

Action taken following dry conditions in Lincs and Northants

Following a dry spring, most river flows and groundwater levels are 'below normal' or 'notably low'. Impacts of this weather are already being felt in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire with river flows becoming lower, causing problems for wildlife and river users.

Prolonged dry weather is a natural event. It occurs as a result of low rainfall for an extended period of time. Once prolonged dry weather is declared actions are taken to minimise impacts on the environment and the risk of further deterioration.

The Environment Agency have been monitoring the situation and reviewing the range of dry weather indicators, including groundwater levels, river flows and soil conditions. It is working with partners across the area, including internal drainage boards and water companies to ensure the situation is managed effectively.

Abstraction licence holders in the affected areas may receive notice to restrict the amount of water they can take. This may include taking reduced quantities or only abstracting at particular times, depending on local circumstances.

Thomas Enright, a drought manager for Environment Agency in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, said:

We continue to monitor our key river, groundwater and reservoir sites using telemetry, and are liaising with water companies to understand any emerging concerns.

We are also working with farmers, businesses and other abstractors to manage water availability. We need to ensure that they get the water they need to be resilient while maintaining our protection of the environment.

We are closely monitoring the developing incident and produce regular reports on the water situation, available on www.gov.uk.

In the lead up to this announcement the Environment Agency has been monitoring weather forecasts and hydrology. Field teams have been busy sampling to check for the impacts of dry weather on the ecology. They have also been meeting with water companies so any necessary actions can be taken.

We can all do our part to use water wisely and manage this precious resource. If you are using water in the garden, take some simple steps such as fitting a trigger to your hose or using a bucket to wash the car or water plants. For more water saving tips visit [Waterwise](#).

If people see any environmental impacts due to dry weather, such as fish in distress, please report it to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60.

Additional information

- The last time Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire moved to prolonged dry weather status was in July 2018.
- The last time Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire declared drought was in June 2011. This drought resulted from 7 to 8 months of exceptionally dry weather and lasted through to 2012. It was declared as an environmental drought.
- Our regulatory role involves issuing and regulating abstraction licences and drought permits. It also involves imposing abstraction restrictions and scrutinising water company drought plans to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose.
- Water companies plan for the expected increase in demand and reduction in effective rainfall over the warmer months and decide themselves on proposing water restrictions. We work closely with the companies to ensure they follow their drought plans.