

# SEPA calls on construction industry to be aware of new licensing requirements

27 August 2018

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is urging the construction industry to ensure they have a licence and Pollution Prevention Plan before starting any new large construction projects from 1 September 2018.

- From 1 September 2018 all new large construction projects must have a licence and Pollution Prevention Plan.
- SEPA has been engaging with the construction industry to ensure they are aware of the changes to drainage system regulations.
- Further guidance is available from SEPA's website to ensure construction activities are compliant with the regulations.

A licence will be required, before any construction work can commence for sites that:

- exceed 4 hectares in area;
- contain a road or track length in excess of 5km; or
- include any area of more than 1 hectare or any length of more than 500 metres on ground with a slope in excess of 25 degrees.

SEPA has produced [guidance](#) for the construction industry to help with the development of a pollution prevention plan which will be required before any work commences. This plan must be complied with onsite during the entire construction phase.

All discharges of water run-off from construction sites to the water environment are regulated, and the changes apply to a wide range of construction types, including house and industrial building, wind farms, forestry, transport, pipe laying, overhead pylons and hydro power schemes.

David Harley, Head of Water and Planning at SEPA, said:

Every day SEPA works to protect and enhance Scotland's environment and the changes to the regulations have been introduced to reduce the risks of pollution to the water environment from construction site water run-off.

"The changes will ensure adequate treatment systems are in place to protect the environment prior to and during the construction phase. For example, this will reduce the risk of silty water run-off which can damage and kill aquatic life by smothering and suffocating.

"We are clear that compliance is non-negotiable and have been engaging with the construction sector to ensure they are aware of

the changes coming into force. If you're responsible for the operation of a construction site please contact your [local SEPA office](#) as soon as possible, so that we can work with you to ensure that the correct authorisations are in place."

**Ends**

#### **Further information**

- The amendments to the Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) introduced a threshold to General Binding Rule (GBR) 10 for when a construction site SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) licence will be required.
- Even if you do not need to apply for authorisation, companies are reminded that they are still required to operate the site in accordance with the general binding rules specified in the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, as amended (CAR). Details of these rules can be found in the [CAR practical guide](#).