

Incident Summary

Muirhead DSR Metals and Turbidity Failure April 2021

DWQR Inspector:
Moira Malcolm

Event No. 11650

Event Category: Significant

Work was undertaken on the Ringford Water Treatment Works (WTW) boreholes in April 2021. This ran on for longer than expected, so the decision was made to flush the main from the WTW to Muirhead Distribution Service Reservoir (DSR) to remove the water that had been lying in the pipe over these days. The scour valve from Muirhead was opened and the main was flushed through until the turbidity at Ringford WTW returned to 0.3NTU. After this the DSR was filled and returned to service. Five days later a scheduled sample was taken from Muirhead which failed for iron, manganese and turbidity. A resample taken the following day was compliant with all water quality parameters.

The incident was caused by disturbed sediment from the flushing operation entering the DSR and the sample pipework. An operational sample taken at the WTW (200m upstream of the DSR) whilst the flushing was ongoing failed for iron, manganese, turbidity and coliforms; however this was not reported as the water was not entering supply and so was not representative. It is likely that this water remained in the DSR and sample pipework until the sample taken five days later. The water in Muirhead DSR is mixed with water from Glengap.

WTW and it is likely – given that no consumer contacts were received – that consumers were not impacted by this incident, however the lack of sampling to verify this means that this remains unknown.

The event has been categorised as significant. Scottish Water has identified five actions which DWQR accepts are appropriate and will monitor to ensure they are completed prior to signing off the incident. DWQR made no additional recommendations.