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From: Russell, Mike <Mike.Russell@southernwater.co.uk>
Sent: 16 January 2025 10:15
To: Morley, Hannah
Subject: Changes to Southern Water's surface water management policy
Attachments: surface-water-management-policy-120724.pdf

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Morning,

I write to advise you of the changes that we have made to our surface water management policy, with the aim of reducing the impact of surface water on our foul and combined sewer networks.

The full details of the changes are set out in the policy, which is available on our website here [Handbooks and technical documents - Southern Water](#), but the significant change is how we assess surface water discharge into the 'foul only' and combined public sewers.

Moving forward, we will refuse any request to discharge surface water into our foul only sewer network, on the grounds that the discharge is prejudicial to our sewerage network and detrimental to the environment. This includes where the surface water hierarchy has been followed and all alternative options have been exhausted.

In addition, a surface water discharge to the combined sewer will only be permitted **under exceptional circumstances**. This approach ensures that we work together to better protect the environment, improve water quality, and reduce flood risk.

The policy update also supports our work to separate rainwater from sewage at source to meet storm overflow reduction targets under Defra's Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan, as well as to reduce the number of sewer flooding incidents that are caused by hydraulic overload of our sewer network during rainfall periods.

We appreciate the challenges of delivering housing targets set out in local plans and we are grateful to those local authorities who have already added planning policy and/or conditions, stipulating that a surface water discharge into the foul sewer network will not be permitted. These conditions/policies support us in improving the environment and protecting our customers from foul sewer flooding.

More details on how the policy relates to a sewer connection application is set out on Page 6 of the policy document. If you have any questions, would like more information, or wish for a meeting to discuss the policy then please let me know and I will arrange this.

We will also be informing developers and local planning authorities of this updated policy and we are committed to working in partnership with all stakeholders to achieve a desirable outcome for all.

Many thanks.

Mike

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