

## FLOW METER VERIFICATION - A REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO CALIBRATION



Accurate flow metering is an important aspect of any borehole abstraction and is necessary to provide good quality borehole performance data and to demonstrate regulatory compliance. However, it doesn't have to mean an expensive and impractical calibration regime.

Guidelines on abstraction metering are published by a number of regulatory authorities including:

- Environment Agency (EA)
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)
- Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency

These authorities advocate regular calibration of flow meters and many licences carry a condition requiring the regular calibration of flow meters, which is enforced through regular inspection of calibration records and certificates.



*A portable meter is strapped to the abstraction pipework to verify the installed meter*

Unfortunately, calibration requires the complete removal of the meter and to enable calibration in a factory, which is often uneconomical and/or impractical, resulting in meters being replaced rather than calibrated; regardless of their accuracy, thereby incurring unnecessary cost.

Thankfully, there is an alternative to calibration, which can often be agreed by the regulatory authorities as a practical and pragmatic alternative. This alternative solution is meter verification where a calibrated, portable meter is strapped to the abstraction pipework and used to verify the installed meter. This can provide a cost effective and efficient means of demonstrating accurate water metering.



Following a successful verification exercise, if there are still concerns about the accuracy of metered volumes, then the type, age, condition and positioning of a flow meter should be considered as this can have a significant bearing on accuracy.

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