

# Press release: Light aircraft used to target illegal abstraction investigations

The Environment Agency in the East Midlands is the first area in the country to use digital imaging collected by light aircraft to put a stop to illegal abstractions from rivers and streams.

The information obtained from the operation is now helping the Environment Agency to effectively target high invasion areas and carry out targeted abstraction patrols to catch illegal abstractors and put a stop to illegal abstraction that can cause harm to the environment and wildlife.

The Environment Agency manages abstraction to balance the needs of the environment with the rights of existing lawful water users during periods of dry weather.

93 abstraction licences in the East Midlands have had restrictions placed on them in the last few weeks to reduce abstractions and 16 licence holders have been told to cease abstracting completely.

To ensure abstractors are complying with the new restrictions, Environment Officers will be carrying out high visibility patrols throughout the East Midlands to check that abstractors keep within the conditions of their licence and do not cause harm to the environment.

Steve Lawrie, Area Environment Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

Our patrols across the East Midlands aim to deter illegal abstraction and identify compliance issues where restrictions are in force, or where we are aware of environmental issues.

We are working to be flexible where possible and allow abstraction where it will not cause harm to the environment or impact other river users. We must balance the needs of farmers and other businesses with those of wildlife and other water users.

As the hot, dry weather continues we are urging everyone to use water wisely to help protect the environment and prevent the need for further water restrictions.

Anyone suspected of abstracting illegally should be reported to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

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## **Notice: S80 3LJ, Steetley Dolomite Limited: environmental permit draft decision advertisement**

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. In some cases they also consult on draft decisions for environmental permits. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- the Environment Agency's proposed decision and the reasons and considerations on which they've based this
- additional relevant information available since the application was advertised
- any information or guidance provided by the Secretary of State relevant to the application

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## **Press release: Flood sirens in Grimsby and Cleethorpes to be tested on 24 August**

The Environment Agency (EA) is conducting its annual test of its flood sirens in Grimsby and Cleethorpes on Friday, 24 August.

Installed after the summer floods of 2007, 17 of the 18 sirens help the EA warn over 25,000 households and local businesses of imminent tidal flooding while one also warns of flood risk from the river.

Testing will take place on Friday, 24 August between 10am and 12pm. If you hear the sirens during this time, you do not need to take any action. If flooding is expected on the day, the test will be rescheduled and flood warnings will be issued through the Environment Agency's free Flood Warning Service (FWS).

Environment Agency staff will be at Freshney Place shopping centre in Grimsby together with representatives from North East Lincolnshire Council between 9am and 5pm on the day of the tests. They'll be on hand to answer questions about the sirens and provide information about how to manage your flood risk, including what steps you can take to prepare for an emergency.

The sirens in Grimsby and Cleethorpes were installed over a decade ago, and since then the Environment Agency has made great strides in how it can warn people when flooding may be possible. The EA now offers a free Flood Warning Service, which provides targeted flood warnings via phone call, text or email. The EA encourages all residents in Grimsby and Cleethorpes to check their flood risk and sign up for flood warnings if they've not done so yet, by visiting [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) or by calling 0345 988 1188.

Although the Flood Warning Service is now the EA's primary warning tool, the flood sirens in Grimsby and Cleethorpes add value as they can help provide people with crucial time to prepare for flooding. The siren on the Willows Estate in Grimsby is used to warn residents about flooding from the New Cut Drain and the River Freshney, while the others warn of flooding from the Humber.

Greg Smith, Flood Resilience team leader with the Environment Agency, said:

The flood sirens we own and operate in Grimsby and Cleethorpes help us warn over 25,000 households and local businesses. It's important that we conduct these annual tests to make sure the sirens still work as they should.

Although our flood defences reduce the risk of flooding to thousands of homes and businesses in Grimsby and Cleethorpes, we can never remove the risk of flooding entirely. This is why it is crucial that we can warn people when there is a risk of flooding, by using tools such as the sirens or our free Flood Warning Service.

It is important that everyone plays their part to protect themselves from the risk of flooding. Find out what you can do to protect yourself and your family by coming to talk to us at Freshney Place on 24 August.

Cllr Matt Patrick, portfolio holder for the environment with North East Lincolnshire Council said:

On the flood siren testing day, North East Lincolnshire Council staff and its partner Engie will be joining the Environment Agency in Freshney Place Shopping Centre between 9am and 5pm.

Officers will be available to answer any questions on flood risk and how you can prepare.