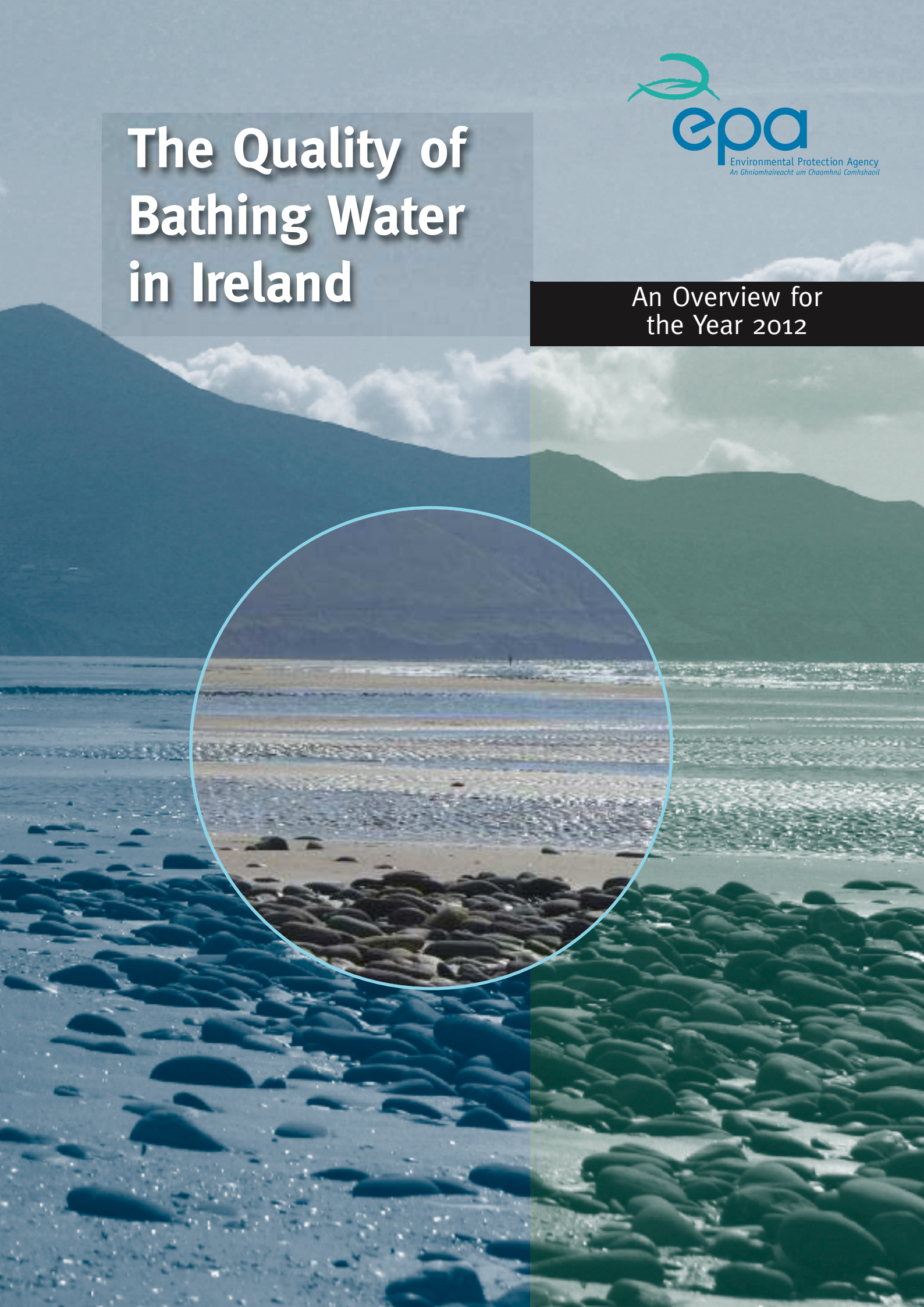


The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland

An Overview for
the Year 2012



Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a statutory body responsible for protecting the environment in Ireland. We regulate and police activities that might otherwise cause pollution. We ensure there is solid information on environmental trends so that necessary actions are taken. Our priorities are protecting the Irish environment and ensuring that development is sustainable.

The EPA is an independent public body established in July 1993 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. Its sponsor in Government is the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

LICENSING

We license the following to ensure that their emissions do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (e.g., landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations);
- large scale industrial activities (e.g., pharmaceutical manufacturing, cement manufacturing, power plants);
- intensive agriculture;
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

- Conducting over 2,000 audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities every year.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities in the areas of - air, noise, waste, waste-water and water quality.
- Working with local authorities and the Gardaí to stamp out illegal waste activity by co-ordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders, conducting investigations and overseeing remediation.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment as a result of their actions.

MONITORING, ANALYSING AND REPORTING ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- Monitoring air quality and the quality of rivers, lakes, tidal waters and ground waters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government.

REGULATING IRELAND'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Quantifying Ireland's emissions of greenhouse gases in the context of our Kyoto commitments.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, involving over 100 companies who are major generators of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Co-ordinating research on environmental issues (including air and water quality, climate change, biodiversity, environmental technologies).

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- Assessing the impact of plans and programmes on the Irish environment (such as waste management and development plans).

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING, EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

- Providing guidance to the public and to industry on various environmental topics (including licence applications, waste prevention and environmental regulations).
- Generating greater environmental awareness (through environmental television programmes and primary and secondary schools' resource packs).

PROACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Promoting waste prevention and minimisation projects through the co-ordination of the National Waste Prevention Programme, including input into the implementation of Producer Responsibility Initiatives.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE EPA

The organisation is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and four Directors.

The work of the EPA is carried out across four offices:

- Office of Climate, Licensing and Resource Use
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Environmental Assessment
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet several times a year to discuss issues of concern and offer advice to the Board.

