

# Bathing Water Profile - Salthill Beach (2013)

Bathing Water:	Salthill Beach
Bathing Water Code:	IEWEBWC170_0000_0200
Local Authority:	Galway City Council
River Basin District:	Western
Monitoring Point:	127151E, 223210N

## 1. Profile Details:

Profile Id:	BWPR00198	Toilets Available:	Yes
Year Of Profile:	2013	Car Parking Available:	Yes
Year Of Identification	1992	Disabled Access:	Yes
Version Number:	1	First Aid Available:	Yes
		Sensitive Area:	Yes
		Dogs Allowed:	No
		Lifesaving Facilities:	Yes

Figure 1: Bathing Water



2. Bathing Water Details:

Map 1: Bathing Water Location & Extent



Bathing Water location and extent:

Salthill Beach is located in Galway City and on Galway Bay, a Special Area of Conservation. It is a traditional seaside resort and major tourist attraction for the City of Galway.

It extends from Dalysfort Road to Blackrock, over a distance of approximately 1km. The beach is within walking distance from the City Centre and is accessed from the Salthill Promenade, R336, and facilitated by frequent public transport to and from the City. Free parking is also available along the promenade.

Main features of the Bathing Water:

Type of Bathing Water

The beach at Salthill is actually several small beaches separated by outcrops. Some of the beaches are sandy and some pebbly, with the main bathing areas located at Blackrock and Ladies Beach. Both areas are safe for swimming. The beach faces directly across Galway Bay and boasts breathtaking views stretching for miles across the bay to County Clare and the Aran Islands. The beach is used extensively all year round, due to its close proximity to the city centre.

Flora/Fauna, Riparian Zone

Vegetation is sparse along the upper zone of the sandy shore. On the rocky outcrops, colonies of mussels, periwinkles, limpets and common barnacles can all be found. Small stands of seaweed can be present on both the strand and the rocky outcrops, but they rarely pose a nuisance to bathers.

Birds commonly found on or along the beach include Grey Herons, Curlews, Gannets, Herring Gulls, and Common Terns.

Water Depth

The water depth at blackrock at full tide is 5.5m approximately at Blackrock

Tidal Range

The beach has a macro-tidal ranges (>4m) with medium and maxium depths of the bathing area varying in relation to the tide height and position.

Land Use

Land use immediately adjacent to the beach is predominantly of urban fabric – residential and recreational & amenity - residential estates, public parks, private domestic dwellings, hotels, and the commercial centre of Salthill all within close proximity. Galway golf club is located immediately adjacent to Blackrock, and there are a number of mobile home holiday parks in close proximity.

### **Sensitive Area**

The entire area of Inner Galway Bay is covered by SAC and SPA designations, including Salthill Beach.

Max. number of visitor during a day in high season: 2500

Approx number of visitor during the bathing season: 45000 (Total from Mid May to Mid September)

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#### **Activities available at the Bathing Water:**

The beach is used extensively all year round, due to its close proximity to the City centre. Swimming and bathing are popular activities particularly during the Summer months. Sea kayaking, windsurfing and diving are also common.

Seating and picnic facilities are available along the promenade, and the promenade is used intensively by walkers and runners alike.

Dogs are prohibited on the beach from 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., during May, June, July, August and September, by beach by-laws.

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#### **Contributing catchment details:**

Salthill Beach is located in the Galway Coast Waster Management Unit of the Western River Basin District. The catchment includes the townlands of Pollnaroona East, Attithomasrevagh and Cappaghnavagh, approximately 3km from Galway City centre. The contributing catchment is approximately 5.2 km sq in area. The entire beach area lies within the Inner Galway Bay, Special Protected Area and Galway Bay Complex, a Special Area of Conservation and houses a number of habitats of high conservation status, being listed in Annex I of the EU habitats Directive.

