

Wastewater resilience common performance commitment

All companies have come together, facilitated by Water UK, to share experiences of shadow reporting for 2017-18 of the new wastewater resilience measure (risk of sewer flooding in a 1 in 50 storm), and have identified opportunities to improve the consistency of reporting primarily through greater transparency.

Context

This measure is new and relatively complex, with a number of stages, some of which involve the use of judgement (for example in assigning grading the vulnerability of catchments or whether to use 'buffer' or '2D' approaches to modelling). As would be expected for a newly introduced measure of this nature, there is some variability in the detailed approaches taken by companies; greater transparency would improve visibility of this and over time result in improved consistency through the identification of best practice.

Enhancing commentaries to improve transparency

To improve transparency to stakeholders, we propose that as a matter of routine, all companies provide in a commentary all the information set out in section 3.6 of Developing and Trialling Wastewater Resilience Metrics, Atkins, and specifically Tables 6-9.

In addition, all companies should:

- Set out the parameters they have used in applying the catchment vulnerability assessment (Appendix A of Developing and Trialling Wastewater Resilience Metrics, Atkins)
- Reporting the extent to which they use '2D' modelling approaches or the simpler modelling approach of applying a buffer zone
- Confirm whether they currently use FEH13 in their assessment, and if not, when they expect to do so

While we commit to providing this information, we suggest that it would be helpful for Ofwat to explicitly include a requirement to do so in the APR reporting requirements.

Technical aspects where companies will improve consistency

At a more technical level, we have identified more consistent approaches to applying some aspects of the methodology, set out below:

- Modelling properties at risk of flooding on the basis:
 - For the 'buffer' approach, including any residential property where flood water reaches the property address point centroid
 - For the '2D' approach, including any residential property where flood water reaches the house boundary

Future development

We recognise that over the next few years, there is further work to be done to improve understanding of this metric, for example more standardised parameters for the catchment vulnerability assessment and better understanding of the relative merits of using the two approaches to modelling ('buffer' or '2D'). We will continue to work with other companies on this to improve the robustness and comparability of this measure.