Anatoxin-a ug/L	Status
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Rea's Wood (RW)	0.92125	<LOD	<LOD	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Newferry Slip (Bann) Lough Beg exit (LB)	1.71292	0.293	<LOD	Amber
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Seaton's Marina (SM)	0.07802	<LOD	<LOD	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Benone Beach (Magilligan) (MGN)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Downhill beach (DL)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Castlerock (CRK)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Portstewart (PST)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Portrush 1 (PM1)	0.000290	<LOD	N/A	Green
06/07/2026	07/06/2026	Portrush 2 (PM2)	None	<LOD	N/A	Green

CSAO update

On the 7th Aug CEH Microbial Source Tacking Researchers are inviting NIW, PHA, FSA and Councils to a briefing day and workshop to lay out CEH's work and invite your input to shape the outputs for maximum benefits.

A media event with UTV to highlight the sampling is being undertaken separately. The media attention is likely to draw attention to Microbial Source Tracking and it would be beneficial if you could attend to be fully informed on the work.

Updates completed by:
NIEA/ EMFG/ CSAO

Date:
09/07/2026