

Research and analysis: Guide to drawdown capacity for reservoir safety and emergency planning

This project has researched the preferred drawdown capacity for reservoirs in the UK and provides guidance on consistent methods for assessing the adequacy of existing drawdown facilities.

The guidance is intended for reservoir inspecting engineers who are required under UK reservoir legislation to review the drawdown capacity of reservoirs. Reservoir owners may also find the guidance useful.

Press release: 'Nameless' Bournemouth angler fined for fishing without licence

A Bournemouth man has been fined £336 for fishing without a licence and failing to state his name and address when asked to do so by the water bailiff.

Lewis Pudwell of Queens Park West Drive, Bournemouth was also ordered to pay £127 costs plus a victim surcharge of £30 following a prosecution by the Environment Agency.

The offence took place on 24 February 2017 at Little Canford Ponds, Wimborne in a place where fishing is regulated for freshwater fish or eels. In addition, contrary to section 35(3) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, Pudwell failed to state his name and address to the water bailiff.

The case was heard by Salisbury magistrates on 20 July. Pudwell pleaded guilty to both offences.

Richard Battersby of the Environment Agency said:

The majority of anglers fish legally. The minority of anglers that fail to buy a fishing licence are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport.

An annual licence costs just £30. Anglers risk significant fines

and costs, a criminal conviction and the loss of their fishing equipment for such a small fee that gets used to enhance angling and fisheries habitat improvement works.

Money from fishing licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers, including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease; restoring fish stocks through re-stocking; eradicating invasive species; and fish habitat improvements.

Licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing and to encourage participation in the sport.

You need a valid Environment Agency rod licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England. Buying a rod licence is easy, simply visit www.gov.uk/fishing-licences/buy-a-fishing-licence.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

Notes to editors:

- Find out more about buying a rod fishing licence:
www.gov.uk/fishing-licences/when-you-need-a-licence
- Try fishing! – lots of events for summer 2017 listed at
www.getfishing.org.uk.

[Press release: Exercise Ash will test water pumps on Somerset Levels](#)

Environment Agency engineers from across England will descend on two Somerset pumping stations next week (14 to 18 August) for Exercise Ash.

Huish Episcopi Pumping Station and Westover Pumping Station, near Langport, will see pump specialists and incident operatives sharpen their major incident skills in preparation for any serious flood.

High volume pumps – which can fill two average sized bathtubs every second – will be deployed at the stations, increasing water pumping capacity.

Westover Pumping Station removes water through three permanent, electric, submersible pumps at a combined rate of 1,800 litres per second. Huish Episcopi Pumping Station also has three permanent pumps and removes water at combined rate of 5,610 litres per second.

Organiser John Rowlands said:

Somerset has experienced a number of flooding incidents in recent years, most notably in 2013/14 when communities were impacted by flood water. That winter was the wettest for 250 years in parts of the country with only one completely dry day in nearly two months in Somerset.

This unprecedented event led the Environment Agency to consider what else we could do to reduce the impact of a similar flood in the future.

In the summer of 2014, we developed a series of trigger points. When certain criteria is met – more than 100mm of rainfall forecast in 5 days, water levels on the moors rise more than 50mm per hour and a geographical feature (normally a road) is inundated – additional pumping capacity will be deployed at certain locations.

These trigger points were rolled out at a series of community meetings over the autumn and winter of 2014 and Exercise Ash will test this commitment next week.

Severe flooding can also have a detrimental impact on the ecology and agriculture and depending on the time of the flood can take years for the landscape to recover.

As part of the Somerset Levels and Moors 20 Year Flood Action Plan, regular testing of our resilience via training exercises on an annual basis will provide reassurance for communities at flood risk.

The pumps will be loaded onto a lorry at an Environment Agency depot in Bawdrip village a few miles north of the pumping stations on Monday, 14 August. They will reach the pumping stations the same day. It will then take a whole day to unload and deploy them before they are switched on. Different exercise teams will practice attaching the pipes over the course of a week.

John Rowlands said:

Deploying and attaching these pumps takes a significant amount of planning and because these pumps can be used anywhere in the

country. We've invited engineers from across the Environment Agency to come and put their incident skills into practice.

