

Turriff RSZ Restriction on water use 11th -17th May 2025

Event No. 15698

Event Category: Significant

A sample taken from a hydrant on 11th May 2025 following a burst mains repair in Auchterless, Turriff failed for coliform and clostridia bacteria. When Scottish Water's Public Health Team (PHT) were notified of the failure on the 14th May, they put in place a 'Boil Water' Notice on affected properties in consultation with NHS Grampian. The restriction was to last until two days of clear samples had been received. This did not occur until the 17th.

The delay was due to resamples firstly being taken from hydrants rather than consumers' taps – which also failed for coliform bacteria. When samples were taken from consumer properties, all of these passed with no bacteria present.

During the incident a total of twenty-one consumer contacts were received. Nineteen of these were to report no water or a burst/leak, and two were enquiries for bottled water and regarding the 'Boil Water' Notice.

The restriction on water use was caused by the microbiology failures. However the failures were caused by unrepresentative samples taken from hydrants. In addition, the original sample was not delivered to the laboratory within its stability period because the sample was delivered to the depot after the courier had left for the lab.

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 zero additional recommendations.

