

Assynt zone Discolouration and Consumer Concern September 2017

DWQR Inspector:
Moira Malcolm

Event No. 8850

Event Category: Significant

Overnight on 27th – 28th September 2017, planned work was undertaken to facilitate a domestic tie-in on the trunk main on Assynt network outside of Strathpeffer. The work was completed but twenty two customer contacts reporting discoloured water from three water supply zones were received over the following two days. Samples taken from consumer's taps on the 28th and 29th failed for turbidity (max. 6.7NTU); aluminium (max. 463µg/l) and iron (max. 814µg/l). All resamples taken on 4th October were compliant with the standards.

The trunk main was successfully shut off, however when recharging the main, the Network Services Operator (NSO) opened the valve and checked the flow rate recharge with the Intelligent Control Centre (ICC) which monitored the flow at 7 l/s, the NSO then completed another quarter turn of the valve without confirming the change with ICC. This exposed the main to a flow of 27 l/s and scoured the main. In addition the inlet valve on the downstream SR which failed to operate automatically and had to be set manually by the NSO. This exacerbated the flow issues and contributed to the extent of the event.

The event has been categorised as Significant. Scottish Water has identified seven 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.