

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	Sow Regional
Organisation	Uisce Éireann
Scheme Code	3300PUB1641
County	Wexford
Site Visit Reference No.	SV35233

Report Detail	
Issue Date	28/05/2026
Prepared By	David O'Malley

Site Visit Detail			
Date Of Inspection	28/04/2026	Announced	Yes
Time In	11:00	Time Out	13:15
EPA Inspector(s)	David O'Malley Sarah O'Connor		
Additional Visitors			
Company Personnel	Uisce Éireann: Padraig Lyng, Bríd Whelan and John Black. Inland Fisheries Ireland: Donnachadh Byrne.		

> Summary of Key Findings

1. A chemical spill at the Kilmallock Bridge water treatment plant between 23/04/2026 and 26/04/2026 resulted in approximately 6,700 litres of aluminium sulphate entering the sludge tank, resulting in a supernatant/aluminium sulphate mixture discharging to the River Sow via the supernatant discharge pipe. The audit confirmed that the spillage occurred due to a crack in the piping connecting the aluminium sulphate bulk storage tank and the day tank.
2. Inland Fisheries Ireland were notified of the incident. There have been no reports of fish kills associated with the chemical spill from the Kilmallock Bridge water treatment plant.
3. Trend data assessed at the audit found that the incident did not have any effect on the quality of drinking water entering the supply. The audit found that drinking water quality entering the Sow Regional Public Water Supply was not affected as there was sufficient aluminium sulphate in the day tank to allow normal treatment operations to continue unaffected.

Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before 29/06/2026 detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the four recommendations in this audit report.

> Introduction

The Kilmallock Bridge Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is the largest of two water treatment plants that supply the Sow Regional Public Water Supply (PWS). The PWS supplies an average of 528 m³/day of water, serving a population of 12,377 (EDEN 2025).

The source for the supply is the River Sow and two onsite boreholes. Treatment consists of coagulation, flocculation, clarification, rapid gravity filtration, pH correction, chlorination, fluoridation and sludge treatment.

The audit was carried out in response to Uisce Éireann's notification on the 27/04/2026 to the EPA of an aluminium sulphate spill at the plant between 23/04/2026 and 26/04/2026.

> Supply Zones Areas Inspected

The inspection focused on chemical storage facilities, sludge storage tanks and drinking water quality trends at the time of the incident.



1.1

	Answer
Was the incident suitably alerted to the plant operators, escalated and managed in order to maintain water quality and protect public health?	No
Comment	
<p>1. Incident</p> <p>Uisce Éireann notified the EPA and Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) on Monday 27/04/2026 of a chemical spill which occurred at the Kilmallock Bridge water treatment plant (WTP) between 23/04/2026 and 26/04/2026 which resulted in approximately 6,700 litres of aluminium sulphate entering the WTPs sludge tank from which the supernatant overflows into the River Sow.</p> <p>The supernatant continued to discharge to the Sow River from the sludge holding tanks between 23/04/2026 and 26/04/2026 as per the normal process.</p> <p>2. Cause of Incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aluminium sulphate is a coagulant used in the drinking water treatment process and stored externally in two 10,000 L double skinned BSTs. Aluminium sulphate is pumped from the BSTs into a bunded day tank (1000 litres) located inside the planthouse. The BST No.1 was filled to 7,500 L on 23/04/2026. Operational staff checked the plant from 23/04/2026 to 26/04/2026 and the plant was operating satisfactorily. The BST No.1 was not checked during the checks. When filling the day tank at 08:15am on 27/04/2026, operational staff noticed that the level was not increasing. The BST level sensor in the plant was reading zero. Operational staff did not receive a low level BST alarm to their work phones. On inspection of the piping from the BST, a crack was observed in the piping exiting the BST located in the adjacent manhole which showed no visible signs of aluminium sulphate. Aluminium sulphate staining was observed leading into the sludge tank No.1. It is understood the spill travelled underground and surfaced in front of sludge tank No.1. <p>3. Action taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At 09:15 the WTP supervisor contacted contractors and Uisce Éireann Operations Manager of the incident who were on site at 10:20. The exit valve from the aluminium sulphate BST No.1 was closed and the valve to sludge tank No.1 was closed. The contents of sludge tank No.1 were emptied and brought to Wexford Waste Water Treatment Plant. Three investigative samples were taken downstream, upstream and in sludge tank No.1. Uisce Éireann notified the IFI by email at 11:30. The IFI visited the WTP on the morning of the 28/04/2026. They inspected upstream, downstream of the WTP and at Edenvale approximately 7km downstream. No adverse changes were observed by the IFI. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade the aluminium sulphate bulk storage tanks and associated pipework so that they are all located in a bunded area capable of containing at least 110% of the volume of chemicals stored therein. Refer to EPA guidance document - "IPC Guidance Note on Storage and Transfer of Materials for Scheduled Activities". Ensure all bulk storage tank and day tank level sensor alarms are activated and that alarms are dialled out via a cascade system to allow a timely response by plant operators. Develop an intern day tank filling procedure to ensure a similar incident does not reoccur. 	



2. Site Specific Issues

	Answer
2.1	Is the information reported by Uisce Éireann on the EPA EDEN portal correct?
	No
Comment	
1. Information regarding treatment reported on the EPA EDEN portal was inaccurate.	
Recommendation:	
4. Update EDEN with the correct treatment used at the plant.	

Recommendations

Actions required by Uisce Éireann

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.

Uisce Éireann is responsible for ensuring a clean and wholesome supply of drinking water and should implement the recommendations raised in this report without delay.

Response to Audit Report

Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before the date specified in the Summary of Key Findings detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the recommendations in this audit report.

The EPA advises that the findings and recommendations from this report should, where relevant, be addressed at other public water supplies.

Publication of Reports

Audit reports are published to the EPA's website, www.epa.ie, typically 1 month after the audit report is issued to Uisce Éireann.