



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited
Haweswater House
Lingley Mere Business Park
Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000
unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR-646
Date: 22/01/2026
Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). As your request contained a number of specific questions, this response restates each part of the request (in bold) and then follows this with our response:

Q1. Under the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 and DWI oversight, please supply all water quality results for my specific water supply zone covering the previous 12 months, including:

Microbiological:

- **E. coli**
- **Coliforms**
- **Enterococci**
- **Cryptosporidium**
- **Giardia**

Chemical and physical:

- **Fluoride levels**
- **Chlorine residual levels (free and combined)**
- **Trihalomethanes (THMs) breakdown**
- **PFAS/PFOA/PFOS levels**
- **pH, turbidity, conductivity**
- **Nitrates/nitrites**
- **Pesticides and herbicides**
- **Hydrocarbons**
- **Any industrial or treatment by-products**

Heavy metals and inorganics:

- **Lead**
- **Copper**
- **Aluminium**
- **Cadmium**
- **Mercury**
- **Arsenic**

Pharmaceuticals (if tested):



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- **Hormones**
- **Antibiotics**
- **Any detected drug metabolites**

Please include sampling dates, locations, testing methods, compliance thresholds, failures, exceedances, corrective actions, and DWI commentary.

Please first allow me to provide some context on the parameters which water companies must monitor for, along with where this monitoring must be carried out. Water Companies collect samples daily from water treatment works, service reservoirs and customer properties. These samples are tested in an accredited laboratory using approved methods to ensure that the water quality meets the requirements set in the Regulations. Within the Regulations, there is a list of parameters which companies must monitor for, where the monitoring should occur (e.g. at a customer's property) and the maximum level which is acceptable in drinking water; these levels are known as a Prescribed Concentration or Values (PCV) or more simply the 'regulatory standard' or 'legal limit'. It is however worthy of note, that PCVs are set based on several factors and most exceedances of the regulatory standard would not be considered a risk to health. A full list of the parameters that Water Companies must monitor for, including the PCVs, can be found on the Drinking Water Inspectorate's (DWI) website by following this link: [Drinking Water Standards and Regulations - Drinking Water Inspectorate](#).

A copy of the water quality results for your water supply zone over the past 24 months accompany this response in Appendix 1. We have also included water quality results for cryptosporidium and PFAS compounds, these parameters are monitored at the water treatment works supplying your property as opposed to customer properties. Water companies are not required to monitor for giardia and pharmaceuticals.

During the 24 months we have reported 163,391 test results for your water supply zone. There has only been one exceedance within your Water Supply Zone in the past the 24 months. This was an iron exceedance, and it was reported from a customer property in October 2024. Due to GDPR, United Utilities are unable to share the location or provide the report sent to the DWI however a summary of the exceedance and associated actions are included below.

Where there is an exceedance of the water quality standards a full investigation is carried out including, and not limited to, obtaining resamples from appropriate locations, onsite investigations by field staff and carrying out a review of water quality and online data. When a root cause is identified, action is taken to rectify the issue and customers are advised of the actions taken to prevent a reoccurrence.

In line with the above, we carried out an investigation into the elevated result. This concluded that the most likely root cause was a short lived disturbance of historic deposits within the local area. The investigation was shared with the regulator and no recommendations or corrective actions were received. The Company is continuing with our programme of proactive mains flushing to remove these deposits from the distribution mains and prevent a recurrence.



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You can also view the latest water quality data for the water supplied to your area, at any time, on our website at <https://www.unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/your-water-supply/>. If you input your postcode on the website, the results of samples that have been taken in the last 12 months from your local area can be viewed. The report covers a rolling 12-month period and is updated weekly. In the past 12 months, there have been no exceedances of the water quality standards.

With respect to PFAS compounds, there are no regulatory standards for PFAS in drinking water. However, recommendations have been made to include such standards in the next review of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations. In the meantime, the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) has issued guidance that the water industry must follow.

The DWI's approach is based on a three-tier system, which reflects the level of PFAS detected and determines the actions required for detections at each level:

Tiers	Value	Risk Level
Tier 1	<0.01 µg/L	Low Risk
Tier 2	<0.1 µg/L	Medium Risk
Tier 3	>0.1 µg/L	High Risk

The results from the water treatment works supplying your property are classified as Tier 1 (lowest risk).

