

Bathing Water Profile for Rosemarkie

Rosemarkie, Scotland

Current water classification <https://www2.sepa.org.uk/BathingWaters/Classifications.aspx>

Description Rosemarkie bathing water is situated on the Black Isle, adjacent to the small town of Rosemarkie, north of the Chanonry Ness peninsula. It is a relatively small, shallow bay, about 500 metres in length. The bathing water looks out on Fort George and the Moray coastline across the Moray Firth.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–100 metres. The beach slopes gently towards the water.



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Site details	Local authority	Highland Council
	Year of designation	2008
	Water sampling location	NH 73900 57900

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Rosemarkie bathing water extends to 15 km². The steep catchment varies in topography from high hills (maximum elevation 220 metres at Callachy Hill) in the north west to the low-lying areas (average elevation 5 metres) along the coast.

The main rivers within the bathing water catchment are the Rosemarkie Burn and the Whitebog Spring which flows into the Rosemarkie Burn.

The catchment is predominantly rural (98%) with agriculture the major land use. The rural land is split between grassland (46%), arable agricultural (18%) and woodland (29%). The area supports mixed farming. Approximately 1% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is the small town of Rosemarkie, situated within 500 metres of the bathing water. Population density outside of the town is generally low.

There are two protected areas which lie partially within the bathing water catchment. One is the Moray Firth, designated as a Special Area of Conservation, and the other a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from surface water urban drainage, agricultural run-off, combined sewer overflows and treated sewage effluent.

Our regulatory and scientific assessment indicates that potential sources of short-term faecal indicator pollution at this bathing water can at times originate from human or animal sources.

Map 1: Rosemarkie bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Rosemarkie bathing water



Daily water quality forecasts

Water quality is forecast on a daily basis during the bathing water season (1 June to 15 September). The forecasts indicate water quality is either acceptable or poor. Warnings against bathing are advised when poor water quality is forecast. This is because there is an increased risk to bathers' health from water pollution. Forecasts are communicated via electronic message signs at the beach, SEPA's website, mobile website and Beachline (08452 30 30 98).

Improving bathing water quality

Improving diffuse pollution from agricultural sources

Diffuse pollution from agricultural sources is the result of rain driven events causing cumulative inputs of pollutants to rivers and streams.

There is potential for agricultural diffuse pollution to occur in the Rosemarkie Burn which could impact on the bathing beach during and following heavy rain.

Farm visits started in the Cromarty coastal priority catchment in 2014 and are ongoing. These visits look to identify diffuse pollution sources and pathways. Mitigation measures have been agreed with land managers to reduce the risk of bacterial pollution on water quality.

SEPA has observed significant changes in land management practice within the catchment. SEPA will continue to work with the farmers to reduce the risk of pollution to the bathing water.

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

Scottish Water provides most waste water collection and treatment services in Scotland.

A new waste water treatment works (WWTW) was commissioned during 2013 to treat the sewage from Rosemarkie. The activated sludge plant replaces the old Fortrose and Rosemarkie Sewage Treatment Works which was a membrane treatment plant system.

Septic tanks discharge to the Rosemarkie Burn. However, they pose a potential threat to bathing water quality if they are not maintained to manufacturers' specifications.

Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources

Urban diffuse source pollution comes from contaminated rainwater discharging to rivers and streams.

Rosemarkie Burn is known to be affected by surface water run-off from the urban area through which it runs.

SEPA, local authorities and Scottish Water are working together to tackle urban diffuse pollution. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) have been incorporated into local plans and partner organisations have been encouraged to retrofit SUDS where possible.

Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)

Marine waters are not at risk of cyanobacteria overproduction.

Algae

Current information suggests that this bathing water is not at risk of excessive growth of macroalgae (seaweed) or phytoplankton.

Jellyfish

There is a possibility of increased numbers of jellyfish in the water during summer months. This is a naturally occurring phenomenon. Most species common to the UK are harmless. The Marine Conservation Society advises to 'look but don't touch'.

Responding to pollution incidents

Please use our 24 hour hotline (0800 80 70 60) to report pollution. SEPA will investigate the incident and contact other relevant organisations. That may include Scottish Ministers, Scottish Water, the local authority and the relevant health board. Where necessary, measures will be put in place to resolve the problem.

If beach users or bathers are considered to be at risk, the local authority will warn the public by erecting signs at the bathing water. Information will also be available on our website.

SEPA will investigate whenever our sampling identifies pollution.

Beach users are encouraged to use the bins provided or to take litter home. Beach cleaning and litter clean-up is maintained by Highland Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA Dingwall office</p> <p>Graesser House Fodderty Way Dingwall Business Park Dingwall IV15 9XB 01349 862021 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>Highland Council</p> <p>Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX 01349 886606 service.point@highland.gov.uk www.highland.gov.uk</p>	<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful</p> <p>01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</p>
<p>Scottish Government</p> <p>Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters</p>		

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1.1	March 2013	
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