The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland

An Overview for the Year 2012

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland

An Overview for the Year 2012

Published by the Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this publication however neither the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the author(s), or other staff accepts any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned, or claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full, as a consequence of any person acting or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this publication.

The collation and summation of data for this report was undertaken by Brigid Flood and Annmarie Tuohy. The report was prepared by Mr. Peter Webster (Senior Scientist, Reporting & Assessment) under the direction of Dr Micheál Lehane, (Programme Manager, Environmental Monitoring & Assessment) within the Office of Environmental Assessment.

The bathing water information contained in this overview report and the EPA online bathing water system Splash (www.bathingwater.ie) was provided by eighteen local authorities responsible for monitoring the quality of identified bathing waters within their functional areas. The assistance of EPA staff who contributed to the collation and validation of data used in Splash and in this assessment is acknowledged: Deirdre Kirwan and Una Cullen, with thanks to Aisling McElwain and Melanie Mageean for the preparation of the Bathing Water Quality Map of Ireland 2012, and to members of the cross office Bathing Water group for their input.

Introduction

Bathing waters have been extensively monitored throughout Europe since the introduction of the Bathing Water Directive (76/160/EEC) in 1976. Significant improvements in water quality have been achieved, in particular over the last decade, due to improvements in wastewater treatment systems and general water quality management practices as a consequence of implementation of the [Water Framework Directive](#).

In 1992 Ireland introduced the Quality of Bathing Waters Regulations 1992 ([S.I. 155 of 1992](#)) which transposed Directive 76/160/EEC. This complex legislation required the monitoring of several microbiological and physico-chemical parameters. In 2006 the EU undertook a major revision of the Bathing Water Directive following a number of major studies establishing links between bathing waters and public health. The revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC) came into force on 24th March 2006 and was transposed into Irish law as the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 ([SI No. 79 of 2008](#)). This will fully replace the original directive with effect from 31st December 2014 and it places significantly greater emphasis on the development of systems for the management of bathing waters and of notification of bathing water quality to the public. Building on research into the health risks associated with bathing waters it focuses on tighter microbiological standards for two new parameters, *Escherichia coli* (*E. Coli*) and Intestinal enterococci (I.E). Previous assessments were based principally on results of Total and Faecal Coliforms analyses plus a range of physico-chemical parameters.

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that bathing water quality is maintained and, where necessary, improved so that it complies with standards designated to protect public health and the environment. Since 2011 interim transitional measures have been in place whereby bathing water quality is reviewed against the microbiological standards of the existing 1976 Directive but using the two new parameters.

Microbiological compliance is assessed annually based on the percentage (number) of samples meeting the relevant microbiological standards and using a three tier classification of 'Good', 'Sufficient' or 'Poor' in keeping with previous assessments.

From 2015 onwards *E.Coli* and Intestinal Enterococci will be used to classify our bathing waters into four categories of 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Sufficient' and 'Poor' in accordance with the 2008 Regulations with a minimum target of 'Sufficient' to be achieved for all bathing waters. Classification will be based on assessment of water quality data over a rolling 4 year period using the data from 2011-2014 inclusive however compliance will be assessed on a percentile (ranked) basis which takes greater account of the spread of the results rather than using a simple pass / fail ratio.

Under the present classification system 'Good' water quality relates to compliance with both EU guide and mandatory values with 'Sufficient' relating to compliance with the mandatory values and 'Poor' reflecting non-compliance with mandatory values. Bathing waters are not currently classified as 'excellent' in this report as the 1976 Directive does not have bathing water standards that equate to this classification. This report presents an overview of the 2012 bathing season.

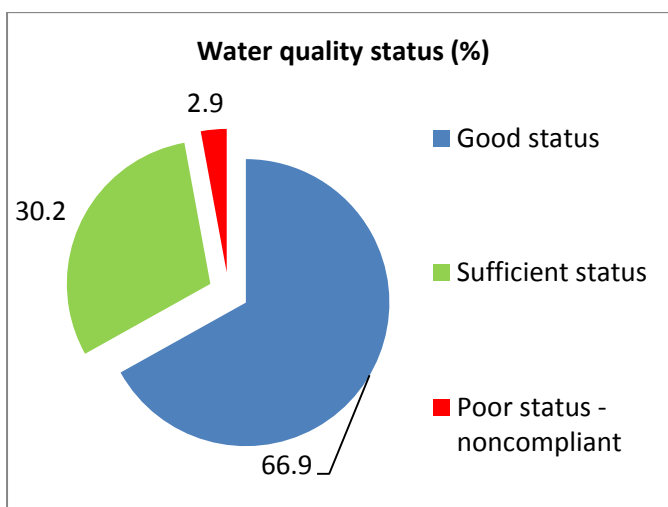
Overview of Bathing Water Quality in 2012

Quality of all Bathing Waters

The results of samples at the 136 designated bathing areas were assessed against the standards defined in Directive 76/160/EEC:

- Compliance with stricter guide values indicating water of **good** quality status
- Compliance with minimum mandatory values indicating water of **sufficient** quality status
- Noncompliance with mandatory values equating to **poor** water quality status.

Figure 1: 2012 Water Quality status (%)



In 2012, 97.1 % of bathing waters (132 of 136) complied with the EU mandatory values and achieved at least 'sufficient' water quality status. From 2009 to 2012, the proportion of bathing waters meeting the mandatory values has increased by over five per cent (Table 1) and shows a stable trend. The proportion of bathing waters meeting the stricter 'good' water quality however dropped to 66.9% (91 of 136) down from 83% (112 of 135) in 2011. The biggest impacts were felt in Co. Cork and Co. Kerry where several high quality beaches exhibited low but consistent levels of microbiological contamination.

Only three local authorities achieved 'good' status for all of their identified bathing waters: Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Sligo, and Leitrim County Councils however these account for only 8 of the 136 beaches. Just 4 of the 136 bathing waters failed to achieve sufficient water quality status. Clifden (Co. Galway), Fountainstown (Co. Cork), Rush (Fingal Co. Co.) and Ballyheigue (Co. Kerry).

