

Mourne Carlingford Catchment Stakeholder Meeting
8th November 2011, Area 6 Notes.

Pollution incidents

Since the last meeting we have investigated 87 pollution incidents within this catchment. We had 2 high severity incidents, 16 medium severity incidents and 69 low severity incidents.

These can be broken into source as follows:-

Domestic 1 High 4 Low

Agriculture 6 Medium 8 Low

Industrial 1 Medium 5 Low

NIWL 1 High 5 Medium 7 Low

NPF 41

Un-sourced 4 Medium 4 Low.

We have collected 6 tripartite statutory samples with view to prosecution, collated evidence for cost recovery for a number of incidents and breached approximately 14 farmers under The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (NI) 2006. These breaches usually result in a financial penalty for the farmer as a loss of a percentage of their single farm payment.

Court Cases

We had a case against NIWL in Newry Court on 21st October for a discharge of sewage from Carran Road sewage pumping station in Crossmaglen. NIWL were fined £2,500.

We had a case against NIWL in Downpatrick Court yesterday regarding a pollution incident and associated fish kill in the upper reaches of the Shimna River at Fofanny WTW in September 2009. This case has been adjourned to 14th November.

We had another case against NIWL in Downpatrick Court yesterday regarding a polluting discharge from Harbour Sewage Pumping Station In Newcastle, which occurred in November 2010. This has also been adjourned to 14th November.

We have a contest against NIWL on 14th November in Downpatrick Court for a discharge from Burren Sewage Pumping Station in Newcastle, which occurred in May 2010.

We had a case against Sean Savage regarding suspended solids pollution into the Moneycarragh River on 21st April 2009. He was bound over on a surety of £500 for two years not to cause any further pollution incidents.

There are several cases at various stages of completion, some with our Area staff collating

evidence, some which have been passed to our headquarters staff for checking and some with the Public Prosecution Service.

Notable Incidents.

- 1. We had a fish kill on the Burren River in Newcastle on 24th May. The discharge was traced to the NIWL Burren Pumping Station at Marguerite Park in Newcastle, which was discharging sewage in dry weather conditions. A tripartite statutory sample of the discharge was collected with view to prosecution. DCAL Inland Fisheries carried out a fish mortality survey and found 228 dead Salmonids, mostly juvenile trout and salmon. This was a High severity incident and resulted in a Major Fish kill.**
- 2. We had a fish kill in a tributary of the Tullyvallen River in Newtownhamilton on 20th July. The incident was traced to a dumped 40 gallon drum labelled THINNERS. We suspect malicious intent by a third party. Over 20 dead juvenile salmonids were observed and invertebrate life was dead for approximately 1.5 miles. This was a Medium severity incident and a Moderate Fish Kill.**
- 3. We had a fish kill in the Bessbrook River on 16th August. The incident was not sourced after inspections by NIEA and Loughs Agency. Loughs Agency reported that the fish were dead for approximately 24 hours and it is suspected**

that some unknown pollutant was discharged to the river over a short period of time, quite some time before it was reported to us. Loughs Agency reported 27 dead trout, 50 dead stone loach, several eels, roach and sticklebacks. This was a Medium severity incident and Moderate Fish Kill.

- 4. We had a fish kill on the Aughrim River in Kilkeel on 20th August. The polluting discharge was traced to a storm water pipe serving Cedar Heights in Kilkeel. The discharge from the pipe smelt of bleach and the results of a statutory sample indicated high levels of chlorine present within it. A fish mortality survey carried out by DCAL Inland Fisheries found 289 dead juvenile salmonids. I carried out house calls at Cedar Heights regarding bleach or chemical use and subsequent discharge to storm drains but no admittance or relevant information was forthcoming. A leaflet drop to all of the houses in the area was also carried out asking house owners not to discharge any bleach or other chemicals into their storm drains. This was a High severity incident and Major Fish Kill.**