# Bathing water profile – St Andrews (East Sands)

[Bathing water classification](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/ViewResults.aspx?id=9318)

## Bathing water description

The St Andrews (East Sands) bathing water is found to the east of the town of St Andrews. The sandy bay is approximately 700 metres long. The beach is popular with tourists and water sports enthusiasts.

The beach slopes gently towards the water and depending on the tide, there can be 10-330 metres of beach before the water’s edge.

Site details:

* Local authority: Fife Council
* Year of designation: 1999
* Water sampling location: NO 52000 16299

## Risks to water quality

This bathing water is subject to short term pollution following heavy rainfall. Bathing is not advised during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall due to the risk to bathers’ health from water pollution.

Pollution risks include sewer overflows.

## Water quality forecasts

As water quality is likely to be impacted by rainfall we make daily predictions of good or poor bathing water quality. We advise against bathing when poor water quality is predicted as there is an increased risk to bathers’ health from water pollution.

These predictions are displayed on the electronic sign at the beach and [online](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Predictions.aspx) between 15 May and 15 September.

## Catchment description

A catchment area of 30 km2 drains into the St Andrews (East Sands) bathing water. The area is predominantly rural (91%) with arable agriculture the major land use. Approximately 8% of the bathing water catchment is urban with the main population area being the town of St Andrews.

The Kinness Burn is the main river within the bathing water catchment. It flows into the sea immediately to the north of the bathing water.

Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) sit partially within the bathing water catchment. They are St Andrews to Craig Hartle and Cassindonald Moss. The Strathmore and Fife area was designated as a surface water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone in 2002

## Map 1: St Andrews (East Sands) bathing water



## Map 2: Catchment draining into St Andrews (East Sands) bathing water



# Improving bathing water quality

## Sewage

[Scottish Water](https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Your-Home/Your-Waste-Water) provides most waste water collection and treatment services in Scotland.

Sewage from St Andrews is treated at Kinkell Ness treatment works before being discharged via a long sea outfall. The works has tertiary treatment including disinfection. Storm tanks have been constructed in the Kinness Burn sewer catchment to minimise discharges from the combined sewer overflows. There may though still be discharges which impact the bathing water during heavy rainfall.

## Agriculture

There are no impacts from agriculture affecting this bathing water.

## Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), algae and jellyfish

Marine waters are not at risk of cyanobacteria overproduction. This bathing water is not at risk of excessive growth of macroalgae (seaweed) or phytoplankton.

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

## Pollution incidents

Pollution can be reported [via our website online form](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/environmentalevents) or by calling our 24 hours a day Pollution Hotline number **0800 80 70 60**

If pollution is reported to us, or identified by our routine water quality monitoring program, we will investigate and where necessary work with others to remediate. We may contact other relevant organisations including the local authority, that local health board, Scottish Water and Scottish Ministers.

If there is a risk to human health the local authority is responsible for placing signs at the bathing water. Information will also be available on our website.

Everyone can help to keep the bathing water clean:

* If you visit the beach with your dog clear up any fouling
* Don’t leave litter or feed birds - this encourages unnatural behaviour, and they can pollute the water
* At home, don’t flush wipes or other inappropriate items as these can block pipes and cause sewage spills

## Contact details and information sources

[SEPA bathing waters homepage](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/)

[SEPA rainfall data](https://www2.sepa.org.uk/rainfall/)

[Scottish Government protected waters homepage](https://www.gov.scot/policies/water/protected-waters/)

[Fife Council](https://www.fife.gov.uk/contact-us)

For information on accessing this document in an alternative format or language, please contact SEPA by emailing equalities@sepa.org.uk

If you are a user of British Sign Language (BSL), the Contact Scotland BSL service gives you access to an online interpreter, enabling you to communicate with us using sign language. [contactscotland-bsl.org](http://contactscotland-bsl.org/)