

Practitioners Fact Sheet No. 5

CSO Warnings 2012

10 July 2012

Providing information about water quality at bathing waters in England is something Defra ministers strongly support. We are pleased to be involved with a second year of trials of providing warnings of CSO (combined sewer overflows) spills, which may affect water quality at participating beaches. The “Cleaner Seas Forum”, a Defra led stakeholder forum is working together on this voluntary scheme, which increases its coverage this year to over 150 bathing waters.

This work is being led by local authorities, Anglian Water, South West Water, Southern Water, Welsh Water, Wessex Water, Yorkshire Water and Surfers Against Sewage. They are supported by Defra, EA, Keep Britain Tidy, the Marine Conservation Society and others.

The scheme provides text message alerts of spills, and at some locations, warning signs at the beach. Information is also available from the water companies participating. During this year, the group will also be looking at how to move into a sustainable future for these warnings and carry out research to learn more about how this information is valued and used by the public.