

Site Visit Report

Under the *European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023*, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the supervisory authority in relation to Uisce Éireann and its role in the provision of public drinking water supplies. This audit was carried out to assess the performance of Uisce Éireann in providing clean and wholesome water to the public water supply named below.

The audit process is a sample of the performance of a water treatment plant and public water supply on a given date.

Water Supply Zone	
Name of Installation	Oughterard
Organisation	Uisce Éireann
Scheme Code	1200PUB1041
County	Galway
Site Visit Reference No.	SV31995

Report Detail	
Issue Date	14/04/2025
Prepared By	Maria O'Connell

Site Visit Detail			
Date Of Inspection	20/03/2025	Announced	Yes
Time In	10:50	Time Out	13:35
EPA Inspector(s)	Maria O'Connell		
Additional Visitors			
Company Personnel	Uisce Éireann: Pearse Faherty, Vinny McGrath, Siobhán Sheridan. Galway County Council (working in partnership with Uisce Éireann): Vincent McDonagh		

> Summary of Key Findings

1. The alarm and inhibit trigger points and time delays enabled at this plant were aligned with EPA guidance regarding disinfection and filtration at the time of the audit.
2. The site specific alarm response procedure did not include the recording of checks on alarm and inhibit status after contract works were conducted on site or responses to critical alarms on site.

> Introduction

Oughterard water treatment plant abstracts water from Lough Buffy and serves Oughterard public water supply (PWS) with approximately 2000m³/day to approx. 6095 consumers. Treatment at the plant consists of aeration, coagulation, flocculation, clarification, rapid gravity filtration, chlorination and fluoridation. This audit was undertaken to assess Uisce Éireann's performance in producing clean and wholesome water with a focus on the alarms and inhibits in place at the treatment plant to ensure the appropriate oversight of treatment processes.

> Supply Zones Areas Inspected

The audit included a site tour of the abstraction point and treatment processes at Oughterard WTP with site personnel.



1. Alarms, Inhibits & Oversight Audits 2025

		Answer
1.1	Is there a documented site specific incident response and incident escalation process?	Yes
	Comment	
	1. A site specific incident response and escalation process was documented and displayed at the water treatment plant however there were no instructions covering verification of alarms and inhibits status following maintenance work on site.	
		Answer
1.2	Are plant performance trends accessible by operational staff at the water treatment plant?	Yes
	Comment	
	1. Plant trends are accessible via a mobile application and there is also a PC at the plant however this device was not operational at the time of the audit. Plant trends were reviewed on a laptop device provided by Uisce Éireann as an alternative.	
		Answer
1.3	Is there appropriate oversight of alarm responses?	No
	Comment	
	1. Alarm history was available via SCADA however there was no record of critical alarm responses retained at the plant. Verification of appropriate managerial oversight on such responses is not recorded.	
	2. The site operator noted that oversight of plant alarms and performance trends on a routine basis is limited at this time due to resource shortages.	
		Answer
1.4	Is there a documented procedure for responding to specific alarms?	No



2. Site Specific Issues

2.1

Are upgrade works proposed for this site?

Answer

Yes

Comment

1. Uisce Éireann outlined that works to upgrade the pH adjustment system and backwash water treatment onsite are planned.

2.2

Are there adequate warning alarm setpoints in place at the treatment plant based on fluoride residual levels?

Answer

No

Comment

1. There are no warning alarm setpoints in place to indicate a failure of the hydrofluorosilicic acid dosing system. Duty and standby pumps were in place but there was no provision for automatic switchover on pumps e.g. time or fault.

Recommendations

Subject	Oughterard Drinking Water Audit 2025	Due Date	12/05/2025
Action Text	<p>Uisce Éireann is responsible for ensuring a clean and wholesome supply of drinking water and should implement the following recommendations without delay.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Progress the proposed works on pH adjustment and residuals treatment at Oughterard Water Treatment Plant.2. Update the site specific alarm response procedure to include checks on alarm and inhibit status post contractor works at the WTP.3. Develop and implement a record system for responses to critical alarms at the plant and ensure managerial oversight of such responses can be verified.4. That the WTP is appropriately resourced to ensure necessary operational control and oversight of treatment processes and supply of drinking water.5. Provide for automatic switch over between duty and standby fluoride pumps on site and an alarm to alert operational staff of faults/issues, as appropriate.6. Ensure that the plant PC/laptop can demonstrate plant trends for operational staff to review on a regular basis. <p>Actions required by Uisce Éireann</p> <p>During the audit, Uisce Éireann representatives were advised of the audit findings and that action must be taken by Uisce Éireann to address the issues raised.</p> <p>Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before 12/05/2025 detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the above recommendations.</p> <p>The EPA advises that the findings and recommendations from this audit report should, where relevant, be addressed at other public water supplies.</p>		