As in previous years, water quality at Clifden was markedly influenced affected by discharges from the nearby sewage works discharge and currently remains closed to the public. This plant was licensed by the EPA in 2011 (Discharge Licence No. D0198-01). Upgrading, including disinfection of the effluent and relocation of the discharge point, is due for completion by the end of 2014 and is expected to bring about improvements in water quality ahead of the 2015 bathing season.

Fountainstown, located at the mouth of Cork harbour, suffered from episodic but persistent pollution throughout the summer and failed to meet the minimum standards. Ballyheigue in Co. Kerry failed solely due one very uncharacteristic sample which exceeded both the mandatory standard for *E. Coli* and guide value for Enterococci. The exceedence had not been forecast. In both of the above cases no specific cause was identified however it is suspected that run-off from adjacent catchments may have had an influence on both waters. In the case of Rush, five of the nine samples reported exceeded the *E. Coli* guide value with one exceeding the mandatory standard for *E. Coli* due to a wastewater pumping station discharge causing the bathing water to be assigned as poor.

In early June two beaches in Co. Donegal were notified as having been affected by the presence of a bloom of the marine algae *Karenia mikimotoi*. Although the microbiological quality of bathing waters was not affected several beaches were temporarily closed following the appearance of large numbers of dead fish and crustaceans.

A summary of 2009 – 2012 data is provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Comparison of 2012 Bathing Water Quality Status in the years 2009 - 2011

	Seawater				Freshwater				Overall			
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012
Identified bathing waters	122	122	126	127	9	9	9	9	131	131	135	136
Sufficient quality (No.)	114	120	124	123	8	7	9	9	122	127	133	132
Sufficient quality (%)	93.4	98.4	98.4	96.9	88.9	77.8	100	100	93.1	96.9	98.5	97.1
Good Quality (No.)	102	113	106	84	6	5	6	7	108	118	112	91
Good quality (%)	83.6	92.6	84.1	66.1	66.7	55.5	66.7	77.8	82.4	90.0	83.0	66.9

More information can be found on the Splash website (www.bathingwater.ie)

While annual rainfall for 2012 was near or above average, the summer of 2012 was one of the wettest on record according to Met Eireann. http://www.met.ie/MetAdmin/useruploads/file/annual_2012sum.pdf.

Despite the remarkably wet summer, as illustrated by Figure 2, which saw the south and southwest have record breaking rainfall figures, the overall the quality of Ireland’s bathing water quality remains very high. There was however a marked reduction in the number of waters achieving “Good” status, which is in keeping with results from the UK where the number of beaches achieving good quality status has also dropped significantly due to weather impacts. This was due not only to the severity of the rainfall but also its continuity (Figure 3), and below average sunshine which is a key factor influencing the rate of bacterial die-off. Prolonged rain resulted in saturated soils increasing the pollution run-off not only from agricultural land, particularly where livestock were being grazed or animal manures being spread, but also urban run-off from roads / pavements etc.