#### **Water Bodies Draining to Bathing Water**

There are no streams/ivers discharging directly to the bathing water however there are a number of surface water outfalls which discharge surface water from the surrounding catchment.

#### **Topography**

The predominant soil group of the area is peaty clays. Bedrock type is murvey granite, and this is overlaid with made ground.

Land use immediately adjacent to the beach is predominantly of urban fabric – residential and recreational & amenity - residential estates, public parks, private domestic dwellings, hotels, and the commercial centre of Salthill all within close proximity. Galway golf club is located immediately adjacent to Blackrock, and there are a number of mobile home holiday parks in close proximity.

Mean annual rainfall at Athenry weather station, for the period 1981 - 2010 was 1192.9mm, and the month with the highest mean precipitation during this period was October with a mean 128.9mm, while April had the lowest mean precipitation at 72mm. Rainfall for June during 2012 was 175.8mm, significantly higher than the mean for June for the period 1981-2010, at 79.6mm.

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#### **Monitoring point details:**

The grid reference for the nominal bathing water monitoring point is Latitude 53.2543, Longitude -9.0926

The location of the bathing water point is at Blackrock.

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#### **Reason for selection of the monitoring point:**

The location of the bathing water monitoring point at Blackrock is the location where most bathers use the bathing water.

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#### **Water quality assessment:**

The bathing water quality monitoring carried out at Salthill since 2004 has shown consistently good water quality.

For the 2012 bathing season, Salthill achieved good water quality status, and complied with EU guide and mandatory values.

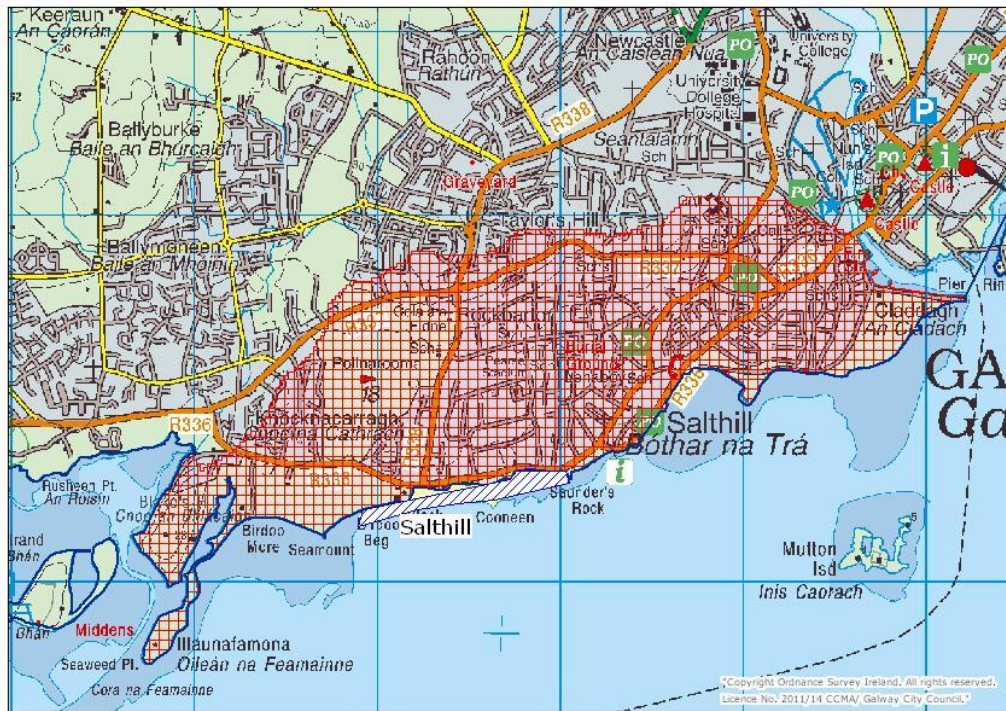
All water quality samples taken during the 2013 bathing season were good.

