

Northern Ireland Water
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FAQ – WATERMAIN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Q: Who are WSP?

A: WSP is one of the world's leading engineering professional services firms, with over 40,000 staff members based in more than 550 offices— one of which being the local Belfast office located in Hollywood, County Down.

Q: Do WSP work for NIW?

A: WSP currently provide a variety of professional services to NIW – NIW's Asset Performance Department has commissioned WSP to undertake works on a Water Infrastructure Investment Model (WIIM) to help identify possible areas for watermain improvements.

Q: What are the samples for?

A: The samples to be taken are to measure the 'metals' within the current water supply. Depending on the natural environment near the water supply source your water may contain traces of some of the following substances:

Aluminium

Some aluminium does occur naturally in water. In some areas, however, aluminium is used as part of the treatment process to clarify and cleanse the water and may be present in minute quantities;

Iron and manganese

These substances occur naturally in many of our water sources. Upland surface water can be naturally acidic and can dissolve iron and manganese from the soil and minerals.

Q: Are the 'metals' in my water harmful??

A: No, NIW apply some of these chemicals (eg. Aluminium) as part of the water treatment process to clarify and cleanse the water.

Q: Why has my property been chosen for sampling?

A: Your property has been randomly selected as it is in a suitable location for collecting a sample of water for a particular watermain that may potentially form part of a future Watermain Improvement Project.

Q: What is involved in the sampling process?



A: The sampling process involves a WSP employee taking a 50ml cylinder and filling it with water directly from the property tap.

Q: How long should it take to sample my property?

A: It should take approximately 2-4 mins to take a sample of water. The 2-4 minutes is to ensure the minimum flush is obtained – the intention of the flush is to make sure the sample obtained is ‘mains’ water rather than the individual property ‘service’ or ‘connection’ pipe water.

Q: Where is the water sampled from regarding my property?

A: In previous sampling exercises the sample has been obtained from the kitchen tap – as this is usually the first point of contact for ‘mains water’. It should be noted that a sample can be obtained from an outside tap if this is preferable for the home owner.

Q: Do I have to be in during the sampling schedule?

A: No, WSP/NIW have issued numerous notification letters to a number of properties in your area to help ensure a sample can be taken in your vicinity.

Q: Is there any problems with my watermains?

A: No, all watermains for NIW are trustworthy. NIW are constantly looking to improve the quality of tap water for their customers. Water sampling simply aids the progression and helps identify areas that may require some improvement.

Q: Is it still okay to consume water from my watermains?

A: Yes, there are no issues with your drinking water. NIW water conduct continual testing to guarantee the best possible quality for their customers. Drinking water is very highly supervised and NIW are continually working to further improve the quality for customers through a variety of watermain improvement projects