Figure 2: Rainfall during 2012 bathing season

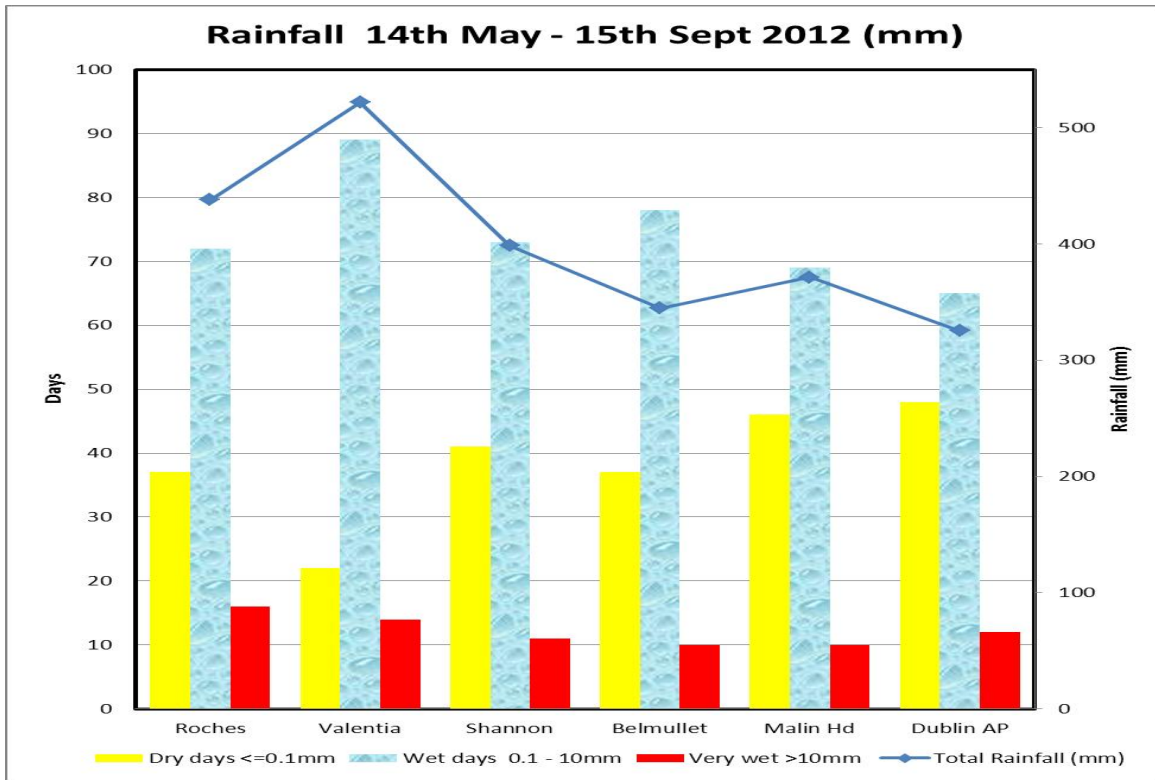
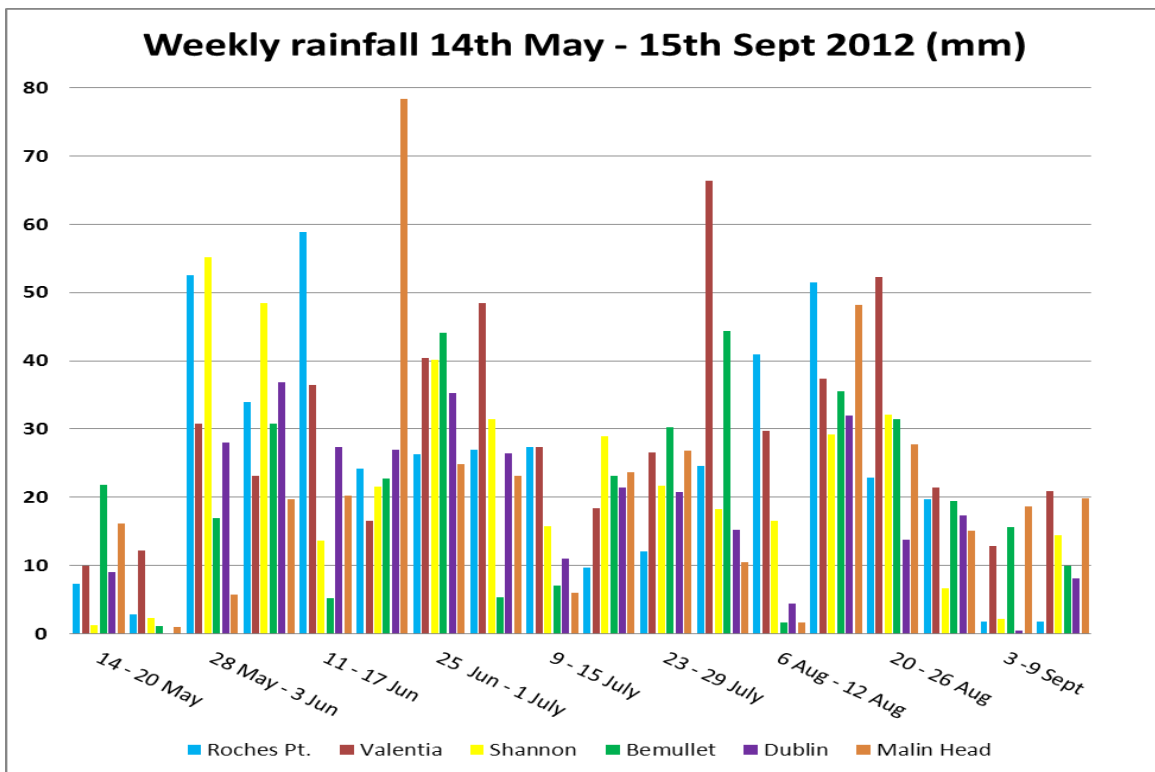


Figure 3: Rainfall patterns during 2012 BW season



As shown in Figures 2 and 3 above the southwest of the country was by far the wettest with Valentia (Co. Kerry) recording rainfall of over twice its 30year summer average on almost 80% of days during the bathing season. It was a similar story at Roches Point (Co. Cork) with over three times the average rainfall in June causing severe local flooding at times. By contrast the north and east coasts fared much better. The main cause appears to have been the location of the high altitude northern jet stream. During most summers this easterly airflow carries Atlantic depressions well to the north of the UK and Ireland however in late April it dipped to a more southerly track affecting much of Ireland, southwest Scotland and many parts of England & Wales for the entire summer where the impacts of continuous rainfall led to significant flooding and a similar deterioration in bathing water quality.

Faced with concerns over public safety, and acting on advice received from the Health Services Executive, many local authorities opted for precautionary restrictions on access to bathing waters following periods of heavy rain or where elevated microbiological counts were observed. Bathing water quality standards are derived from studies of bather exposure risk and are generally set at a circa. 5% risk level however, in only a few cases did bathing water quality actually exceed these standards. Of all of the samples taken during 2012 only 26 out of 1509 (1.7%) exceed the mandatory threshold for *E.Coli*. and for Enterococci while 59 (3.9%) exceeded the guide value of 100 cfu/100ml only 25 (1.7%) exceeded the 2008 Regulations good quality maximum of 200 cfu/100ml (95%ile).

The EPA has been in consultation with the HSE to establish guidance on suitable intervention thresholds for action in the event of microbial contamination. and it is anticipated that these will be published prior to the 2013 bathing season.

Why E.Coli and Enterococci?

E.Coli and Intestinal Enterococci are two types of bacteria that live predominantly in the gut of warm blooded animals including humans. They generally enter the water environment in run -off containing small amounts of faeces from agricultural land or urban areas, from the land-spreading of manures, or directly from wastewater treatment systems and overflows. Their lifetime outside the gut is generally a few hours to a few days depending on conditions however both animal and human faeces contain many millions of bacteria so it doesn't take much by way of pollution to reach the targets set within the bathing water regulations.

They present a relatively low risk at the thresholds set in the regulations, however because of their abundance they are used as indicators of the potential presence of other bacterial and viral species which, though less abundant, may present a greater risk to health. E.Coli have been shown to provide good correlation with illness in freshwater environments while Intestinal enterococci are more strongly correlated with illness from coastal waters.

