

Site Visit Report

Under the *European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014* as amended, 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	Birr PWS
Organisation	Uisce Éireann
Scheme Code	2500PUB1002
County	Offaly
Site Visit Reference No.	SV27392

Report Detail	
Issue Date	22/02/2023
Prepared By	Lisa Noone

Site Visit Detail			
Date Of Inspection	26/01/2023	Announced	Yes
Time In	11:00	Time Out	13:30
EPA Inspector(s)	Lisa Noone Michelle Roche		
Additional Visitors			
Company Personnel	Uisce Éireann: Joseph Moran, Jessica Evans Murphy Ireland Ltd. (DBO Contractor): Ellen Cassidy, Gemma Dunican, Roisin Watters, Sean Devoy, Andrew McCourt		

> Summary of Key Findings

The audit found that the Birr Water Treatment Plant (WTP) was operating and performing well in providing clean and wholesome water to the public supply. Uisce Éireann should ensure that the supply of safe drinking water is maintained and that Birr WTP continues to be suitably managed and operated at all times upon handover from the DBO contractor to Offaly County Council.

> Introduction

Birr WTP serves a population of 5,307 in Birr, Co. Offaly, with an average of 3,000m³ of treated water being produced at the plant per day. Birr WTP is currently under a Design, Build and Operate (DBO) contract with Murphy Ireland Ltd. as part of the 'Tullamore & Birr Water Supply Schemes Project'. The WTP returned to service in 2021 following demolition of the original Birr WTP works and complete upgrade of the plant and associated treatment units. Handover of the plant from Murphy Ireland Ltd to Offaly Council Council has commenced and will be ongoing for a number of weeks.

The raw water abstraction is from the Camcor River via Syngefield pumping station and is supplemented by a gravity-fed line from Kinnitty River. The treatment at the plant comprises coagulation, flocculation, clarification by dissolved air flotation (DAF), rapid gravity filtration (RGF) via three filters, chlorination and fluoridation.

The audit of Birr WTP was carried out to assess the performance of Irish Water in providing clean and wholesome drinking water.

> Supply Zones Areas Inspected

All treatment processes were inspected on-site as well as the raw water abstraction point at Syngefield pumping station. The raw water abstraction point at Kinnitty and the treated water reservoirs served by the Birr WTP were not inspected as part of the audit.



1. Site Specific Issues

	Answer
1.1 Has handover of the water treatment plant upgrade from the DBO contractor been completed?	No
Comment	
At present Birr WTP is being managed and suitably controlled by Murphy Ireland Ltd acting under a DBO contract to Uisce Éireann. Management and oversight of the plant is currently being handed over to Offaly County Council due for completion within the coming weeks.	

Recommendations

Subject	Birr Audit Recommendations	Due Date	22/03/2023
Action Text	<p>Uisce Éireann is responsible for ensuring a clean and wholesome supply of drinking water and should implement the following recommendation without delay:</p> <p>1. Uisce Éireann should ensure that the clean and wholesome supply of drinking water is maintained and that Birr WTP continues to be suitably managed and operated at all times upon handover from the DBO contractor to Offaly County Council.</p> <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>The EPA advises that the findings and recommendations from this audit report should, where relevant, be addressed at other public water supplies.</p>		