

[Fishing without a licence costs Retford man over £600](#)

The case was brought to Northampton Magistrates' Court by the [Environment Agency](#) on 5 August 2019. Kevin Benson of Lime Tree Avenue, Retford, pleaded guilty and was ordered to pay a total penalty of £621. An annual fishing licence would have cost him just £30.

Fines up to £2,500

The penalty includes a fine of £442 for fishing without a licence, contrary to the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act (1975), costs of £135 and a victim surcharge of £44.

Following the verdict, Mick Alcott, Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency, said:

This case shows how seriously the courts take these offences and we hope the high penalty will act as a deterrent to any angler who is thinking of fishing without a licence.

Fishing illegally can incur a fine of up to £2,500 and offenders can also have their fishing equipment seized and be banned from fishing. We inspect rod licences throughout the East Midlands and work 24/7, seven days a week to check on cases of illegal fishing.

We have the same powers and responsibilities as a police constable to uphold the legislation and can arrest and detain offenders, enter land, stop and search, seize boats, vessels, vehicles and equipment, and ask people to show their fishing licences.

Money raised from fishing licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, benefitting anglers. We will always prosecute those caught cheating the system.

Buy fishing licences online

Anglers who wish to buy their licence online should buy it directly from [GOV.UK](#) as they will receive a reference number allowing them to go fishing on the same day. Customers who use third-party sites may be charged more and might not get added to the official database as quickly.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. A 1-day licence costs from just £6 and an annual licence costs from just £30 (concessions available). Junior licences are free for 13- to 16-year-olds. Licences are available from [GOV.UK](#) or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, licences can be bought at a local Post Office.

Report illegal fishing

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and the Angling Trust. Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency Incident Hotline 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to [Crimestoppers](#) on 0800 555 111.