

Pateshill WTW Disinfection failure 30th November 2025

Event No. 16555

Event Category: Significant

Water produced at Pateshill Water Treatment Works (WTW) was inconsistently dosed with sodium hypochlorite for two and a half hours following a plant restart. During this period, there was intermittent forward flow of inadequately disinfected water from the chlorine contact tank (CCT) to the clear water tank (CWT) whilst the operator attempted to diagnose and resolve the sporadic chlorine dose.

Upstream treatment processes were operating well throughout the event, the post-CCT chlorine residual was below emergency action level (EAL) for four and a half hours and final water chlorine residuals dropped from 1.09mg/l to 0.65mg/l, but remained above the EAL of 0.6mg/l. Two samples from the CWTs and three samples from downstream properties following the event were all satisfactory.

The initial loss of chlorine dosing was due to the hypochlorite carrier water pumps tripping after the site automatically transferred to generator supply during a loss of mains power. The duration of the event was extended due to the time taken to recharge the hypochlorite dosing line which is over 100 metres long, and inadequate procedures to support the operator in restarting the works following a power failure and returning water to supply after a back-end shutdown.

The event has been categorised as significant. Scottish Water has identified four actions which DWQR accepts are appropriate and will monitor to ensure they are completed prior to signing off the incident. DWQR made two additional recommendations.