EU Directive requirements

The EU bathing water Directive and revised Bathing Water Regulations places a significant and increased obligation on both Local authorities and the EPA for the provision of information to the public in a timely manner. Among the key requirements are;

- Identification of bathing waters following public consultation
- Bathing Water Profiles: involving a thorough assessment of the catchment characteristics with consideration and risk assessment of possible pollution sources together with management measures necessary for their control.
- Provision of signage and up to date bathing water information at the beach
- Monitoring Calendars: involving details of monitoring programs for each bathing water
- Notification to the public and the Agency of any event or pollution incident where there is a risk that bathing water quality may have deteriorated due e.g. to heavy rainfall
- Management measures: involving the reporting of any measures taken to reduce potential pollution or actions taken in the event of a pollution incident

The bathing season in Ireland, is designated as being from 1st June to 15th September. Each year, in advance of commencement of the bathing season, Local Authorities submit to the EPA details of beaches, monitoring calendars and any updated bathing water profiles. A pre-season sample is required in late May approximately 10 days before the start of the season with a minimum of four additional samples required to be taken during the season at the point of greatest bather density, or where the greatest risk of pollution is expected, in accordance with the bathing water profile however most local authorities take significantly more than this minimum requirement.

Results of sampling are provided to the EPA during, and at the end of, each bathing season. Local Authorities are required to take the necessary measures to ensure that the standards are complied with and should a bathing water sample fail to meet the EU mandatory values that the public are notified immediately. This would generally be by means of advisory notices posted at the bathing area together with the use of, signage and flags at the beach, but other media may also be used.

The Bathing Water unit of the EPAs Office of Environmental Assessment (OEA) is responsible for compiling the bathing water quality results together with undertaking the overall assessment of water quality. This data is submitted to the EU for inclusion in the [European Bathing Water report](#) prepared by the European Environment Agency.

The Office of Environmental Enforcement (OEE), within the EPA, follows up on the cause of any bathing area failing the EU mandatory values or where instances of pollution have been identified as arising e.g. from municipal wastewater treatment plants and their related infrastructure. They also monitor the measures being taken by the relevant local authority to bring the bathing area into compliance.

The 2008 Bathing Water Directive aims to determine the “typical” water quality based on regular sampling over several bathing seasons. It recognizes however that there may be periods when water quality can be temporarily impacted by weather events such as heavy rainfall or as a result of planned maintenance of wastewater outfalls etc. and makes provision for Local Authorities to request of the EPA that any planned compliance samples taken during such periods be discounted and replaced by samples taken after the impact has receded.

Discounting such “Short Term Pollution” events can only be considered where it has been identified in bathing water profiles that water quality may be prone to impacts from heavy rainfall, or other effects, and where Local Authorities have issued a precautionary notice prior to the event advising the public against bathing until water quality improves. Specific sampling criteria are also required to be met. In such circumstances the Local Authority is required to provide clear evidence of the management measures taken to minimize the impact on bathing water quality.

In more extreme cases application may be made for the discounting of planned compliance samples due to an “Abnormal situation” which is defined as “*an event not likely to recur more than once in any 4 year period*”. Such circumstances would normally be reserved for physical impacts such as sewage infrastructure defects / unplanned impacts due e.g. to power failures etc. however as a consequence of the exceptionally poor weather during 2012 a numbers of events were considered as abnormal situations.

A total of 136 identified bathing waters were monitored during the 2012 bathing season, of which 127 were coastal seawaters and 9 were freshwater lakes. One new beach (Claremont, Fingal County Council) was identified for 2012 bathing season. These represent the most popular bathing waters nationally, having been formally designated as such to the EU, however many local authorities also monitor a number of less well used bathing waters.

The microbiological standards applicable post - 2014, when the Directive is required to be fully implemented, are almost twice as strict as presently applied and represent a lowering of the risk threshold for bathers to ca. 3% with a more stringent category of Excellent water quality being applied. A minimum standard of Sufficient quality is required to comply with the Directive. It is estimated that approximately 2/3rd of Irish beaches will be expected to meet this new higher standard however around 10 beaches may fail to meet the minimum standard of sufficient standards unless actions are taken to mitigate the impacts of pollution sources.

Online Bathing Water System

Since July 2009, the EPA has had in place an online map-based website entitled “*SPLASH*” (www.bathingwater.ie) which provides the public with bathing water quality information for all of the identified bathing waters. The website provides the latest bathing water sampling results during the season bathing season together with their compliance with EU bathing water quality standards, their overall water quality status, lifeguard availability, weather and tidal information. It has been extensively updated during 2012 and 2013 to provide additional information including access to bathing water profiles and incident notifications together with provision for message alerts.

The EPA is developing an on-line Bathing Water Implementation system to assist Local Authorities in uploading bathing water information. One key feature will be the notification of any incidents affecting bathing water quality directly which will link directly to the SPLASH website.

Since 2002 the Environmental Protection Agency has prepared annual summary reports on bathing water performance and this present report continues that process. The annual national bathing water reports previously published by the EPA have now been largely replaced by ‘Splash’, which provides in addition to the other items, an overview of bathing water quality status at various levels: national, local authority, river basin district and identified bathing area. In addition to providing information on the compliance history of bathing waters since 2003 the website provides descriptions of each bathing area together with photographs and details of any Blue Flag status.

Summary

Despite a marked drop (21) in the numbers of bathing waters attaining good status in 2012, due largely to the impact of extensive rainfall over the summer period, overall compliance with the current bathing water standards remains high (97.8%) and is consistent with recent years.

The main reason for the decline in waters achieving good status was the presence of persistent but relatively low levels of pollution particularly in bathing waters in the south and southwest of the country. Many of these generally high quality waters are unaffected by discharges from wastewater treatment systems and are more prone to the impacts of urban and agricultural run-off. With soil moisture levels at saturation for most of the bathing season the impacts of livestock grazing and spreading of animal manures adjacent to watercourses may have had a deleterious impact.

The number of designated beaches is lower than the European average with 1 beach per approximately 25km of coastline. There are only 9 inland designated bathing areas. Local authorities are encouraged to re-examine bathing patterns in their regions with a view to providing more extensive coverage of bathing areas.

