Information Sheet 3 - Pollution Identification

Sewage Outfall: Sewage water can look brown or milky grey if it has been mixed with grey wastewater before it reaches the river. It can smell strongly, and you might spot personal care or sanitary items in or around it.

Sewage Fungus: Sewage fungus is a mass of filamentous bacteria that grows in response to organic nutrients in the water. It looks slimy and is light grey or brownish in colour, and cotton wool-like. Often found downstream from a sewage outfall or in ditches with slurry run-off.

Road Runoff: Water containing run-off can look oily, blackish or have a rainbow sheen on the surface. Often this is washed off from roads and contains oil and brake and tyre residues.

Soil Runoff: Unnatural runoff will usually be brown in colour due to soil Presence. Often observed exiting gateways or through hedges from farmed fields. Occurs after heavy rainfall events, especially in winter, no problems in dry weather.

Oily Sheen: A very thin layer of oil floating on water that spreads out. As the thin layer of oil spreads on the water, the oil changes in colour from black or brown to a rainbow of colours.

Livestock: Are there livestock in or that have access to the water? You may see cows or sheep that are able to enter the river, where they have potential to erode/trample the bank, disturb the bottom and transfer faeces or chemicals into the water.

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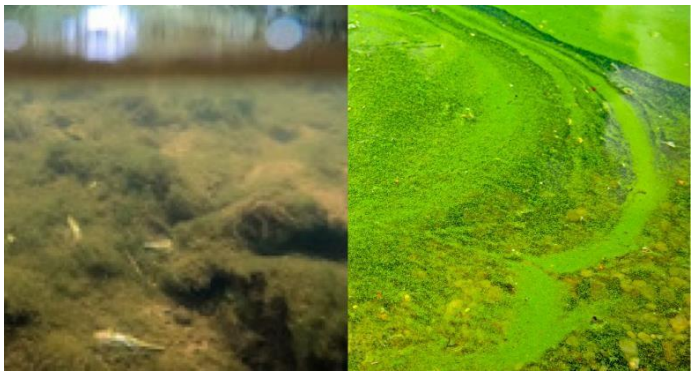
Foam: Natural foam may start off as white, but often becomes light tan or brown incolour as it collects sediment and organic matter. Man made foam appears white in colour and will smell fragrant, perfumed, or soapy. Usually occurs over small area, localised near source of discharge.



Algae: Algal blooms or scums can make the water look green, blue-green or brown,and sometimes the bed appears coated in a brown mat. The water surface can appear dirty and crusty. Surface algae has no distinct leaves and can be confused with duckweed.