With regards to pharmaceuticals, we do not routinely monitor for pharmaceuticals in drinking water. Most of our drinking water comes from upland impounding reservoirs that have very few wastewater inputs, therefore our sources would be considered low risk. We are actively involved in research to understand the concentrations of pharmaceuticals in the environment and should any risks be highlighted through this work, then further investigations, including monitoring will be undertaken. No standards currently exist for pharmaceuticals in drinking water; so, water companies are not required to routinely look for them. The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) has published a report titled 'Toxicological evaluation for pharmaceuticals in drinking water' which is available on their website via this link <https://www.dwi.gov.uk/research/completed-research/risk-assessment-chemical/toxicological-evaluation-for-pharmaceuticals-in-drinking-water/>.

Our schedule of accreditation can be found on the UKAS website by following this link <https://www.ukas.com/download-schedule/1494/Testing/>. This lists all the testing methods, all materials tested, the types of tests and range of measurements plus the specifications, equipment and techniques used in our Laboratory.

Q2. Request for Water Safety Plan and Risk Assessments

Please provide:



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- **The full Water Safety Plan for my supply zone**
- **All risk assessments submitted to the DWI**
- **Any flagged risks, non-compliance issues, or corrective measures**
- **All DWI audit reports for the treatment works supplying my area**

The DWSP approach involves 'source to tap' risk management that identifies and proactively manages risks to drinking water quality. This approach is central to the way in which United Utilities ensures a continuous supply of safe drinking water now and in the future. There are three key elements that are considered, these are: hazard characterisation and risk assessment, identification of control measures and associated monitoring and finally verification and continuous review.

We are unable to provide the full Water Safety Plan or risk assessments for your supply zone in line with Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR as this information is deemed to be part of Critical National Infrastructure and is therefore protected for National Security. However, we can confirm that your local Water Supply Zone is covered by two legal instruments. The first is an enforcement order to carry out work to reduce the risk of discolouration on supplies from the Vyrnwy Large Diameter Trunk Main (LDTM). This work is due to be completed in 2028 and involves:

1. Cleaning and refurbishing the Vyrnwy large diameter trunk main.
2. Enhanced monitoring at strategic points and in zones supplied
3. Proactive maintenance programme for all tanks and valves on the system.

The second is a Regulation 28 Notice associated with Oswestry Water Treatment Works, where the Company is spending £247 million to upgrade the water treatment processes. This work is due to complete in the middle of 2026.

All details with respect to remedial, enforcement or warning notices (improvement programmes) are included on the DWI's website by following this link <https://www.dwi.gov.uk/water-companies/improvement-programmes/united-utilities-water-improvement-programmes/>

With respect to audit reports for the treatment works supplying your area, I can confirm there have been no DWI audits carried out in the past 24 months.

Q3. Duty to Supply Wholesome Water under Water Industry Act 1991

Under Sections 68–70 of the Water Industry Act 1991, you are legally required to supply “wholesome water” that is fit for human consumption.

Please supply written evidence that United Utilities is currently meeting obligations under:

- **Section 68 (Failure to Supply Wholesome Water)**
- **Section 70 (Supplying Water Unfit for Human Consumption – Offence)**

Please refer to our response to question 1. The sampling results for the previous 12-month period

confirm that wholesome water, which is fit for human consumption, is supplied to your area.

Q4. Request for Compliance Documents, Incident Reports and Breaches

Please provide all information for the past 24 months relating to:

- Compliance documents submitted to the DWI
- Monitoring schedules
- Failures or exceedances of standards
- Remedial action notices
- Enforcement or warning notices
- Infrastructure failures
- Any contamination events
- Customer notification logs
- Any failures reported to the DWI or Environment Agency

The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 sets the monitoring schedules for sampling. It states the locations and how many samples we need to take from our water treatment works, storage tanks and customer properties. As the population of your WSZ is 70,870, the maximum number of times we are required to sample your water supply zone is 180 per annum for microbiological parameters, with fewer samples required, as laid out in the regulations referenced above, for the chemical parameters.

Please refer to our response to question 1 which provides and summarises the results from water quality samples taken in your water supply zone and the details regarding any exceedances of the standards.

Please refer to our response to question 2 which provides details on remedial action notices, enforcement and warning notices.

We have reviewed the information within your Water Supply Zone that may relate to infrastructure failures and contamination events. We have notified the Drinking Water Inspectorate of two water quality events, the details of which are included in the table below. There have been no contamination events affecting your Water Supply Zone.

Date	Event Type	Infrastructure Related	Description, Impact and Risk Assessment
Aug-25	Discoloured Water	Yes	There was a burst on the Rivington Large Diameter Trunk Main. Action was taken to rezone the supply to ensure customers continued to receive water via an alternative route during the repair. Altering the flow of water in the pipes caused short term discolouration of the water. This caused no risk to public health and flushing was undertaken to ensure this impacted our customers for as little time as possible.