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### **3. Identified Pressures:**



## Map 2: Bathing Water Catchment



### 3.1 Potential pressures in the catchment assessed as posing no risk:

No pressures identified

### 3.2 Potential pressures in the catchment assessed as posing risk:

<b>Description:</b>	The gentian hill pumping station, with storm overflow is located > 1km from the beach. There is no history of overflows with this station and no evidence of it affecting bathing water however it is considered a potential pressure.
<b>Source:</b>	Gentian Hill Pumping Station
<b>Type:</b>	Sewer Networks
<b>Short Term Pressure:</b>	Yes
<b>Nature:</b>	Moderate Risk
<b>Frequency:</b>	< per 5 seasons
<b>Duration:</b>	< 48 hours
<b>Risk Assessment Methodology:</b>	EPA recommended assessment methodology
<b>Risk Assessment Results:</b>	Discharge is considered a long outfall as it is greater than >1km from the beach. There is no treatment here, therefore the microbial pollution potential is moderate. The 95th percentile monitoring result for intestinal enterococci for the period 2009-2012 is between 1-40, therefore the WQI grade is A. The microbial pollution risk (MPR) for this discharge is therefore inconsistent, and is considered 'moderate' using the conservative assessment.
<b>Details:</b>	There is a moderate risk of a discharge/overflow from the pumping station, and based on water quality results the frequency of occurrence is very low. The primary risk factor is periods of heavy rainfall, or failure of pumping equipment.
<b>Management Measures:</b>	Regular inspection and maintenance of the pumping equipment is in place. Site inspections will be increased during periods of heavy rainfall when risk of overflow is greatest. In the event of a discharge, bathers shall be notified of potential risk to water quality and advised not to use the bathing water by signage at the beach, through the media, and by informing lifeguards on duty.

<b>Description:</b>	The mutton island waste water treatment plan services the city of Galway and is located on Mutton Island, 2.2km from the beach. There is a potential risk of pollution, due to failure of equipment, an overflow discharge or insufficient wwtp capacity.
<b>Source:</b>	Mutton Island Waste Water Treatment Plant
<b>Type:</b>	Waste Water Treatment plant
<b>Short Term Pressure:</b>	Yes
<b>Nature:</b>	Low Risk
<b>Frequency:</b>	< 1 per season
<b>Duration:</b>	< 24 hours
<b>Risk Assessment Methodology:</b>	EPA recommended Assessment Methodology
<b>Risk Assessment Results:</b>	The discharge is considered a long outfall. There is full treatment at the plant therefore the microbial pollution potential is very low. The 95th percentile monitoring result for intestinal intercocci for the period 2010-2013 is between 1-40, therefore the WQI grade is A. The microbial pollution risk (MPR) for this discharge is therefore Very Low. This result is inconsistent with the water quality results obtained at Salthill during blue flag water quality monitoring.
<b>Details:</b>	Very low risk of pollution from Mutton Island Treatment Facility.
<b>Management Measures:</b>	A strong line of communication exists between the management at the treatment plant and the environment section of Galway City Council, so that in the event of a failure or discharge, a water sample is taken and bathers are notified of potential risk to water quality and advised not to use the bathing water by signage at the beach. There are proposals for upgrading works at Mutton Island treatment plant and these works should commence in 2014.

<b>Description:</b>	There is a risk due to the use of the beach by dog walkers and subsequent dog fouling may pose a risk to bathing water quality.
<b>Source:</b>	Domestic Animals on Beach
<b>Type:</b>	Domestic animals on beach
<b>Short Term Pressure:</b>	Yes
<b>Nature:</b>	Low Risk
<b>Frequency:</b>	< 1 per season
<b>Duration:</b>	< 24 hours
<b>Risk Assessment Methodology:</b>	Local knowledge and history at beach
<b>Risk Assessment Results:</b>	Low, due to bye laws in place.
<b>Details:</b>	Risk is low, as dogs are restricted on beach during bathing season.
<b>Management Measures:</b>	Bye-laws have been introduced which prohibits dogs from city beaches between 9am and 8pmduring the months of May – September inclusive. Enforcement and awareness will be increased in advance of each bathing season.

