

# 2023 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 launched our 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.

We are also investing nearly £4.5 billion in the 'Super Sewer', Thames Tideway Tunnel. The tunnel will capture all of the 'first flush' from the big London sewers after heavy rain and reduce discharges by around 95% in a typical year to the tidal River Thames. The project started on site in 2016 and is due to finish in 2025.

Further details of our plans and investment priorities related to storm discharges can be found on our website by following the below links.

- [Drainage and wastewater plan | Regulation | About us | Thames Water](#)
- [Drainage Plans | Regulation | About us | Thames Water](#)
- [Pollution incident reduction | Regulation | About us | Thames Water](#)

## Differences between our 2023 and previously reported Event Duration Monitoring (EDM) Annual returns

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2024 we submitted our EDM Annual Return data for the calendar year 2023 to the Environment Agency. This return includes information on the frequency and duration of storm discharges from locations across the Thames Water region.

Following a reconciliation of our asset data and permit requirements in 2022 we identified further overflows that required investigation to determine whether an EDM monitor was required. This reconciliation led to a significant programme of surveys and EDM installations at the identified overflows. This programme was completed in December 2023, and we have installed new monitors where they were found to be required.

As a result of the surveys and installations described above and permit changes during 2023, the total number of locations listed in our 2023 submission differs from previous submissions. The number of overflows listed in 2023 has decreased.

In our 2022 submission we listed 777 Storm Overflows. In 2023 we listed 698, of which 619 were considered active storm overflows. The reduction in locations between 2022 and 2023 is due to a combination of us confirming that multiple locations were not storm overflows, surrendering permits where required, and the removal of duplicate locations from the Annual Return.

### 2023 EDM Summary

In 2023 we experienced prolonged periods of wet weather. 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 in comparison to 2022.

**Table 1.** Comparison of the EDM Summary Statistics, as published by the Environment Agency, for the previous four years (\* note the 2020 EDM figures provided have been updated since the original submission in February 2021 following further data validation checks)

	2020 *	2021	2022	2023	4 Year Rolling Average
Number of locations	469 *	465	777 (480 with EDM installed)	698 (619)	N/A
Total duration (hours)	213,924.46 *	163,089.85	74,693.25	196,414.05	162,030.4
Total spill count	16,654 *	14,713	8,014	16,990	14092

Spill count and the duration of spill events can vary by location and are highly influenced by weather conditions. Full details of our EDM data can be found in our 2023 Annual Return document located on the River Health pages of our website ([Storm discharge data](#) | [River health](#) | [Thames Water](#)).