

**DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE**

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[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: EIR2025/19244
3 October 2025

Dear [Redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Drinking water test results

Thank you for your request for information of 10 September 2025 about drinking water test results. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

In the Drinking Water Inspectorate's July 2025 report into Drinking Water quality 2024 it highlighted the results of PFAS testing.

On page 22, it says that of 747,386 tests carried out there were 292 in raw water which showed Tier 3 levels of PFAS and 1,729 in treated water which showed Tier 2 levels of PFAS.

Under EIR Regulations I would like to request a copy of the results for those 2,021 tests, including the:

- *Test ID*
- *The date the sample was taken*
- *Coordinates of the location it was taken. Happy to accept in these other readily available formats: lat/lon; easting/northing; or NGR*
- *The site type of the test e.g. borehole, surface water etc*
- *The compound tested e.g. PFOA or combination of compounds*
- *The total level detected of PFAS*
- *Water company responsible for site*

Can I have the data provided in two separate excel sheets, one for the Tier 2 treated water results and one of the Tier 3 raw water results please.

Information you have requested is provided in the attached files:

PFAS tier 2 treated.xlsx

PFAS tier 3 raw.xlsx

Please note that in the raw water data file the source type uses the following code:

GW is Ground Water, and SW is surface water. The Data ID column is the Test ID you requested.

We are withholding the specific locations from which samples are collected under regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIRs, which relates to information whose disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety. In this instance the specific part of this exception that is engaged is national security.

Regulation 12(5)(a)

In all part of the request above the specific part of this exception that is engaged is national security and in applying we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We have also applied a presumption in favour of disclosure, as required by regulation 12(2) of the EIRs.

We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) testing. We understand that release of this information aids accountability and transparency in government. However, there is a stronger public interest in withholding the information because releasing the specific location of a sampling point could result in an act of sabotage around the sampling point. Releasing information about the location of water testing sites could expose sensitive data about the broader water supply system. Such infrastructure is classified as critical national infrastructure, meaning any vulnerability or attack could have serious implications for public health, security, and the economy. Detailed knowledge of where testing occurs may give malicious actors insight into weaknesses or gaps in the water supply chain, making it easier to disrupt the system through sabotage, contamination, or cyberattacks.

This regulation is engaged because the water infrastructure is critical to national security, and we have therefore concluded that the location details of the samples should be withheld in the stronger interest of public safety.

Information disclosed in response to this EIRs request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](#), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

DWI FOIA and EIR team

dwi.enquiries@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Vanessa Drury, Head of Information Rights via email at InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk and they will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure is on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted using the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>