

Developing drought in the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment

It is the first catchment in the East Anglia area to move to this status, since being in drought recovery following the large amount of rainfall over the 2019 winter.

The drought team in East Anglia have been monitoring the situation and reviewing the range of dry weather indicators, including groundwater levels, river flows and soil conditions.

Following one of the driest springs on record, river flows and some groundwater levels are 'below normal' in locations along the rivers Cam and Ely Ouse. In addition, the soil condition means it is soaking up water faster.

Abstraction licence holders in the most affected areas are likely to receive notice to restrict the amount of water they take as described in their licence conditions.

This may include taking reduced quantities or only abstracting at particular times, depending on local circumstances.

Helen Smith, a drought manager for Environment Agency in East Anglia, said:

"We continue to monitor our key river, groundwater and reservoir sites using telemetry, in line with government guidance, and are liaising with water companies to understand any emerging concerns.

"We are also working with farmers, businesses and other abstractors to manage water availability and ensure that as far as possible they get the water they need to be resilient while maintaining our protection of the environment.

"We are closely monitoring the developing incident and produce regular reports on the water situation, available on www.gov.uk.

"We can all do our part to use water wisely and manage this precious resource. If you are using water in the garden, take some simple steps such as fitting a trigger to your hose or using a bucket to wash the car or water plants.

"While we ask people to use water wisely, they should follow current NHS advice on stopping the spread of coronavirus by washing hands with soap and water often."

If people see any environmental impacts due to dry weather, such as fish in distress, please report it to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60.

For more water saving tips [visit Waterwise](#).