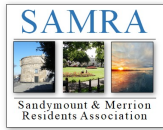


SAMRA
Sandymount
Dublin



CEO Environmental Protection Agency : **Dr Eimear Cotter**

28th September 2023

By email

Discharge of Sewage and Waste onto Sandymount Beach

Dear Dr Cotter,

- **As Chief Executive Officer of the EPA, SAMRA calls for your direct involvement in resolving this issue.**

I refer to my letter 14th May sent jointly to yourself and CEOs for **Dublin City Council** and **Uisce Éireann**.

I thank you for the reply subsequently received from within your organization, ie. your Inspector Johnathon Hughes dated 14/05/2023. The incident was logged as COM017257 in your EPA system.

I can confirm that since that event there have, as expected, been multiple discharges onto the beach repeating the same scenario evidenced by the [video link information](#) on [SAMRA.ie](#) - sent with 14th May letter. This has been consistent with the summer rainwater storms which produce circa 10-12 events per annum.

The same scenario of condoms, sanitary products, baby wipes and raw sewage detritus has occurred on each discharge. Depending on the tidal cycle the erosion and ponding which has occurred on the beach has lasted up to 10 days. This has always been accompanied by atrocious, foul sickening, odours. It has additionally become a breeding ground for rodents, with trapped material amongst the rock armour. I have informally had reports of sick dogs and it is inevitable that humans will be getting affected too, if not yet formally linked and reported.

I can advise that contrary to what has been reported to the EPA by Uisce Éireann, there has been no evidence of clean-up of the affected area by their staff, There were two visits after this incident by DCC staff to confirm an unimpeded access to the outlet flapper valve and thereby prevent on-land flooding.

I can also confirm that there **exists completely inadequate signage**. The only sign is on the rock armour which is small and has to be sighted by being within the contaminated area. **There is no other signage.**

There is also **no signage on the beach area** where ponding usually occurs in the beach erosion after such a discharge. This is often the place where dog walkers and children play, unbeknown to the hazard, dependent on the prevailing wind and odour level. It is the intention of SAMRA to capture a water quality toxicity measurement, as it appears that this **may be necessary to capture your attention.**

Your Inspector referred to above, makes it very clear in his correspondence when he speaks about this outfall from Ailesbury Pumping Station which discharges onto Sandymount Strand

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- ***“does not meet the standards set in Ireland’s “Procedures and criteria in relation to storm water overflows”.***
- ***“it is the responsibility of Uisce Éireann to carry out all works necessary to resolve this issue and bring the overflow outlet up to the required standards” – as quickly as possible.***

He continues :

SAMRA
Sandymount
Dublin



- ***“The EPA requires Uisce Éireann to identify the best option and provide a detailed plan and timeframe to resolve this issue” – as quickly as possible.***

We recognise that the system is a legacy issue and that implementation of the system engineering issues will take some time to resolve. We are also educated on and understand the relative priorities of the current situation between flooding to a residential area or discharge to the beach.

However, **after circa twenty years, what is completely unacceptable is to have circumstances whereby :**

- There is **no plan or measurable timeline of actions** to bring resolution to this intolerable situation
- That there are **completely inadequate levels of signage** informing the public of the existence of and extent of biological toxicity to which they are **routinely being exposed to**
- That EPA as the Irish State Environmental Enforcement Agency appear to be **satisfied with allowing this situation to be perpetuated with impunity**. This is despite your most recent EPA inspector report declaring resolution **“to be as quickly as possible”**

Dr Cotter :

- **As Chief Executive Officer of the EPA, SAMRA calls for your direct involvement in resolving this issue.**
- **If an escalation course proves to be necessary, amongst the conclusions reached will be that: Ireland’s State Environmental Protection and Enforcement Agency, are either “turning a blind eye” OR have collectively become normalized to this situation.**

We assert that if these events were the proven responsibility of private enterprise, swift enforcement action would follow to protect public interestwe similarly call on EPA to honour their statutory public duties, under your leadership as CEO.

Yours sincerely,

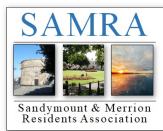
David Turner, Chairperson

Sandymount and Merrion Residents Association

Cc : SAMRA Committee



Pictures taken 26th September 2023 from the public footpath path at St Albans pump outlet demonstrating the erosion and ponding which occurs at the discharge. Beneath the light covering of weed lies the sewage detritus, which routinely discharges as per video link found on website : SAMRA.ie



The remains of the accessible public hazard signage.....