

# Feargal Sharkey tells GMB

## Congress 'we've been cheated'



Private water companies in England and Wales dumped sewage into the UK's waterways more than 383,000 times in 2025 – as GMB calls for workers to have a seat on the new super regulator.

The spills – which are recorded by the [Environment Agency](#) – pumped out raw, untreated sewage for a total of 2,635,198 hours.

Earlier this year, the Government announced Ofwat would be scrapped and a new 'super regulator' would take its place.

GMB's annual congress in Blackpool will today [Monday] discuss the figures and move a motion calling for 'a permanent worker seat on the board to safeguard from future failures.'



Feargal Sharkey – Undertones frontman and water campaigner – will address the conference floor to help move the motion.

### List of spills by water company

Water company	Number of spills	Total duration (hours)
Anglian Water	16,779	101,598
Northumbrian Water	27,776	123,521
Severn Trent Water	36,471	200,361
South West Water	46,164	407,006
Southern Water	15,554	114,868
Thames Water	9,189	107,822
United utilities	60,483	327,453
Wessex Water	24,442	190,666
Yorkshire Water	51431	285,931
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	94,738	775,972
Totals	383027	2635198

#### **Feargal Sharkey told GMB Conference:**

“The brutal reality is as employees, bill payers, as customers, we have been lied to, we’ve been misled, we’re being extorted, we’ve been cheated.

“For 37 years, we’ve been subjected to nothing more than the greatest act of organised criminality perpetrated against the British people.

“We’ve had little in return apart from corporate greed, profiteering, financial engineering, political failure and regulatory incompetence.



"In short, we've been had.

"In reality, this Thatcherite theme park has delivered nothing but pain, sorrow and anger.

---

## Press office

07958 156846

[press.office@gmb.org.uk](mailto:press.office@gmb.org.uk)

## Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

[info@gmb.org.uk](mailto:info@gmb.org.uk)

