

Our Ref: 18411

Date: 18th July 2023

Dear Selaine Saxby MP,

Thank you for your email dated 14th July 2023, regarding the Pollution Risk Forecast (PRF) Warning at Croyde for no bathing.

PRFs are issued when a temporary reduction in water quality is forecast. To make these forecasts we use measurable factors that we know influence bathing water quality including rain, tide, wind, sunlight, and seasonality. Pollution risk forecasting is modelled at around 64 of 151 bathing waters in Devon and Cornwall and has been in place for many years.

In North Devon, we carry out pollution risk forecasting every day in the bathing water season at the following bathing waters:

- Croyde Bay
- Woolacombe Village
- Combesgate Beach
- Ilfracombe Hele
- Combe Martin

PRF is different from a reported pollution event or spills from storm overflow. PRF doesn't currently directly take account of information from storm overflows operated by water companies. However, since storm overflows operate during heavy rainfall, warnings often coincide with discharges.

When a temporary reduction in water quality is forecast, we issue a daily pollution risk warning and advice against bathing. These PRF warnings are issued on [Swimfo](#), and the local authorities are notified. Signage may be provided by the beach controller at the bathing water. PRFs are explained on the Swimfo website.

This enables bathers to avoid times or locations where the risk of pollution is higher than normal and health risks from bathing may be higher than the annual classification suggests.

South West Water Waterfit live notification service is only looking at storm overflow spills affecting a bathing water. Where our system is predicting whether run-off from the land or freshwater will have an impact on the bathing water.

Should you require any further information on this matter, we can arrange a meeting to discuss this further with one of our technical leads. Please contact our Customers and Engagement Team, who will be happy to help you via DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk. As discussed last week I have raised the need for better communications on bathing water quality with national colleagues, locally we will continue to champion the consistently high bathing water standards across Devon and Cornwall.

Yours sincerely



Mark Rice
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