

Our Reference: DAERA/26-507

Previous correspondence reference:

[REDACTED]

Your reference:

J [REDACTED]

**NIEA**

Water Regulation and Enforcement  
Division



Department of

**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil  
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment  
an' Kintra Matthers**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

Office of [REDACTED] via email

[REDACTED]

Water Pollution Response & Enforcement  
Team

NIEA Lisburn

17 Antrim Road

Tonagh

Lisburn

BT28 3AL

21 August 2026

Telephone: 0800 80 70 60

Email: [WMU.FOI@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:WMU.FOI@daera-ni.gov.uk)

21 August 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

**Environmental Information Regulations 2004**

Thank you for your further environmental information request, received by the  
Department on 29 July  
2026 regarding sewage discharges to the Strule and Drumragh Rivers

I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can  
confirm that it holds the information you requested.

1. What enforcement action, if any, was taken in respect of each substantiated  
incident and whether any of those incidents involved Northern Ireland Water assets.

WR 9/26/0507 – 3/6/26 – No pollution found, unsubstantiated, however photos  
provided show discharge earlier but none at time of officer visit. Believed to have  
originated from a NI Water CSO. No enforcement action possible, no sample.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can  
contact the Department via the Next Generation Text  
Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®**  
We invest in people Standard

WR 9/26/0073 – 17/6/26 – Sourced to overflow from NI Water WWPS Riverside Walk. Investigations suggested a blockage in the sewer caused by debris from nearby roadworks underway. No further action taken. Inappropriate items in sewer. Low severity impacts no enforcement.

WR 9/25/0066 – 1/8/25 – Industry Sewage – No discharge but with help of video provided, investigations suggested a local industrial sewage source – Low severity impact, no enforcement.

WR 9/25/0101 – 4/11/25 – Industry Sewage – Local industry sewage source. Low severity impact. Consented discharge incident passed to NIEA consenting team – Low severity – No enforcement.

WR 9/25/0070 – 13/8/25 – Domestic septic tank – Out of town domestic septic tank Low severity – No enforcement.

WR 9/26/0019 – 16/2/26 – Domestic septic tank – Found because of an application to update the septic tank system to a new package treatment plant. Low severity – No Enforcement.

2. Further information on the environmental impact of these incidents, any assessment undertaken of their cumulative effect on water quality and the measures being taken to reduce the risk of future pollution events within the Drumragh and Strule catchments.

NI Water is prioritising the installation of event duration monitors (EDMs) at CSOs within designated bathing waters and within 2km of shellfish waters. Further EDM installations will be prioritised at CSOs across Northern Ireland throughout PC21 and PC28. Reporting spill information from CSOs will not only inform the public on how overflows are performing but will also aid the understanding of wastewater spills and inform investment to improve the performance of the wastewater network.

3. Finally, your response refers to the proposed withdrawal from the SORPI arrangement. I would be grateful for an update on the timescale for this change and the practical effect it would have on the regulation of Northern Ireland Water.

Minister Muir is seeking Executive colleagues' support in progressing the Department's withdrawal from the 2007 SORPI. This would enable the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to regulate and, where necessary, take enforcement action in respect of NI Water's continuous and intermittent discharges, that are regulated under the Water (NI) Order 1999, on the same basis as applies across other regulated sectors, thereby ensuring a consistent and equitable regulatory framework. In respect of water pollution incidents, NI Water came into operation in April 2007 and the Crown Immunity, enjoyed by its predecessor, Water Service, lapsed. Since then, NIEA have taken robust enforcement action in respect

of NI Water, similarly to other business sectors, where significant water pollution events have been confirmed and, from investigation, the cause was identified as managerial failure. Since April 2007, NI Water have had fines totalling £261,900 levied by the courts in respect of water pollution incidents.

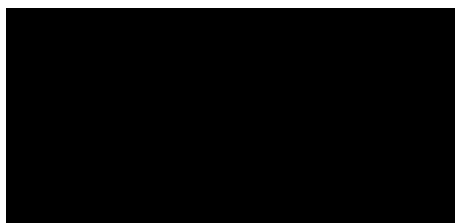
If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department.

If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing [daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk) or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE, SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,



**Water Pollution Response and Enforcement Team**