Date	Event Type	Infrastructure Related	Description, Impact and Risk Assessment
Oct-25	Bacteriological Detection at a Treated Water Tank	Yes	A single enterococci was detected at a treated water storage tank which supplied customers in this area. The tank was taken out of supply and isolated. Further samples taken from the tank and the area supplied all passed the relevant tests, so there was no risk to public health. The tank has been fully drained down, inspected, cleaned and is now back in supply, following further satisfactory sampling.

Q5. Environmental Discharge Practices (Rivers and Coastal Waters)

Under the Environment Agency and Water Resources Act 1991, please provide:

- All wastewater discharge permits held by United Utilities in my area

Please note that all discharge permits held by United Utilities are publicly available and can be viewed on [Environmental Permitting Regulations – Discharges to Water and Groundwater](#).

- All discharge event logs for the past 24 months

Discharge event data is publicly available, and can be viewed on [Storm overflow performance | United Utilities](#). When reviewing this, it is important to recognise that the data is raw, unvalidated data. There are therefore a number of points which you should take into consideration:

- Raw telemetry data should not be treated as validated regulatory Event Duration Monitor (EDM) data due to the potential for sensor malfunctions, data transmission errors or environmental interference (which are rectified when this data is validated). There may also be gaps in the data resulting from instrument failure or maintenance, for example.
- Whilst error codes from sensors are captured and inspected, they may still appear as erroneous data in this raw telemetry dataset, as erroneous and anomalous data will not have been removed.
- As this raw data has not gone through data validation it will likely be different to what is reported annually in our regulatory EDM return.
- Storm overflow events and untreated releases

Please see our response to your previous point.

- Chemical analysis of discharged effluent

Sample data for discharged effluent is publicly available on the Environment Agency's website: [Map Explorer | Water Quality Explorer](#). To use their platform, you can either search for the area you're interested in using the search bar at the top of the map or use the filter option on the lefthand side of

the map. You can also select the type of sample point you're interested in.

- **Any breaches of environmental permits**

Please see enclosed a spreadsheet titled Appendix 2. Copies of environmental permit breaches in the Wigan area for the last 24 months are available in the first tab.

- **Any enforcement notices issued against United Utilities**

There have been no enforcement notices issued to United Utilities in the last 24 months for sites in the Wigan area.

- **Any pollution incidents recorded or investigated**

The second tab of Appendix 2 includes copies of all recorded pollution incidents for the past 24 months in Wigan.

Q6. Ofwat Customer Information Duties

As a regulated water undertaker, United Utilities must provide transparent and accurate information to customers under Ofwat licence conditions. Failure to provide the requested data constitutes a breach of these obligations.

Formal Billing Dispute (Lawful Status)

I am placing my water account into formal dispute pending the outcome of this investigation. This is not a refusal to pay. It is a lawful dispute raised under consumer rights and industry complaint rules. While a formal complaint is active:

- **No enforcement or debt action may be taken**
- **No negative credit reporting may occur**
- **Billing must remain paused or held until the complaint is resolved**

For awareness, United Utilities have been appointed by Secretary of State to operate the water and wastewater network in the North West of England, to use the network to supply customers with water and to collect and treat wastewater. As United Utilities have a statutory duty to supply water and wastewater services to customers in the Northwest, rather than a contractual agreement, charges are raised in accordance with our Charges Scheme, made under section 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

Our Customer Relations Team have confirmed that whilst your account was placed on hold until 11 January 2026, this hold has since ended and the balance on the account is due and payable. This means that data will be shared with third party credit agencies, as is permitted by the Information Commissioner's Office and Ofwat. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact our

affordability team on 0800 072 6765 who will be happy to help.

Q7. Health and Public Welfare Concerns

I have personally observed significant differences in health and wellbeing between individuals consuming local tap water versus those who avoid it. These concerns warrant full investigation and regulatory review.

We are sorry you have concerns regarding the water being supplied to your property and would like to reassure you that the water supplying your area, as shown within the results provided, meet the relevant standards set by our regulators. We carried out over 384,000 tests during 2025 across the region and 99.97% met the water quality standards. Where concerns, or risks to supply are highlighted, these are reviewed by the Water Quality and Public Health team, and action is taken to reduce any risk. Any infringement or water quality event is investigated thoroughly, and further action is taken to resolve this as quickly as possible and prevent a recurrence.

We would like offer to take samples from the property at your convenience, which our Water Quality team will follow up on and update you with the results. If you would like to arrange sampling, please contact EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk, and we'll be happy to organise a sampler to attend your property at a time that suits you.

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.