Further information

Further information and links to bathing water information are provided below:

EEA Water Information System for Europe (WISE)

<http://www.water.europa.eu/>

European Environment Agency

<http://www.eea.europa.eu>

Water Quality in Ireland 2007 -2009 (EPA)

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/water/waterqua/waterqualityinireland2007-2009.html>

Ireland's Environment: An Assessment (EPA)

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/indicators/irelandsenvironment2012.html>

An Taisce (National Trust for Ireland)

www.antisce.org

Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)

www.fee-international.org

Clean Coasts Ireland

www.cleancoastsireland.org

Details of the Blue Flag and Green Coast schemes are available at www.blueflag.org ,
www.beachawards.ie and www.antisce.org

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/bathing_waters.aspx

Environmental Agency (England & Wales)

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/recreation/142937.aspx>

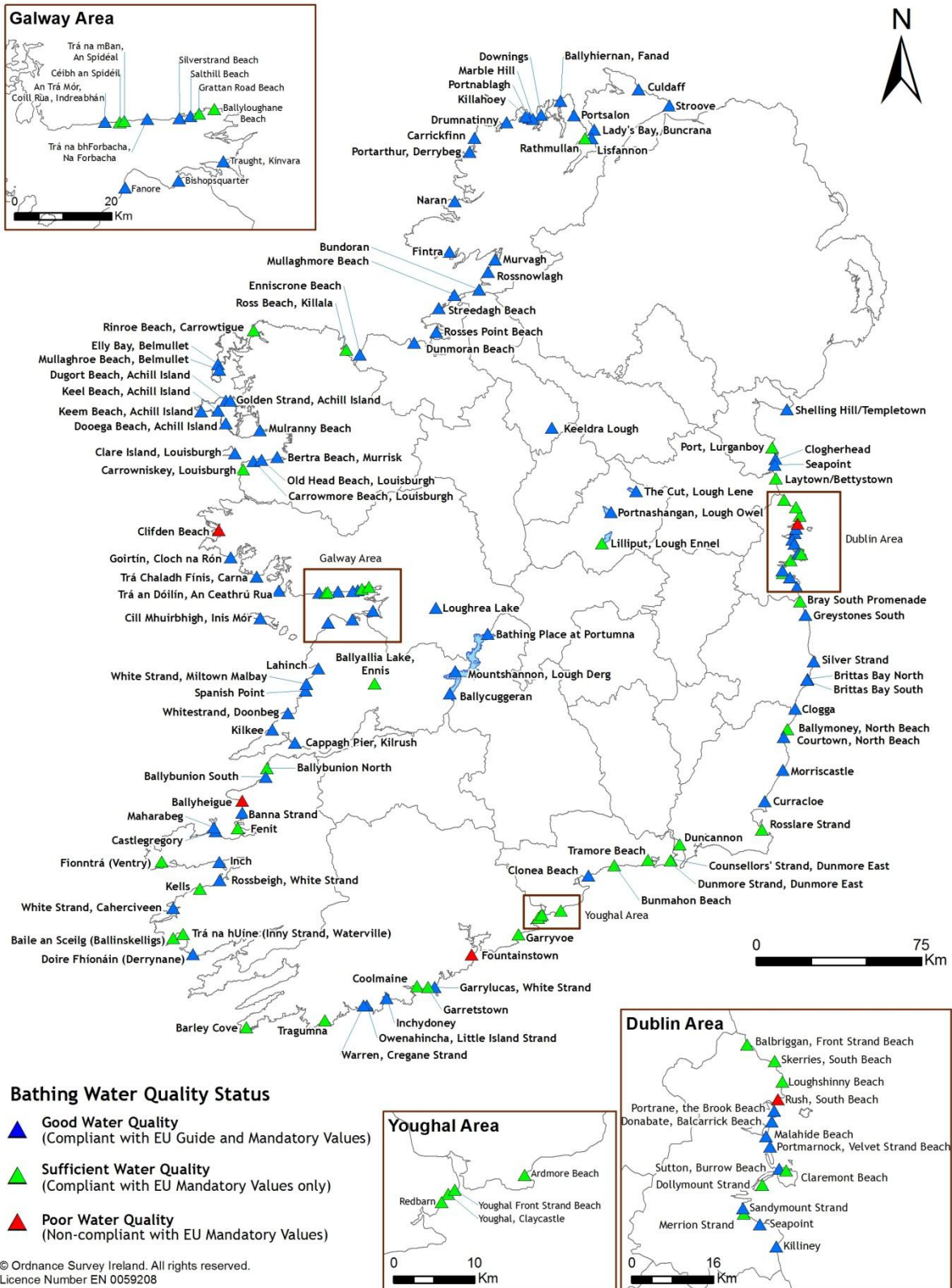
Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (UK)

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/water/water-quality/bathing/>

Department of Environment (Northern Ireland)

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/protect_the_environment/water/bathing_water.htm

