

# Abstract or impound water: hydrological information needed for your application

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## Applies to England

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Contact the Environment Agency

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The Environment Agency grants most licences to abstract or impound water using the flow or level restrictions in local catchment [abstraction licensing strategies](#). If they cannot do this they may grant your proposal with a local flow or level condition. Where they need to use a local condition they may ask you to produce flow estimates to understand the flow in the river. This will help them to set conditions to make sure your proposal leaves enough flow in the river for people and the environment.

The flow conditions the Environment Agency produces must be accurate to make sure the abstraction or impoundment licence is not:

- damaging to the environment
- over precautionary

When the Environment Agency assesses your application they may need:

- flow duration statistics including the mean flow value
- details of how you have produced the flow duration statistics
- flow measurements to validate the flow duration statistics
- hydrographs showing the impact of your proposal

This document explains what these terms mean.

The Environment Agency recommends that you get [enhanced pre-application advice](#) before you apply so that they can tell you what they need. If you submit a formal application without doing an enhanced pre-application first and the Environment Agency find they need hydrological information from you, they may need to return your application to you until you can provide it.

## 2. Producing flow statistics

Use data from within the catchment. This is likely to produce more accurate flow statistics. You can produce flow statistics using naturalised data from their gauging stations. You will then need to scale to the ungauged site. The Environment Agency have a large network of gauging stations so there is likely to be a gauge within the major catchment of your proposal. They have naturalised sequences for many of their gauging stations. Contact the Environment Agency to find out if the data exists and if you can have it.

The Environment Agency produces naturalised sequences based on the best available data at the time.

Where gauged data is unavailable, you can use other hydrological methods to estimate flow statistics at an ungauged site. You may choose to use a computer model.

Computer models can produce flow estimates with high levels of uncertainty depending on the size and type of river. You must consider this when choosing to use a model. It may be appropriate to discuss it with the Environment Agency before getting the flow estimates.