

2024 EDM Annual Return Supplementary Information

Our commitment

At Thames Water we recognise that all discharges of untreated sewage are unacceptable. We are committed to meeting Government targets for storm overflow improvements, prioritising overflows in the most sensitive catchments.

Transparency is really important to us at Thames Water. That is why at the end of 2022 we were the first supplier to launch a Storm Overflow Discharge map which shows near real-time data of where a storm discharge has occurred. This map can be found on the River Health pages of our website ([EDM Map](#) | [Storm discharge data](#) | [River health](#) | [Thames Water](#)).

Storm overflows take place at our sewage treatment works and sewer network. They allow us to deal with excess flow due to rainfall and prevent sewer flooding in our homes, gardens and streets. These discharges are regulated by the Environment Agency through the issuing of Environmental Permits which set out the circumstances when storm discharges can occur. Further information on storm discharges and overflows can be found on the River Health pages of our website ([Storm discharge and event duration monitoring](#) | [Thames Water](#)).

We are committed to responding to all requests for information through the Environmental Information Regulations ([Requesting environmental information](#) | [Regulation](#) | [About Us](#) | [Thames Water](#)), and working in a collaborative and transparent manner with our regulators.

2024 summary

In 2024, parts of our region experienced some of the wettest weather in 250 years and parts of central southern England recorded 350% of average rainfall in the month of September. Storm overflow discharges are closely correlated with rainfall and groundwater conditions, and we therefore experienced an increase in the frequency and duration of storm discharge events.

Our network was not designed to deal with such extremes in rainfall, and while we view all storm discharges as unacceptable, the system was designed to operate in this way to prevent sewage backing up into people's homes.

We know how much people enjoy and appreciate rivers, which is why over the next five years we will deliver a record amount of investment to address our ageing infrastructure. This is an enormous undertaking; we are responsible for the oldest and most complex infrastructure of any company in the sector.

Our planned investment includes £1.8 billion to improve river health in London and upgrades to over 250 of our sites across the region to lower the number of storm discharges.

Our 1.8bn investment will include work to significantly reduce discharges from 26 sewer overflows in London, deliver improvements to river health including river restoration schemes and treatment works upgrades, renew and repair 14km of pressurised sewers known as rising mains to reduce the risk of pollution incidents affecting watercourses, and increase the proportion of proactive

maintenance at eight major London treatment works to protect the quality of the rivers to which they discharge.

Previous investment includes the newly completed Tideway Tunnel that will capture 95% of the untreated sewage that previously entered the tidal Thames in a typical year, and as our investment over the next five years gathers pace, the positive benefits of this new investment will begin to feed through.

Differences between our 2023 and 2024 data

A number of presumed unconsented CSO (*Combined Sewer Overflow*) locations reported last year have been confirmed as not being a CSO, as such they do not discharge to the environment and have been removed from the annual return.

There has been a change to the number of Tideway overflows, where some have been deactivated to make way for a smaller number of new overflows.