

Getting EA Water Quality Data - UPDATED for New API (2026)

Simple Guide for Excel

****Important:**** The old API was retired in December 2025. This guide uses the ****NEW API**** that works as of February 2026.

Many thanks to Alison Matthews of the Rivers Trust for providing this.

🎉 Method1: Excel (WORKS GREAT)

Excel can set custom headers, so it works perfectly with the new API

Step-by-Step Instructions

****1. Open Excel****

****2. Go to Data tab → Get Data → From Web****

- Click the "Data" tab
- Click "Get Data"
- Click "From Other Sources"
- Click "From Web"

****3. Click "Advanced"** (important!)**

****4. Enter the URL:****

In the URL box, paste this (change the parts in CAPITALS):

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/sampling-point/YOUR-CODE/observation?dateFrom=2024-01-01&dateTo=2024-12-31&limit=250>

Replace:

- `YOUR-CODE` with your sampling point code (e.g., AN-CORBY)
- `2024-01-01` with your start date
- `2024-12-31` with your end date

****5. Add HTTP request header:****

Click "Add HTTP request header"

- In the first box, type: `Accept`
- In the second box, type: `text/csv`

****6. Click OK****

****7. Excel will connect and show you a preview****

****8. Click "Load"****

The data will appear in your spreadsheet!

Refreshing Data in Excel

To get updated data later:

1. Click anywhere in your data table
2. Go to Data tab
3. Click "Refresh All"

You can also set up automatic refresh:

1. Right-click on your data table
2. Click "Refresh" → "Connection Properties"
3. Check "Refresh every" and set to 60 minutes

🔎 Finding Sampling Point Codes

****Option 1: Interactive Map (Easiest)****

1. Go to: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality>
2. Click on the map to find your location
3. Click on a sampling point

4. Look for the "notation" - that's your code

Option 2: List by Area

1. Go to the API docs: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/api-docs>
2. Try the "sampling-point" endpoint
3. Use filters to find your area

Understanding Your Data

The data will have these columns:

Column	What It Means
phenomenonTime	When the sample was taken
determinand.prefLabel	What was measured (e.g., "Temperature", "Phosphorus")
result	The actual measurement value
unit	Unit (e.g., "CELSIUS", "MILLIGRAM PER LITRE")
samplingPoint.prefLabel	Location name
samplingPoint.region	Region

Plus coordinates, sample types, and other details.

Getting Only Specific Measurements

Add these to your URL (before &limit=):

Temperature only:

&determinand=0076

Phosphorus only:

&determinand=0348

Common Issues and Solutions

Issue: Excel says "Can't connect"

Solution:

- Make sure you clicked "Advanced" when entering the URL
- Check you added the HTTP header (`Accept: text/csv`)
- Check your internet connection

Issue: No data appears

Solution:

- Check the sampling point code is correct
- Check the dates are valid
- Try a longer date range
- Make sure the dates are in format YYYY-MM-DD

Issue: Only 250 results but I need more

Solution: Make multiple requests with different date ranges:

- Q1: Jan-Mar
- Q2: Apr-Jun
- Q3: Jul-Sep
- Q4: Oct-Dec

Quick Reference

For Excel: Use Data → From Web (Advanced) with the Accept header

URL:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/sampling-point/POINT-CODE/observation?dateFrom=START-DATE&dateTo=END-DATE&limit=250>

HTTP Header:

- Header: `Accept`

- Value: `text/csv`

Need Help?

Environment Agency Support:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/support>

API Documentation:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/api-docs>

What Changed from the Old API?

Old API (retired Dec 2025):

- Used ` .csv` in the URL
- Used `IMPORTDATA` in Google Sheets
- Used `year=` parameter

New API (current):

- Uses `Accept: text/csv` header
- Uses custom function in Google Sheets
- Uses `dateFrom=` and `dateTo=` parameters
- Same data, different access method

Updated: February 2026, *Using: Environment Agency Water Quality Archive - NEW API*