

Supporting guidance for Water-use Efficiency – Irrigation Lagoon

This is an old version of the page

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

This item provides a contribution towards the costs of installing a lined lagoon for collecting and storing water to be used for irrigation purposes.

Benefits

Some rivers and burns in Scotland can in dry summers suffer from exceptionally low water levels with a number of burns running dry and so causing significant damage to aquatic life within the river.

An irrigation lagoon will allow water to be abstracted over the winter and stored and so help reduce the need to take water from burns and rivers at times when the water levels are low thus helping to protect the aquatic life within the river.

What needs to be done?

- if an abstraction from the water environment is required to fill the lagoon then an authorisation will be required from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Contact with SEPA is advised at an early stage to ensure sufficient water is available for an authorisation to be issued.
- filling the lagoon should be timed to cause minimum impacts on the water environment. This will usually be during high flows, preferably in the winter, but SEPA should be contacted by email at srdp@sepa.org.uk for advice to ensure that environmental standards for the site are being met
- the lagoon must not be directly connected to the water environment (i.e. there should be no dams or other works which hold back flows in wetlands, rivers, lochs and estuaries)
- where the lagoon is not connected to the water environment no authorisation will be required from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (for the construction works), if there are any doubts it is best to speak to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency at an early stage
- it is important to check with the local planning authority to investigate if planning permission will be required
- where a proprietary lining is to be used (as opposed to a clay soil liner), a receipt for the liner will be required. This will be used to prove that a liner has been incorporated and may be checked as part of the process of verifying costs

Design guidelines

Where the lagoon is capable of holding 25,000 cubic metres or more of water above the natural level of any part of the surrounding land then it will be captured under reservoir safety legislation.

Reservoir safety in Scotland is covered under the Reservoirs (Scotland) Act 2011 which is regulated by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Where the reservoir is likely to exceed the 25,000 cubic metres threshold it is advised to speak to Scottish Environment Protection Agency at the early planning stage.

The reservoir construction must comply with the Construction, Design and Management Regulations(CDM).

The [Thinking about an irrigation reservoir](#) booklet provides a useful guide to planning, designing and constructing a water storage reservoir. While the booklet references regulations applicable to England the practical advice and guidance is useful to Scottish growers as well.

Further information

- Thinking about an irrigation reservoir? [A guide to planning, designing, construction and commissioning a water storage reservoir](#)
- [Scottish Environment Protection Agency: Creation of Ponds, Pools and Lochans](#)
- [Reservoirs \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change
What needs to be done?	Added text to end of first bullet: Contact with SEPA is advised at an early stage to ensure sufficient water is available for an authorisation to be issued. Revision to 4th bullet: where the lagoon is not connected to the water environment no authorisation will be required from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (for the construction works), if there are any doubts it is best to speak to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency at an early stage.
Design guidelines	Revisions related to what the lagoon can hold and added text about the The Thinking about an irrigation reservoir booklet.
Further Information	Corrected link to Scottish Environment Protection Agency: Creation of Ponds, Pools and Lochans

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)