

# PRESS RELEASE



The Water  
Forum

AN  
FÓRAM  
UISCE

[www.nationalwaterforum.ie](http://www.nationalwaterforum.ie)

## WHO

A STATUTORY STAKEHOLDER  
BODY

## WHAT

A NEW APPROACH TO WATER  
GOVERNANCE IN THE  
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

## ADVISORY BODY TO

MINISTER FOR HOUSING,  
PLANNING AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT

IRISH WATER

WATER POLICY ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

COMMISSION FOR REGULATION  
OF UTILITIES

## DEBATE & ANALYSIS

WATER QUALITY

RURAL WATER CONCERNS

IRISH WATER CUSTOMER  
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WFD IMPLEMENTATION

RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT

# BOIL WATER NOTICES

At a recent meeting of The Water Forum, concern was expressed regarding the content of the EPA report on the failures at the Leixlip Water Treatment Plant in March and October 2019 which resulted in a boil water notice being issued for 600,000 connections in Dublin, Meath and Kildare. On the evening of 4 November 2019, a second boil water notice was issued following a period of heavy rain. The old treatment plant at Lexlip was unable to safely treat the subsequent increased turbidity in the source water supply caused by the heavy rain.

It is noted that Irish Water responded to this latest incident swiftly and issued this second boil water notice to protect consumer health.

Tom Collins, Chair of the Forum, stated that it was a matter of great concern that so many people and businesses have been affected by a second boil water notice at the Leixlip Water Treatment Plant within a few short weeks. The Forum is also aware of a number of boil water notices which are in place elsewhere throughout the country, with some regions, such as Lough Talt, County Sligo, experiencing such notices for prolonged periods of time.'

Professor Collins went on to draw attention to Dublin's excessive reliance on a single source -the Liffey- for its drinking water. He stated that 'the Forum has already voiced this concern, drawing attention to the urgent need to spread risk and diversify supply and treatment options.'

'The Liffey currently supplies 85% of Dublin's drinking water, supporting all aspects of life in our capital city and beyond. There is an urgent need to utilise additional sources of drinking water to safeguard water supply to Dublin and its regions into the future and to minimise risk of disruption to supply under any potentially catastrophic events.'

'The Water Forum also notes with concern the recent findings of the Water Advisory Body first quarterly report and the implications these findings have on public confidence regarding the management of our water services.'

'Extreme climatic events, such as heavy rainfall, storms and prolonged dry periods are expected to increase as a result of climate change. Ireland is in a climate and biodiversity crisis. The vulnerability of Ireland's water resources and water services infrastructure to future climate change should be of concern to all the people of Ireland. The extreme weather events of recent years -and days- brings into sharp focus how such events impact on our daily lives, highlighting our vulnerability to environmental pressures. This vulnerability will only increase as our population grows and we place greater pressures on our rivers, lakes and groundwaters, according to the Forum.'

Professor Collins concluded 'Historical underinvestment has threatened the water services that we often take for granted. The future of our water resources must be safeguarded against all forthcoming events and we all have a role to play in their protection against pollution, over abstraction and through water conservation.'

5 November 2019



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### Continued

An Fóram Uisce|The Water Forum was established as a statutory body in June 2018 to facilitate stakeholder engagement and debate on issues relating to water as a resource, water quality, rural water concerns, issues affecting customers of Irish Water and issues associated with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

The Forum consists of 27 representatives from a wide range of organisations with direct connections to issues relating to water quality. These include consumer, community and water sports groups, business and trade unions, environmental sector, Irish Water consumers, the group water scheme sector and a range of other sectors including education, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The Forum is chaired by Dr Tom Collins.

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