

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that as United Utilities (UW) are not subject to the Freedom of Information Act, your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).

Your request:

I have been in communication with the Environment Agency regarding the legal requirement for businesses to refrain from disposing of milk down any drain (regardless of where the drain goes).

They advised that it was down to the water companies to consent to this. I was surprised to hear this as it's either illegal or it isn't, but I'm getting touch as United Utilities are the water company for the business in question (a client of ours in Preston). Please let me know what is allowed.

In addition to the above, please can I make a Freedom of Information request for all businesses that have a permit with United Utilities for discharging milk to drains.

Please also provide what is allowed by United Utilities for businesses pouring milk down drains and if allowed, why this is, as it seems to be in direct contravention to the regulations.

Our response:

It is the position of UW that raw and waste milk must not be discharged to the foul sewer. Milk has a high biological oxygen demand (BOD) and can significantly impact the biological treatment process at our Wastewater treatment works and negatively impact the receiving watercourse.

The Animal By-Products Regulations (ABPR) impose strict controls on the disposal of waste milk, with the rules dependent on if the milk originated from a farm, processing plant or retail premises. ABPR details methods of disposal dependent on point of origin including use as animal feed, spreading to land or transfer to an approved facility for disposal. We maintain that raw and waste milk should be properly disposed of in accordance with section 34 of the UK Environmental Protection Act 1990.

We do however consent dairies and bottling plants to dispose of wash water from milk production which is controlled as trade effluent. Companies proposing to undertake these activities must first apply for a trade effluent consent with our Trade Effluent Team. The trade effluent consent will include a list of matters which should either be limited or eliminated prior to any trade effluent discharge, in addition to the maximum temperature and pH parameters.

For awareness, we have a public register containing all active trade effluent consents, which can be accessed via our website: [Trade effluent consent register](#). You can also read more about trade effluent here: [Trade effluent | United Utilities](#).

For prompt assistance with environmental information requests to, please direct all future requests to EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk.

We hope that this response answers your request. However, if you're not satisfied with how we've handled it, you can request an internal review. To do this, please write to us at Environmental Information Office, Haweswater House, Lingley Mere, Warrington, WA5 3LP or email us at EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk, addressing your request to [REDACTED], and explaining why you're unhappy with our response. We'll be very happy to review your request and ensure we've done everything we can to assist you.

Any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this response, and we will reply within 40 working days from receipt of the request for internal review.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

We'd love to hear your feedback on how we handled your request! If you have a moment, please complete our short survey here – your input helps us improve our service.