<b>Description:</b>	Galway bay is used for shipping including oil tankers, cargo ferries, recreational boats etc. There is a potential risk of discharge/leak from these boats, including discharge from onboard toilets and engine oil spillage resulting in a discharge/pollution to the beach.
<b>Source:</b>	Recreation boating/Charter Shipping
<b>Type:</b>	Recreational boating and charter shipping
<b>Short Term Pressure:</b>	Yes
<b>Nature:</b>	Low Risk
<b>Frequency:</b>	<1 per 5 years
<b>Duration:</b>	< 24 hours
<b>Risk Assessment Methodology:</b>	Local knowledge and history at the beach.

<b>Risk Assessment Results:</b>	There is a low risk of a discharge/leak from shipping affecting the bathing water at the beach. Based on water quality results the frequency of occurrence is very low.
<b>Details:</b>	The risk is deemed very low based on history at the beach.
<b>Management Measures:</b>	In the event of a discharge, bathers shall be notified of potential risk to water quality and advised not to use the bathing water by signage at the beach, media and by informing lifeguards on duty.

<b>Description:</b>	Surface water runoff enters the beach via the various surface water outfalls along the promenade. There is potential for pollution from surface water and these outfalls, however there is no indication from the water quality analysis carried out over recent years that there is any significant pressure on water quality from surface water runoff.
<b>Source:</b>	Rainwater Discharge/Surface Water Runoff
<b>Type:</b>	Rainwater discharges
<b>Short Term Pressure:</b>	Yes
<b>Nature:</b>	Low Risk
<b>Frequency:</b>	<1 per season
<b>Duration:</b>	< 24 hours
<b>Risk Assessment Methodology:</b>	Local knowledge and history at the beach.
<b>Risk Assessment Results:</b>	Sampling results for Salthill beach have in general been very good for the past number of years since the installation of the Mutton Island Waste Water Treatment facility. There may however be a very low risk of pollution as a result of surface water runoff during periods of very heavy rainfall.
<b>Details:</b>	Very low risk of pollution due to very heavy rainfall.
<b>Management Measures:</b>	In the event of heavy rainfall, bathing water will be monitored and bathers shall be notified of potential risk to water quality where such exists.

### 3.3 Other Risks:

Assessment of the potential for proliferation of cyanobacteria: N/A

Proposed management measures for cyanobacteria: The beach will be monitored and the HSE consulted to determine the acceptability and any potential health risks, and where required, consideration will be given to the removal of excess macro-algae. The public will be informed through the posting of notices at the beaches.

Assessment of the potential for proliferation of macroalgae: N/A

Proposed management measures for macroalgae: Not Applicable. Monitoring of the beach since 2003, indicates that there is no significant potential for proliferation of Macroalgae on this beach.

Assessment of the potential for proliferation of marine phytoplankton: Not Applicable.

Proposed management measures for marine phytoplankton: Monitoring of the beach since 2003, indicates that there is no significant potential for proliferation of Marine Phytoplankton on this beach.

Additional Information:

Contact Details:

Galway City Council

Sinead Johnstone, Executive Engineer Environment Section, City Hall, College Road, Galway.

Phone: (091) 536595

Fax: (091) 568146

Email:sinead.johnstone@galwaycity.ie;environment@galwaycity.ie

Name of contact person during holidays: Daithi Flood, Assistant Engineer or Eithne Murphy, Executive Engineer, Parks

4 Bathing Water Status From Previous Sampling Years:

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Salthill Beach	Good	Good	Good	Good

5 Contact Details:

Contact:	Galway City Council
Email:	environment@galwaycity.ie
Address:	Environment Department, City Hall, College Road, Galway
Phone:	091 536400