

# Taking and using water



Permitted surface water and groundwater takes

Water has a range of values and is the natural resource that underpins the Southland economy and our lifestyle.



Historically, Southland has had an abundance of water, with appropriate modest limits on use. However, more recently there has been increasing demand for water for a variety of activities, and an improved understanding of the linkages between water quantity and quality.

As a regional council, Environment Southland has a responsibility to ensure that the region's water resources are sustainably managed so that they are available for future generations to use and enjoy. With this in mind, the rules for taking and using water in the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan provide direction and guidance regarding the sustainable use, development, and protection of water.

The abstraction and use of up to 86m<sup>3</sup> per day of freshwater is a permitted activity, provided the certain conditions are met.

#### For groundwater

- The rate of abstraction must not exceed 5 litres per second
- The point of abstraction must not be within 50m of an existing lawfully established groundwater take
- The volume of take must not exceed 86m<sup>3</sup> per landholding per day

#### For surface water

- The rate of abstraction must not exceed 2 litres per second
- The rate of abstraction must not exceed 30% of the flow in the waterway at the time of the take

- The volume of take must not exceed 2,000 litres per day, plus 250 litres per hectare per day, up to a maximum of 40m<sup>3</sup> per landholding per day
- Fish screens are used in accordance with Appendix R of the plan

In addition, there are some conditions that apply to both surface water and groundwater. These include providing information to Environment Southland when requested, installing a water meter if your take exceeds 20m<sup>3</sup> per day and recording the daily volumes. Your combined surface water and groundwater take cannot exceed 86m<sup>3</sup> and the volumes from the two types of takes cannot be added together.

## Common questions and answers

**Q:** John has a 30 hectare farm. There is a stream on his property that is flowing at 63 litres per second, and he wants to take water from this stream for his dairy operation. How much water can John take and at what rate?

**A:** John may take 9,500 litres of water per day

2,000 litres per day + (30 hectares x 250 litres) = 9,500 litres per day

The rate of abstraction from the stream must not exceed 2 litres per second

**Q:** Susan has a 50 hectare farm. There is a bore to take groundwater and a stream that is flowing at 6 litres per second on her property. Can she take water from both of these sources for stock use?

**A:** Yes, Susan can take up to 86m<sup>3</sup> of water per day: a maximum of 14.5m<sup>3</sup> of water may be sourced from the stream, and the rest must be sourced from the groundwater bore.

The rate of groundwater abstraction must not exceed 5 litres per second, and the rate of surface water abstraction must not exceed 1.8 litres per second

In addition, a water meter must be installed on the groundwater take, and daily abstraction volumes must be recorded. This information must be supplied to Environment Southland upon request.

**Q:** Jim has a 200 hectare farm with a river running through it that flows at 2.7m<sup>3</sup> per second. He wants to take 60m<sup>3</sup> of surface water and 26m<sup>3</sup> of groundwater for crop irrigation.

**A:** Jim will need to apply for resource consent to take that volume of surface water.

Because there isn't already an established groundwater bore on Jim's property, he will need to apply for resource consent to drill one. This is a controlled activity, which means consent must be granted, provided certain conditions are met.

The rate of groundwater abstraction must not exceed 5 litres per second and a water meter must be installed on the groundwater take, where daily abstraction volumes are recorded. This information needs to be supplied to Environment Southland upon request.

## Definitions

**Abstraction:** Removing groundwater or removing water from a lake, river, artificial watercourse, modified watercourse or natural wetland.

**Groundwater:** Subsurface water that is found beneath the water table in soils and geologic formations.

**Surface water:** Fresh water or geothermal water in a river, lake, stream, pond or wetland



The information provided is based on Policies 20-25 and Rules 49-54 in the decisions version of the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan, April 2018.

*If you're thinking about making a change to your farming activity, it's important to remember what the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan is striving towards. Don't forget to address the objectives and policies*

*alongside the relevant rules when you are making an application for resource consent. The objectives and policies are the key drivers of the rules and need to be considered carefully.*

**Published by:**  
Environment Southland, April 2018