

REFERENCE

2526054

RELEASE DATE

June 2025

SUBJECT

- Are there any recent reports or data indicating environmental or public health risks at Ballyholme Beach?
- Has there been any recorded pollution or sewage overflow in the area in recent weeks?
- Are any investigations underway, or are public advisories being considered in light of this incident?

RESPONSE

NI Water can confirm there have been no recorded pollution incidents arising from storm overflows in the Ballyholme area this year.

Please be advised Event Duration Monitors (EDMs) are being installed across our wastewater network to monitor and record discharges (commonly known as spills) from storm overflows. These measure the times when a spill is occurring (count) and for how long (duration).

NI Water's [storm overflow map](#) shows where operational EDMs are monitoring the outlets of storm overflows. A number of storm overflows in the Ballyholme area have EDMs installed. By clicking on each orange pin, you can see a summary of data for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2024. Data for 2025 is not yet available.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) sets standards for overflows to allow spills of dilute wastewater at times of prolonged heavy rainfall when receiving waters are themselves fast flowing. Tighter standards apply to bathing and shellfish waters which are special to all and attract tourism.

NI Water also continue to work with NIEA to establish the best method for future measurement of the quantity of what is being discharged.

NI Water does not have responsibility for monitoring bathing water quality and would instead recommend that you contact DAERA's (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs) Environment, Marine & Fisheries Department, which has responsibility for monitoring bathing water quality (see link below).

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/water>

Regarding your last query, pertaining to any ongoing investigations, NI Water are currently collaborating with NIEA on a joint investigation of the river catchments that flow into Ballyholme Bay to better understand some of the sources of potential pollution and the impact of mis connections either directly into the river system or into storm drainage. This work is being conducted over a calendar year to provide a full view for an integrated environmental model and source apportionment. The timeline for publishing this report will be dictated by NIEA. It is important to note this work is not being done in response to any individual incident, but to better understand the status of the water quality in the Ballyholme Bay.