This, alongside the work of our partners, will make a huge difference in reducing the frequency, duration and severity of flooding in the future.

Partner organisations have been invited to attend Exercise Ash as observers, including Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum, Somerset County Council, Internal Drainage Board and the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.

It is important that everybody is aware of their own flood risk. People can find out how to get ready and check their flood risk at <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding> or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Notes for Editors:

There are 21 permanent pumping sites in Somerset. Pumping stations are set to operate automatically according to water levels in the rhynes draining the moor or flood alleviation schemes. These pumps cannot operate if the receiving river is full, when spillways are operating or river banks are overflowing. This is why trigger points are in place, which alert the Environment Agency to start deploying mobile pumps. Triggers include specific roads starting to flood, the forecast of heavy rain, and moor water levels rising above 50mm/hour.

Huish Episcopi Pumping Station and Westover Pumping Station were built in the 1960 as part of a suite of works around Langport. Another two pumping stations were built at the same time – Long Load Pumping Station and Middelney Pumping Station. They are all located next to rivers – Huish Episcopi and Long Load on the River Yeo, Middelney on the River Isle and Westover on the River Parrett. They pump water from the adjacent moors (38 million cubic metres of water when the moors are full) which form part of the entire 160,000 acre Somerset Levels and Moors.

The 20 Year Flood Action Plan was jointly created by a broad range of local and national organisations and communities, and is overseen by the Somerset Rivers Authority.

[Press release: Exercise Ash will test](#)

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Press release: South West Water to pay £142,524 for Devon and Cornwall breaches

South West Water Ltd has been ordered to pay more than £142,000 in fines and costs for discharging poor quality effluent from two of its sewage treatment plants. The prosecutions were brought by the Environment Agency.

The offences were committed in Denbury, Devon and Praze an Beeble near Camborne, Cornwall where the company breached permit conditions by allowing inadequately treated effluent to enter nearby watercourses.

Strict limits are set on effluent discharged from sewage treatment works to ensure they don't adversely affect receiving watercourses. It is the responsibility of the site operator to ensure a treatment works operates in accordance with its permit. They must carry out regular maintenance and repairs.

At Denbury, treated effluent is discharged into the Halwell Stream. Between September 2015 and June 2016, four samples tested for ammonia, suspended solids and Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) exceeded the quality standards laid down in the site's permit. The treatment works is only permitted two exceedances in any 12 months so the additional discharges made in March and June 2016 were offences.

The court was told the filter bed rotating arms at the site failed to operate effectively over a number of months. This coincided with a time when the site was not visited every day and alarms were not working reliably.

The sewage treatment works at Praze an Beeble requires a lot of maintenance and is permitted to discharge only a very limited amount of ammonia. Every month South West Water must take a sample of the discharge and notify the Environment Agency of the result.

In May and August 2016 the amount of ammonia discharged exceeded the amount allowed by the permit.

When further inquiries were made by the Environment Agency, it transpired

that the site's online ammonia monitor had recorded that too much ammonia had been discharged from the treatment works for some 15 days in April 2016 as well.

In May, part of the site was not being cleaned often enough and equipment needed repairing. In August, part of the site had been blocked by moss, blanket weed and sludge. South West Water said the monitoring equipment had not always worked accurately in April.

Mark Pilcher of the Environment Agency said:

Water companies must ensure effluent is treated to a sufficiently high standard to protect the environment. Regular maintenance of sewage treatment works helps with the early detection of faults and allows repairs to be made in good time before treatment deteriorates to the point where a site breaches its permit.

Appearing before a district judge at Bodmin Magistrates' Court, South West Water Ltd was ordered to pay a total of £142,524. The company had earlier pleaded guilty to three charges (two for Denbury and one for Praze an Beeble) of breaching Regulation 38(2) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

The fine for Denbury was £80,000 with £4,993 costs plus a £120 victim surcharge. The fine for Praze an Beeble was £53,334 with £3,957 costs plus a £120 victim surcharge. The case was heard on 3 August, 2017.