Bathing Water Quality Map of Ireland 2012



Appendix 2 2012 Compliance & Water Quality Status of Identified Bathing Waters

Responsible Local Authority	Bathing Area	Water Quality Status 2012	Compliance with mandatory / guide values			
			E.Coli		I.E.	
			Mandatory	Guide	Guide	
Clare County Council	Ballyallia Lake, Ennis	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Ballycuggeran	Good	√	√	√	
	Bishopsquarter	Good	√	√	√	
	Cappagh Pier, Kilrush	Good	√	√	√	
	Fanore	Good	√	√	√	
	Kilkee	Good	√	√	√	
	Lahinch	Good	√	√	√	
	Mountshannon, Lough Derg	Good	√	√	√	
	Spanish Point	Good	√	√	√	
	White Strand, Doonbeg	Good	√	√	√	
	White Strand, Miltown Malbay	Good	√	√	√	
	Cork County Council	Barley Cove	Sufficient	√	X	√
		Youghal, Claycastle	Sufficient	√	X	√
Coolmaine		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Fountainstown		Poor	X	X	√	
Garretstown		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Garrylucas, White Strand		Good	√	√	√	
Garryvoe		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Inchydoney		Good	√	√	√	
Owenahincha, Little Island Strand		Good	√	√	√	
Redbarn		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Tragumna		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Warren, Cregane Strand		Good	√	√	√	
Youghal, Front strand beach		Sufficient	√	X	√	
Donegal County Council	Ballyhiernan, Fanad	Good	√	√	√	
	Bundoran	Good	√	√	√	
	Carrickfinn	Good	√	√	√	
	Culdaff	Good	√	√	√	
	Downings	Good	√	√	√	
	Drumnatinny	Good	√	√	√	
	Fintra	Good	√	√	√	
	Killahoey	Good	√	√	√	
	Lady's Bay, Bunrana	Good	√	√	√	
	Lisfannon	Good	√	√	√	
	Marble Hill	Good	√	√	√	
	Murvagh	Good	√	√	√	
	Naran	Good	√	√	√	
	Portarthur, Derrybeg	Good	√	√	√	
	Portnablagh	Good	√	√	√	
	Portsalon	Good	√	√	√	
	Rathmullan	Sufficient	√	X	√	
Rossnowlagh	Good	√	√	√		
Shroove	Good	√	√	√		

Responsible Local Authority	Bathing Area	Water Quality Status	Compliance with mandatory / guide values			
			2012	E.Coli		I.E.
				Mandatory	Guide	Guide
Dublin City Council	Dollymount Strand	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Merrion Strand	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Sandymount Strand	Good	√	√	√	
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown County Council	Killiney	Good	√	√	√	
	Seapoint	Good	√	√	√	
Fingal County Council	Balbriggan, Front Strand Beach	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Claremont Beach	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Donabate, Balcarrick Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Loughshinny Beach	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Malahide Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Portmarnock, Velvet Strand Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Portrane, the Brook Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Rush, South Beach	Poor	X	X	X	
	Skerries, South Beach	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Sutton, Burrow Beach	Good	√	√	√	
Galway County Council	An Trá Mór, Coill Rua, Indreabhán	Good	√	√	√	
	Loughrea Lake	Good	√	√	√	
	Bathing Place at Portumna	Good	√	√	√	
	Céibh an Spidéil	Sufficient	√	√	X	
	Cill Mhuirbhígh, Inis Mór	Good	√	√	√	
	Clifden Beach	Poor	X	X	X	
	Goirtín, Cloch Na Rón	Good	√	√	√	
	Trá na bhForbacha, Na Forbacha	Good	√	√	√	
	Trá na mBan, An Spidéal	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Trá an Dóilín, An Ceathrú Rua	Good	√	√	√	
	Trá Chaladh Fínis, Carna	Good	√	√	√	
	Traught, Kinvara	Good	√	√	√	
Galway City Council	Ballyloughane Beach	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Grattan Road Beach	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Salthill Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Silverstrand Beach	Good	√	√	√	
Kerry County Council	Baile an Sceilg (Ballinskelligs)	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Ballybunion North	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Ballybunion South	Good	√	√	√	
	Ballyheigue	Poor	X	X	√	
	Banna Strand	Good	√	√	√	
	Castlegregory	Good	√	√	√	
	Doire Fhíonáin (Derrynane)	Good	√	√	√	
	Fenit	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Inch	Good	√	√	√	
	Trá na hUíne (Inny strand, Waterville)	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Kells	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Maharabeg	Good	√	√	√	
	Rossbeigh, White Strand	Good	√	√	√	
	Fionntrá (Ventry)	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	White Strand, Caherciveen	Good	√	√	√	

Responsible Local Authority	Bathing Area	Water Quality Status	Compliance with mandatory / guide values			
			2012	E.Coli		I.E. Guide
				Mandatory	Guide	
Leitrim County Council	Keeldra Lough	Good	√	√	√	
Louth County Council	Clogherhead	Good	√	√	√	
	Port, Lurganboy	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Seapoint	Good	√	√	√	
	Shelling Hill / Templetown	Good	√	√	√	
Mayo County Council	Bertra Beach, Murrisk	Good	√	√	√	
	Carrowmore Beach, Louisburgh	Good	√	√	√	
	Carrowniskey, Louisburgh	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Dugort Beach, Achill Island	Good	√	√	√	
	Doogea Beach, Achill Island	Good	√	√	√	
	Elly Bay, Belmullet	Good	√	√	√	
	Golden Strand, Achill Island	Good	√	√	√	
	Keel Beach, Achill Island	Good	√	√	√	
	Keem Beach, Achill Island	Good	√	√	√	
	Ross Beach, Killala	Sufficient	√	√	X	
	Old Head Beach, Louisburgh	Good	√	√	√	
	Mullaghroe Beach, Belmullet	Good	√	√	√	
	Mulranny Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Rinroe Beach, Corrowigue	Sufficient	√	√	X	
	Clare Island, Louisburgh	Good	√	√	√	
Meath County Council	Laytown / Bettystown	Sufficient	√	√	X	
Sligo County Council	Dunmorran Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Enniscrone Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Mullaghmore Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Rosses Point Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Streedagh Beach	Good	√	√	√	
Waterford County Council	Ardmore Beach	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Bunmahon Beach	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Clonea Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Counsellors' Strand, Dunmore East	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Dunmore Strand, Dunmore East	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Tramore Beach	Sufficient	√	√	X	
Westmeath County Council	Lilliput, Lough Ennel	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Portnashangan, Lough Owel	Good	√	√	√	
	The Cut, Lough Lene	Good	√	√	√	
Wexford County Council	Ballymoney, North Beach	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Courtown, North Beach	Good	√	√	√	
	Curracloe	Good	√	√	√	
	Duncannon	Sufficient	√	X	X	
	Morriscastle	Good	√	√	√	
	Rosslare Strand	Sufficient	√	X	√	
Wicklow County Council	Bray South Promenade	Sufficient	√	X	√	
	Brittas Bay North	Good	√	√	√	
	Brittas Bay South	Good	√	√	√	
	Clogga	Good	√	√	√	
	Greystones South	Good	√	√	√	
	Silver Strand	Good	√	√	√	

