#

**WAT-G-005**

**EASR Guidance: Registration Activity: Abstraction from and discharge back to the same freshwater loch**

Version 1.0, August 2025

If you would like this document in an accessible format, such as large print, audio recording or braille, please contact SEPA by emailing equalities@sepa.org.uk

# Purpose

This document provides information and guidance for anyone undertaking the abstraction of water from a freshwater loch where all the water is discharged back to the same loch which requires a registration under The Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations.

This guidance does not cover any other permissions that may be required.

# What activity does this guidance apply to?

This guidance applies to the abstraction of water from a freshwater loch, where all of the abstracted water is discharged back to the same loch.

# Understanding the activity

This activity covers the abstraction of water from a freshwater [loch](#_Definitions) where all the water is returned to the same loch.

This registration activity also allows the subsequent discharge of the abstracted water and there are conditions related to this to protect the water environment.

# Understanding and minimising risks to the water environment

## Risks to the water environment

The abstraction and discharge of water poses a risk to the water environment if any substance is allowed to enter the abstracted water prior to the water being discharged to the loch or if the temperature of the discharged water is altered.

The activity allows the discharge of the abstracted water. If substances or heat are added or allowed to enter the abstracted water prior to discharge this can pose a risk of polluting the receiving waters.

To minimise risks to the water environment and to help you comply with the standard conditions for this activity, you should follow the Dos and Don’ts below.

## Dos and don’ts

* Do take all reasonable steps to secure efficient and sustainable water use.
* Do regularly check your abstraction equipment to make sure it’s in good condition and fix any leaks straight away.
* Do check what other species and habitats may be affected.
* Do be aware of any [protected areas](#_Definitions) (e.g. SAC’s, SSSI’s etc.).
* Do consider the potential impacts on other water users.
* Don’t add or allow any substances or heat to enter the abstracted water prior to discharge.

# Glossary

A full list of terms is available in the main Glossary.

**Loch** means a body of standing inland surface water

**Protected area** means an area designated under International (Ramsar sites), European (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) or National (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) legislation, to provide protection of their notable natural features or biodiversity. This legislation places duties on bodies such as SEPA to assess whether activities we regulate would harm these sites

# Disclaimer

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this guidance, SEPA gives no warranty, covenant or undertaking (express or implied) regarding the fitness for purpose of, or any error, omission or discrepancy in this guidance. Reliance on its contents and the contents of any websites that are linked to or from this guidance is entirely at the user’s own risk. SEPA is not liable for any loss or damage that may come from using this guidance. This includes:

* any direct, indirect and consequential losses
* any loss or damage caused by civil wrongs, breach of contract or otherwise

SEPA reserves the right to depart from this guidance and take appropriate action as it considers necessary or appropriate. Operators are responsible for ensuring that they are compliant with the law. If necessary, independent legal / specialist advice should be sought.