

[Home](#) > [Policies](#)

Policy

# Water

Directorate: [Energy and Climate Change Directorate](#), [+1 more ...](#)Topic: [Business, industry and innovation](#), [Environment and climate change](#)[Choose section](#)

## Overview

We play an active role in maintaining and improving the quality of all fresh and marine waters in Scotland, and in ensuring that our water resources are managed and supplied responsibly.

We work closely with partners to ensure that environmental protection is balanced with the interests and safety of industry and consumers.

We also work to reduce flood risk across Scotland by supporting the responsible authorities to deliver actions that protect communities from flooding and help to raise awareness.

## Actions

We are managing and developing Scotland's water resources by:

- working with partners to provide [water industry governance](#)
- [setting charging principles](#) for domestic and non-domestic customers
- continually [improving water services](#) to ensure standards remain high
- following the actions set out in our [Hydro Nation strategy](#) to maximise the economic benefits of our water resources
- developing the policy and regulatory framework for protecting and improving the [water environment](#) via river basin management plans
- setting measures for managing [protected waters](#)
- developing the policy and regulatory framework for [reservoir safety](#)
- helping communities reliant on [private water supplies](#) affected by water scarcity

We are reducing flood risk by:

- working with partners to [manage flood risk](#), build flood resilience and raise awareness

## Background

### Water supplies

Scotland's public drinking water and sewerage services are provided by [Scottish Water](#), a public company accountable to Scottish Ministers and Scottish Parliament.

Information on [how to make a complaint regarding the public water supply](#) can be found on mygov.scot.

Private water supplies in Scotland are the responsibility of owners and users and are regulated by local authorities. We provide [guidance on private water supplies](#) for owners and users on mygov.scot. More information is available on the [Drinking Water Quality Regulator \(DWQR\) website](#).

### Approved products and processes for use in Scotland's public water supply

The DWQR website provides information on the approvals process and the latest list of [approved products and processes for use in Scotland's public water supply](#).

### Water environment

Scotland's water environment is one of our greatest natural assets, supporting our health, wellbeing, wildlife and the sustainable growth of our economy.

We take action to protect and improve Scotland's rivers, lochs, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs), which are produced every six years. Improvements are typically achieved through programmes of work led by the [Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#) and delivered with a wide range of partners.

## Bills and legislation

### Water industry

The [Sewerage \(Scotland\) Act 1968](#) and the [Water \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#), both substantially amended since their introduction, define the powers and duties in those areas.

The [Water Industry \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#) set up Scottish Water, the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR) and the Customer Consultation Panels.

The [Water Services etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#) strengthened economic regulation by introducing the Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS), strengthened customer representation and introduced retail competition for non-domestic customers.

The [Water Resources \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#) makes it a statutory duty for Scottish Ministers to 'take such reasonable steps as they consider appropriate for the purpose of ensuring the development of Scotland's water resources'.

Ministers exercise their powers in these Acts through water industry regulations and ministerial orders, which are outlined in our [full list of water industry legislation](#).

## **Private water supply**

[The Private Water Supplies \(Scotland\) Regulations 2006](#) help ensure the provision of clean drinking water from private sources.

## **Water environment**

The [Water Environment and Water Services \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#) made provision for protection of the water environment, and amended the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 and the Water (Scotland) Act 1980 in relation to the provision of water and sewerage services.

The [Water Environment \(Controlled Activities\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2011](#) set the regulatory regime for the delivery of measures to protect and improve our water environment.

View a [list of all water environment legislation](#).

## **Reservoirs**

[The Reservoirs \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#) ensures increased protection to the public from the risk of flooding from reservoirs, while also ensuring that reservoir owners are fairly treated through a proportionate system.

Ministers exercise their powers in this Act through reservoir safety regulations and ministerial orders, as set out in our [list of all reservoirs legislation](#).

## **Flooding**

[The Flood Risk Management \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) created a more co-ordinated process to manage flood risk at a national and local level.

[The Flood Risk Management \(Flood Protection Schemes, Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2017](#) amended the [flood risk management regulations made in 2010](#).

## **Contact**

### **Water supply and industry enquiries**

Email: [waterindustry@gov.scot](mailto:waterindustry@gov.scot)

Phone: 0131 244 7576

Post:  
Scottish Government  
Water Industry Team  
Area 3F South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

### **Drinking water enquiries**

Email: [regulator@dwqr.scot](mailto:regulator@dwqr.scot)

Post:  
DWQR  
3F South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

### **Water environment enquiries**

Email: [EQCAT@gov.scot](mailto:EQCAT@gov.scot)

Phone: 0300 244 4000

Post:  
Environmental Quality Division  
Scottish Government  
Area 3H South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

### **Flooding enquiries**

Email: [flooding\\_mailbox@gov.scot](mailto:flooding_mailbox@gov.scot)

Phone: 0131 244 4763

Post:  
Scottish Government  
Flood Risk Management Team  
Area 3H South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

## Reservoir Safety Enquiries

Email: [Reservoir\\_Safety@gov.scot](mailto:Reservoir_Safety@gov.scot)

Phone: 0131 244 4763

Post:

Scottish Government

Flood Risk Management Team

Area 3H South

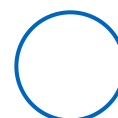
Victoria Quay

Edinburgh

EH6 6QQ

**NEXT**

[Water industry governance](#)



---

### Was this page helpful?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, but

[Continue](#)



---

[Accessibility](#)

[Archive](#)

[Contact](#)

[Cookies](#)

[Crown Copyright](#)

[Jobs and vacancies](#)

[Privacy](#)

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except for graphic assets and where otherwise stated

© Crown Copyright

