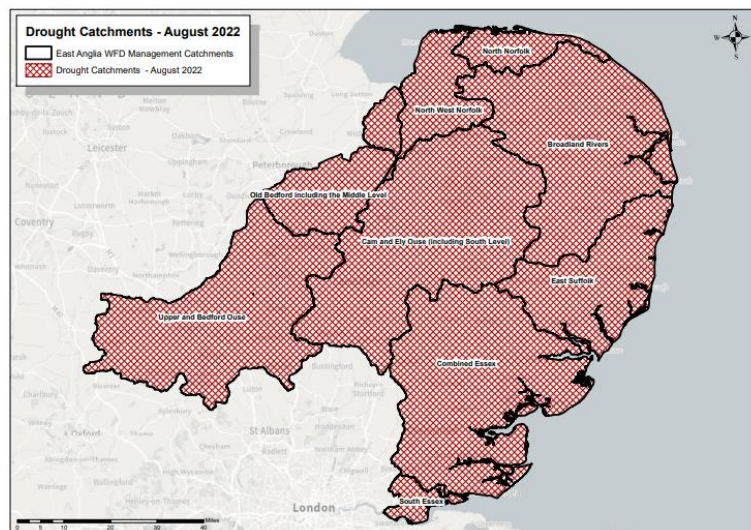


# Environment Agency Drought Update Briefing

October 2022

## East Anglia Area continues to experience Drought.

All catchments in East Anglia Area continue to be in Drought. We have experienced below average rainfall in the last 6 months and have seen extremely hot and dry periods over the summer which has caused impacts to the environment.



Map of Drought catchments in East Anglia

In recent weeks we have seen some rainfall which has provided a temporary benefit to river flows in some catchments, but by no means in all. Some of our rivers remain at exceptionally low levels and some headwaters have stopped flowing due to the Drought conditions.

Groundwater levels in some locations have seen a small positive reaction but we do not expect to see a return to normal flows and levels until we experience a prolonged spell of effective rainfall which we usually associate with Autumn and Winter. As a result, our status of being in Drought remains unchanged.

## What are we doing?

We have been monitoring and reporting on the situation, producing regular water situation reports available at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). Our teams have been carrying out abstraction compliance inspections and analysing samples collected from the environment. Our analysis is showing that Drought is impacting the ecology of our rivers, which we expect will take time to recover.

Working with Internal Drainage Boards, Abstractor Groups, and abstraction licence holders we have applied pre-agreed abstraction restrictions where they have been needed. Some restrictions remain in place, and we have advised abstractors of this. In 13 catchments in the east abstractors who take surface water for spray irrigation can only take 50% of their daily licensed water to protect the environment and extend water availability. We are keeping all abstraction restrictions under regular review.

Our teams continue to respond to reports of environmental incidents, including blue/green algae and fish in distress. You can report an incident by calling our 24-hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

### Water companies

We are liaising regularly with water companies to share information on water availability, operational activities and to understand any emerging concerns.

Water companies have reported they are taking actions in accordance with their own Drought Plans and are scenario planning for 2023.

### Looking ahead

We can expect to remain in Drought for the coming weeks, perhaps longer. As the Autumn and Winter rains come, we can expect to see soil moisture deficit reduce, our river flows recover and groundwater levels start to improve as the winter recharge begins.

We do need to see an average to above average amount of effective winter rain to allow our groundwater and rivers to recover properly. Without that level of winter rainfall we remain at risk of Drought in 2023.

### How you can help

We can all do our part to use water wisely and manage this precious resource, and there are useful water saving tips for us all at [Waterwise](#).

We encourage the public to report sightings of fish in distress or other impacts on the environment by telephoning our 24hr Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60.

Kind regards

Simon Hawkins, East Anglia Area Director  
Iceni House, Cobham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 9JD or  
Brampton Office, Bromholme Lane, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 4NE

Email: [areamanagercorrespondence.eastanglia@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:areamanagercorrespondence.eastanglia@environment-agency.gov.uk)

More information can be found here:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)