
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations revoke and replace the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 and the Urban Waste Water Treatment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003. The Regulations implement Council Directive [91/271/EEC](#) as amended by Council Directive [98/15/EC](#) concerning urban waste water treatment. They reflect the new arrangements for the delivery of sewerage services provided for in the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

Regulations 2 and 3 define certain terms used in these Regulations. Regulation 3 also places a duty on the Department of the Environment (“the Department”) to review the identification of sensitive areas and high natural dispersion areas by a specified date, and at least every 4 years thereafter.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of regulation 4 place a duty on the Department to publish a notice of any decision on the review of sensitive areas or areas of high natural dispersion under regulation 3(2) in the Belfast Gazette and on its website, to deposit maps of the area affected by such a decision at its offices in Lisburn, and to take such other steps as it considers appropriate to publicise its decision. Paragraph (3) specifies that a decision takes effect on the date specified in the Department’s notice published in the Belfast Gazette and continues in force until any subsequent decision changing it takes effect.

Regulation 5 places a duty on the Department to maintain, on its website, maps of current sensitive areas and high natural dispersion areas, and the dates on which such areas were identified or ceased to be identified, and to ensure that maps and other information are available at its offices for public inspection.

Regulation 6 supplements the general duty imposed on a sewerage undertaker by Article 149 of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, by requiring it to secure that “collecting systems” (this and other expressions are defined in regulation 2(1)) are provided which secure that urban waste water entering collecting systems is subject to treatment provided in accordance with regulation 7.

Regulation 7 prescribes the standard of treatment required. The standard of treatment is determined according to the size of the “agglomeration” from which the waste water emanates and the nature of the waters into which the treated waste water is discharged. Generally, “secondary treatment” is required, but more stringent treatment is required for waters identified as “sensitive areas” and less stringent treatment is permissible for waters identified as “high natural dispersion areas”. Discharges from smaller agglomerations need to be subjected to “appropriate treatment”.

Regulation 8(1) requires that discharges from urban waste water treatment plants meet the requirements of Part I of Schedule 3. Paragraph (2) places a duty on the Department to ensure that those requirements are met.

Regulation 9 imposes requirements in respect of discharges of industrial waste water to collecting systems or treatment plants. A sewerage undertaker is empowered to modify trade effluent consents and agreements for this purpose.

Regulation 10 imposes a duty on the Department to secure that direct discharges of biodegradable industrial wastewater from the industrial sectors listed in Schedule 5 are subject to conditions appropriate to the nature of the industry concerned.

Regulation 11 prohibits the dumping of sludge from ships to surface waters.

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007. (See end of Document for details)*

Regulation 12 makes provision in connection with samples and records.

Regulation 13 imposes a duty on the Department to ensure that monitoring of discharges and waters to which the Regulations apply, and such other studies as are required by the Regulations, are carried out. The requirements as to monitoring of discharges are set out in Part II of Schedule 3.

Regulation 14 requires the Department to keep maps showing estuaries available for inspection by the public.

Regulation 15 requires the Department and the Department for Regional Development, acting jointly, to publish a biennial report on the disposal of urban waste water and sludge and to send it to the Commission. It also requires the Department and the Department for Regional Development, acting jointly, to advise the Commission on the programme for implementing the Directive.

Regulation 16 revokes the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 and the Urban Waste Water Treatment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 on 1st April 2007.

Copies of the Directive may be obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD.

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.