



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited

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Our ref: EIR/ID709

Date: 04/03/2026

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).

Your request:

Dear United Utilities Environmental Information Regulations Request – Evidence of Drinking Water Safety I am writing to make a formal request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 EIR This request concerns evidence that the water supplied by United Utilities is fit for human consumption as required by UK law Under The Water Supply Water Quality Regulations 2016 as amended water intended for human consumption must be wholesome and clean meeting statutory standards for microbiological chemical and indicator parameters in order to protect human health Compliance with these regulations is overseen by the Drinking Water Inspectorate DWI To enable independent verification of compliance please provide the following environmental information The most recent water quality testing results for the water supply zone serving my property including all parameters regulated under the Water Supply Water Quality Regulations 2016 Confirmation of compliance with each Prescribed Concentration or Value PCV including details of any exceedances temporary departures or risk based exemptions in force within the last five years Copies of Drinking Water Inspectorate DWI inspection reports compliance assessments enforcement notices or correspondence relating to my supply zone or the relevant treatment works Details of laboratory testing arrangements including confirmation of UKAS accreditation and the frequency of testing for microbiological and chemical parameters Risk assessments or Water Safety Plans used to ensure that water supplied for human consumption does not pose a risk to human health Historical compliance data for my supply zone for at least the past five years including any incidents affecting potability or consumer health This information constitutes environmental information as defined by Regulation 2 1 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 As such it should be provided within 20 working days as required by Regulation 5 2 If any part of this request is refused please specify the exact exemption relied upon and provide the public interest test reasoning as required by the Regulations I would prefer the information to be provided electronically Yours faithfully

Our response:

Thank you for your enquiry. I'm sorry if your water supply has given you cause for concern. We'd like to reassure you that we do take water quality very seriously so please allow me to explain how we ensure that the water supplied to our customers meets the standards set in the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 and is safe to drink.

1. The most recent water quality testing results for the water supply zone serving my property including all parameters regulated under the Water Supply Water Quality Regulations 2016

Please allow me to first provide context on the parameters which water companies must monitor for, along with where this 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 five years of water quality results for your water supply zone accompany this response. These results are from customers' properties in your local area, that will be representative of the water supplied to your property. Please refer to 'Appendix A – Water Quality Data – WSZ 236'. 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.

2. Confirmation of compliance with each Prescribed Concentration or Value PCV including details of any exceedance's, temporary departures, or risk-based exemptions in force within the last five years

The below table shows the exceedances in your water supply zone within the last five years. During this period, we carried out over 13,600 tests, and there were seven exceedances reported. 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. The findings are shared with the DWI as required by the regulations.

Due to GDPR, United Utilities are unable to share the precise location or provide the report sent to the DWI, however a summary of the exceedance and associated root causes are listed below.

Date	Parameter	Root Cause
14/01/2022	Taste and odour	Despite a robust investigation, a definitive root cause for the taste and odour was not identified. Resamples at the original property and neighbouring properties were satisfactory. During the investigation we found lead pipework at the property which was replaced with a suitable alternative.
20/04/2022	Iron	Investigations confirmed that the iron exceedance was due to low turnover on the main. A change was made to the local network configuration to improve turnover. Samples taken following this change and flushing were satisfactory for iron.
28/11/2022	pH	Investigations confirmed that the elevated pH was associated with low turnover within that area of the network. Flushing was carried out on the mains which resolved the issue and samples taken post flushing were satisfactory.

05/04/2023	Taste	Despite a robust investigation, a definitive root cause for the taste was not identified. Resamples at the original property and neighbouring properties were satisfactory, concluding the wider network was unaffected.
05/07/2023	Coliform bacteria	Despite a robust investigation, a definitive root cause for the coliform bacteria was not identified. Resamples at the original property and neighbouring properties were satisfactory, concluding the wider network was unaffected.
08/08/2023	Coliform bacteria	Despite a robust investigation, a definitive root cause for the coliform bacteria was not identified. Resamples at the original property and neighbouring properties were satisfactory, concluding the wider network was unaffected.
16/11/2023	Taste and odour	Investigations concluded that the taste and odour was associated with black alkathene pipework supplying the property. The pipework was replaced which resolved the issue. Samples taken at neighbouring properties were satisfactory.

