

TRICKLE IRRIGATION LICENSING

The implementation date for the regulation of the abstraction of water for trickle irrigation continues to slip. While all the indications up until the end of January were that things were on track, the word on the street is now **NOT BEFORE APRIL 2015**.

We don't think that this is official policy, but we understand that regulatory impact work is still ongoing and may not be finished until late spring / early summer. Then there needs to be final drafting and re-consultation on the transition arrangements, before preparing the final policy.

April 2015 brings us perilously close to a General Election which means there is a high likelihood of further delay with the potential for a new party, new government and new minister in power.

So What?

While we are not surprised by this outcome - we have been monitoring these proposed regulations since 1998 and there has been continual slippage — we are incredibly frustrated.

The continual postponement, tardiness and misinformation makes forward planning in an industry that by its very nature has to try and predict the future all the time, almost impossible.

We still need clear guidance on issues such as:

- Exemptions for abstractions that present a low risk to the achievement of Water Framework Directive objectives
- The starting date of a project, for it to be considered for inclusion in the transition arrangements
- Interaction with the future reform agenda for water abstraction licensing and control
- Issues of fairness and proportionality in implementing licensing control
- The level of “light touch” approach to licence determination
- The duration of first licences

What do I do now?

Trickle irrigators should now take the opportunity to establish new abstraction points including boreholes which may remain exempt until the new regulations are in place, and once established may fall into the transition arrangements. All trickle irrigators should record how much water they abstract on a daily basis to provide a sound evidence base.

The ultimate solution is likely to include high flow storage reservoirs. Planning and even developing reservoirs now and taking advantage of grants, where available, will provide security against future regulatory changes.

Remember, reservoirs can be “winter” filled from boreholes, not just rivers.



WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Understanding the risk to your business of changes in regulations is vital, and mitigating the risk as effectively as possible is essential. **Contact us today** to discuss how we can help you to meet your obligations, reduce your exposure and save you money.

“If Envireau Water can't get you an abstraction licence, nobody can”

Visit our website for more information.

www.envireauwater.co.uk

