

Mr Ian Kermodé
Court View Chambers
14 Albert Street
Douglas
IM12QA

Manx Utilities
PO Box 177, Douglas
Isle of Man, IM99 1PS

e: enquiries@manxutilities.im
t: 01624 687687
www.manxutilities.im

Our ref: 3237126

24 July 2023

Dear Mr Kermodé

We write further to your request which was received on 10 July 2023 and which states:

"Please can you confirm the following:

- 1. How often is IOM drinking water quality tested?*
- 2. Who carries out such testing (e.g. the UK Drinking Water Inspectorate)?*
- 3. Is the drinking water tested for metallic elements such as cadmium, nickel, lead, mercury, copper and aluminium?*
- 4. Is the drinking water tested for sodium and nitrate levels?*
- 5. What recommended safety limits does Manx Utilities apply in relation to cadmium, nickel, lead, mercury, copper and aluminium?*
- 6. What recommended safety limits does Manx Utilities apply in relation to sodium and nitrates?*
- 7. Are any coagulants such as aluminium sulphate or ferric sulphate added to drinking water?*
- 8. How much chlorine or other disinfectant such as chlorine dioxide is added to drinking water (e.g. per litre of raw water)?*
- 9. How much did it cost Manx Utilities in 2022 on all chemicals (including chlorine) added to drinking water?*
- 10. Is drinking water monitored for any germs/bacteria such as salmonella, hepatitis and norovirus? If so how?"*

Our response to your request is as follows:

1. Routine testing is carried out every week from different supply points. Parameters can vary between supply points and frequencies are based on the requirements of The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016:
 - Reservoirs – 4 times a week
 - Water Treatment Works final/supplied waters – 4 times a week
 - Service Reservoirs – once a week
 - Consumers' taps – random testing is carried out weekly at different locations across the Island
2. Manx Utilities Samplers take the samples, and the Government Laboratory carry out the majority of analysis. In addition, United Utilities carry out cryptosporidium/giardia, bromate and diazinon analysis for us.

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The Government Analyst based at the Government Laboratory also carries out monthly sampling and analysis as our on-Island regulator.

3. Yes – the parameters stated are regulatory parameters.
4. Yes – these are also regulatory parameters.
5. We follow the values stated within [The Water Supply \(Water Quality\) Regulations 2016 for England and Wales](#). Regulatory limits as follows:
 - Cadmium – 5ug/l
 - Nickel – 20ug/l
 - Lead – 10ug/l
 - Mercury – 1ug/l
 - Copper – 2mg/l
 - Aluminium – 200ug/l
6. We follow the values stated within [The Water Supply \(Water Quality\) Regulations 2016 for England and Wales](#). Regulatory limits as follows:
 - Sodium - 200mg/l
 - Nitrate – 50mg/l
7. Yes – ferric sulphate
8. We do add sodium hypochlorite as part of the treatment process and as a final water disinfectant.

There is no regulatory limit specified for chlorine but the World Health Organisation guideline value is 5mg/l. The level of residual disinfectant in final treated waters leaving the Works is always well below 5mg/l, usually around 0.8mg/l, and this is adjusted slightly according to time of year and other factors.

We have to ensure residuals remain effective across the Island and the optimum is around 0.4mg/l.

9. Whilst we do hold the figures spent on chemicals for the treatment of water, to extract these for 2022 would require use to create and derive the information from our records which we are not required to under 8(3)(a) of the Act and practical refusal 11(3)(b).

However to assist we do readily hold this figure for our annual financial reporting year 2022 – 2023, this amount was £671,621.

10. We do not monitor for salmonella, hepatitis or norovirus.

We monitor for cryptosporidium/giardia and the microbiological parameters listed in the Regulations.

Please note for future requests that the purpose of Freedom of Information Act is to enable Manx residents to request information that promotes public interest and is also information that is likely to be already held (there is no requirement to create an answer).

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As in this case questions do not always translate, especially when a request is phrased as a closed question with a 'yes' or 'no' answer. The phrasing of any request is key to ensure it allows us the correct interpretation of the particular information you wish to obtain, and it can easily relate to information that is likely to be held.

Please quote the reference number 3237126 in any future communications.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your freedom of information request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by completing a complaint form and submitting it electronically or by delivery/post.

An electronic version of our complaint form can be found by going to our website at <https://services.gov.im/freedom-of-information/Review> . If you would like a paper version of our complaint form to be sent to you by post, please contact me and I will be happy to arrange for this. Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made as soon as practicable. We will respond as soon as the review has been concluded.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner for a decision on;

1. Whether we have responded to your request for information in accordance with Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2015; or
2. Whether we are justified in refusing to give you the information requested.

In response to an application for review, the Information Commissioner may, at any time, attempt to resolve a matter by negotiation, conciliation, mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution and will have regard to any outcome of this in making any subsequent decision.

More detailed information on your right to a review can be found on the Information Commissioner's website at www.inforights.im.

Should you have any queries concerning this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Further information about freedom of information requests can be found at www.gov.im/foi.

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely


FOI Coordinator