

2 January 2020

## Water Abstraction – New Authorisations Announcement Extension to application period from 31 Dec 2019 to 30 June 2020

### If you are currently abstracting for a previously exempt activity then this applies to you.

A helpful six month extension has just been announced to the application window for previously exempt abstractions. The new deadline for all applications to be successfully submitted has been moved from the 31 of December 2019 to the 30 June 2020. This **good news** benefits trickle irrigators, wetland operators and other previously exempt abstracting businesses that still need to apply if they wish to continue abstracting.

The **New Authorisation regulations** came into force on 1 January 2018, meaning that those previously exempt abstractions now require an abstraction licence.

### Favourable transition arrangements

If you make a valid application by this new deadline, you will still be able to benefit from the **favourable transitional arrangements**. These allow you to have a New Authorisation water abstraction licence for quantities based on your recent water use (2011 – 2017), rather than current water availability. This is a **last opportunity** to secure these protected rights for your abstraction and cannot be retrospectively applied after the 30 June 2020.

Ian Johnson, Water Resources Manager for the Environment Agency said, “The Environment Agency is pleased to announce a short extension until 30 of June 2020, for applications for previously exempt water abstractions activities. This is a helpful last chance for previously exempt abstractors to apply, based on what they have needed, rather than be constrained by the current water availability for licensing. If you miss this opportunity, any further abstraction will be unlawful without a current licence.”

Apply now at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-management-abstract-or-impound-water>

### When do the new regulations apply?

The activities that this new regulation covers are:

- All remaining forms of irrigation including trickle not yet licensed
- Abstractions within previously exempt areas
- Transferring water out of a watercourse by a navigation, harbour or conservancy authority
- Abstracting water into and between internal drainage districts
- Dewatering mines, quarries and engineering works
- Warping (abstraction of water containing silt for deposit onto agricultural land)
- Abstractions for managed wetland systems and water level management plans
- The majority of abstractions covered by Crown and visiting forces and the Ministry of Defence

The requirement for licensing is if you abstract more than 20m<sup>3</sup> of water per day.

### What happens after the 30 June 2020?

- After the 30 June 2020, it would be unlawful for you to continue to abstract water without having a valid application submitted to us.
- Any application submitted after 30 June 2020 will be determined on the basis of water availability. For many parts of the country, this would rule out abstracting water in the summer months.
- Without a valid application being submitted in this short extension now provided, businesses and wetlands operators will find themselves at the back of the queue for water - and in many catchments that list is already closed.

### If I am successful when will I get my licence?

- All applications for New Authorisations licences will be determined by the Environment Agency by 31 December 2022.

### Further information

- Gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-management-abstract-or-impound-water>
- Citizen Space page: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/> and search for New Authorisations.
- Environment Agency - New Authorisations hotline ([03708 506 506](tel:03708506506)) for free confidential advice from an expert about the process and for help with completing an application.
- Environment Agency - Email [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).