3. Copies of Drinking Water Inspectorate inspection reports, compliance assessments, enforcement notices, or correspondence relating to my supply zone or the relevant treatment works

We can confirm that within the last five years there have been no enforcement orders or notices served by the Drinking Water Inspectorate applicable to your water supply zone or for the water treatment works and service reservoirs that feed it. I can also confirm there have been no DWI inspections carried out in the past five years at the treatment works or service reservoirs supplying your property.

We can confirm that four of the five service reservoirs supplying your area were covered by a legal instrument that was revoked in 2022. The legal instrument was a Regulation 28 Notice associated with Treated Water Tanks. The Notice was issued to ensure that the risks arising from treated water storage were appropriately mitigated, including removing tanks from supply to clean and inspect their integrity.

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

As mentioned above, due to GDPR, United Utilities are unable to provide any compliance assessments report however a summary of the exceedance and associated root causes is included in our response to question 2. We are also unable to provide any inspection reports from the assets supplying your zone, as under Regulation 12(5)(a), which states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety.

4. Risk assessments or Water Safety Plans used to ensure that water supplied for human consumption does not pose a risk to human health

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.

Unfortunately, as advised above, United Utilities are unable to provide the full Water Safety Plan for your supply zone as under Regulation 5, this is protected for National Security.

Please refer to question 6 for details of public health risk assessments carried out in your zone.

5. Details of laboratory testing arrangements including confirmation of UKAS accreditation

and the frequency of testing for microbiological and chemical parameters

Our testing methods align with the standards set out by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), which is the UK's national body responsible for assessing the technical competence of laboratories. UKAS accreditation is only granted to organisations that demonstrate full compliance with recognised national and international standards, including the rigorous requirements of ISO/IEC 17025, which governs the quality, reliability, and technical validity of laboratory testing processes. This framework covers everything from staff competence and equipment calibration to robust quality assurance procedures and validated testing methods. Because our practices follow these same principles, our results meet the level of independence, accuracy, and reliability that UKAS accreditation is designed to guarantee, giving customers confidence our results testing.

All accredited methods for our laboratory are listed on the UKAS website at the following link: https://www.ukas.com/wp-content/uploads/schedule_uploads/00002/1494Testing-Multiple.pdf. For ease, we have downloaded this from the UKAS website and included it with this response. Please refer to 'Appendix B – United Utilities Schedule of Accreditation'.

As mentioned above, 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 52,870, the maximum number of times we are required to sample your water supply zone is 132 per annum for microbiological parameters, with fewer samples required, as laid out in the regulations referenced above, for the chemical parameters. A list of the sampling frequencies per parameter over the past five years also accompanies this response. Please refer to 'Appendix C – WSZ 236 Watergrove - Sampling Frequency.'

6. Historical compliance data for my supply zone for at least the past five years including any incidents affecting potability or consumer health

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.

We have reviewed the information held for your Water Supply Zone and include in the table below the single event that was notified to the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). There are many situations that we are required to report to the DWI. Where there is a concern that there is a potential risk to health we would issue appropriate advice to customers. We have not issued that advice to customers in your water supply zone during the last five years.

Date	Event Type	Description, Impact and Public Health Risk Assessment
July 2021	Elevated Turbidity at the supplying WTW	The WTW supplying the area shut down due to a fault. Once remedial work was completed, the WTW was restarted and returned to supply once all water quality parameters were acceptable. However, an elevated turbidity result of >1 NTU was recorded on the outlet of the WTW. Turbidity is a measure of the clarity of water. Investigations concluded that the elevated turbidity result was due to the introduction of water into the network before sufficient flushing was undertaken. The company installed additional valves in the downstream area to facilitate effective flushing should the situation be repeated. Throughout the incident, water supplied to customers was adequately treated and the risk to health throughout the event was low. DWI carried a thorough investigation following the event.

I hope that our response has provided the reassurance the water supplied to our customers is safe for consumption and that we comply with the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016.

If you have specific concerns about the water at your property, we'd be happy to arrange a visit from one of our Water Quality Officers to take samples and investigate further.

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