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An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Is í an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (EPA) comhlachta reachtúil a chosnaíonn an comhshaoil do mhuintir na tíre go léir. Rialaímid agus déanaimid maoirsiú ar ghníomhaíochtaí a d'fhéadfadh truailliú a chruthú murach sin. Cinntímid go bhfuil eolas cruinn ann ar threochtaí comhshaoil ionas go nglactar aon chéim is gá. Is iad na príomhnithe a bhfuilimid gníomhach leo ná comhshaoil na hÉireann a chosaint agus cinntiú go bhfuil forbairt inbhuanaithe.

Is comhlacht poiblí neamhspleách í an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (EPA) a bunaíodh i mí Iúil 1993 faoin Acht fán nGníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil 1992. Ó thaobh an Rialtais, is í an Roinn Comhshaoil, Pobal agus Rialtais Áitiúil.

ÁR bhFREAGRACHTAÍ

CEADÚNÚ

Bíonn ceadúnais á n-eisiúint againn i gcomhair na nithe seo a leanas chun a chinntiú nach mbíonn astuithe uathu ag cur sláinte an phobail ná an comhshaoil i mbaol:

- áiseanna dramhaíola (m.sh., líonadh talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistriúcháin dramhaíola);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíocha ar scála mór (m.sh., déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta);
- diantalmhaíocht;
- úsáid faoi shrian agus scaoileadh smachtaithe Orgánach Géinathraithe (GMO);
- mór-áiseanna stórais peitreal;
- scardadh dramhuisce.

FEIDHMIÚ COMHSHAOIL NÁISIÚNTA

- Stiúradh os cionn 2,000 iniúchadh agus cigireacht de áiseanna a fuair ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht gach bliain.
- Maoirsiú freagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil údarás áitiúla thar sé earnáil - aer, fuaim, dramhaíl, dramhuisce agus caighdeán uisce.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus leis na Gardaí chun stop a chur le gníomhaíocht mhídhleathach dramhaíola trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmithe náisiúnta, díriú isteach ar chiontóirí, stiúradh fiosrúcháin agus maoirsiú leigheas na bhfadhbanna.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí comhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil mar thoradh ar a ngníomhaíochtaí.

MONATÓIREACHT, ANAILÍS AGUS TUAIRISCIÚ AR AN GCOMHSHAOIL

- Monatóireacht ar chaighdeán aer agus caighdeáin aibhneacha, locha, uisce taoide agus uisce talaimh; leibhéil agus sruth aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách chun cabhrú le rialtais náisiúnta agus áitiúla cinntiú a dhéanamh.

RIALÚ ASTUITHE GÁIS CEAPTHA TEASA NA HÉIREANN

- Cainníochtú astuithe gáis ceaptha teasa na hÉireann i gcomhthéacs ár dtiomantas Kyoto.
- Cur i bhfeidhm na Treorach um Thrádáil Astuithe, a bhfuil baint aige le hos cionn 100 cuideachta atá ina mór-ghineadóirí dé-ocsaíd charbóin in Éirinn.

TAIGHDE AGUS FORBAIRT COMHSHAOIL

- Taighde ar shaincheisteanna comhshaoil a chomhordú (cosúil le caighdeán aer agus uisce, athrú aeráide, bithéagsúlacht, teicneolaíochtaí comhshaoil).

MEASÚNÚ STRAITÉISEACH COMHSHAOIL

- Ag déanamh measúnú ar thionchar phleananna agus chláracha ar chomhshaoil na hÉireann (cosúil le pleananna bainistíochta dramhaíola agus forbartha).

PLEANÁIL, OIDEACHAS AGUS TREOIR CHOMHSHAOIL

- Treoir a thabhairt don phobal agus do thionscal ar cheisteanna comhshaoil éagsúla (m.sh., iarratais ar cheadúnais, seachaint dramhaíola agus rialacháin chomhshaoil).
- Eolas níos fearr ar an gcomhshaoil a scaipeadh (trí cláracha teilifíse comhshaoil agus pacáistí acmhainne do bhunscoileanna agus do mheánscoileanna).

BAINISTÍOCHT DRAMHAÍOLA FHORGHNÍOMHACH

- Cur chun cinn seachaint agus laghdú dramhaíola trí chomhordú An Chláir Náisiúnta um Chosc Dramhaíola, lena n-áirítear cur i bhfeidhm na dTionscnamh Freagrachta Táirgeoirí.
- Cur i bhfeidhm Rialachán ar nós na treoracha maidir le Trealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach Caite agus le Srianadh Substaintí Guaiseacha agus substaintí a dhéanann ídiú ar an gcrios ózón.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta um Dramhaíl Ghuaiseach a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a sheachaint agus a bhainistiú.

STRUCHTÚR NA GNÍOMHAIREACHTA

Bunaíodh an Ghníomhaireacht i 1993 chun comhshaoil na hÉireann a chosaint. Tá an eagraíocht á bhainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a bhfuil Príomhstíúrthóir agus ceithre Stíúrthóir.

Tá obair na Ghníomhaireachta ar siúl trí ceithre Oifig:

- An Oifig Aeráide, Ceadúnaithe agus Úsáide Acmhainní
- An Oifig um Fhorfheidhmiúchán Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Measúnacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáide

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag ball air agus tagann siad le chéile cúpla uair in aghaidh na bliana le plé a dhéanamh ar cheisteanna ar ábhar imní iad agus le comhairle a thabhairt don Bhord.

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