



2024 Drought Support

Expedited *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) processes

Background

Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) recognizes that drought conditions in 2024 may impact a wide variety of water users including business, the agricultural sector and communities. EPA is implementing expedited *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) processes to support Albertans impacted by drought conditions.

Program description

EPEA authorization holders whose source water availability or effluent discharge is impacted by drought or water shortage conditions can receive assistance to help minimize the impacts from drought.

These authorization holders (applicants) should contact EPA for support to identify options available and how to receive authorization under the EPEA.

Program eligibility

Expedited support is available for the following EPEA authorized activities:

1. Drinking water treatment – raw water intake modifications
2. Stormwater reuse
3. Wastewater effluent irrigation/reuse
4. Wastewater effluent release to a surface waterbody with low flow/level¹

How the program works

Step 1 – Applicants in need of support should contact EPA by emailing or calling their EPA district office. See “What information to have available” as well as map and contact information below.

Step 2 – Within one business day, an EPA staff member will contact the applicant directly to discuss their specific situation.

Step 3 – EPA staff and water users will work together to identify regulatory requirements and the practicality of the proposal.

Step 4 – Where required, EPA will work with the applicant through a streamlined authorization process under the EPEA.

Step 5 – Once approved, the applicant can commence the authorized activity.

What information to have available

Applicants requesting assistance should have the following information available for discussion by phone, or included within the body of the email:

- Identify this is for ‘**2024 Drought – EPEA Process**’ on the phone, or in the subject line of the email
- Detailed information regarding the purpose of the amendment or authorization
- How the amendment or authorization will help mitigate the impacts of drought
- Supporting documents such as plans, consent, reports, etc.
- Phone number, email and/or alternative contact information

Please see the specifics of what information to have available below.

1. Drinking water treatment – raw water intake modifications

Where raw water intake modification is required in response to the drought conditions, applicants should provide the following information:

- Notify EPA under the existing EPEA approval, including:
 - a description of the modification
 - engineered drawings

¹ If you are unsure if your waterbody is in a low flow situation, please contact EPA staff for support.

- confirmation the modification meets [Standards and Guidelines for Municipal Waterworks, Wastewater and Storm Drainage System](#).²
- Outline any change to chemical dosage
- Be stamped and signed by the design engineer.

Note, an additional approval under the *Water Act* may also be required to conduct raw water intake modifications (please see: [2024 Drought Support: Expedited Water Act approvals support](#)³).

2. Stormwater reuse

Stormwater ponds may require both *Water Act* and EPEA authorizations. Stormwater diversions of up to 6,250 m³ per year may be exempt from requiring a *Water Act* licence if certain conditions are met.

Stormwater facilities (ponds) may also need to be authorized under EPEA. Contact the appropriate regional office for more information.

Please see [Stormwater use regulation amendment: removing barriers to stormwater use](#)⁴ for more information.

3. Wastewater effluent irrigation/reuse

Wastewater effluent may require alternate disposal methods such as irrigation or reuse. Applicants should be prepared to provide information related to the specific type (irrigation or reuse) and location of proposed disposal method, as well as the risk of human contact with the effluent.

4. Wastewater effluent release to surface waterbody with low flow/level

Where the release of treated wastewater effluent to a surface waterbody during low or no flow conditions is being considered, applicants should consult the [Managing Treated Effluent Release under Drought Conditions Fact Sheet](#)⁵. If you are unsure if your waterbody is in a low flow situation, please contact EPA staff for support.

Additional information

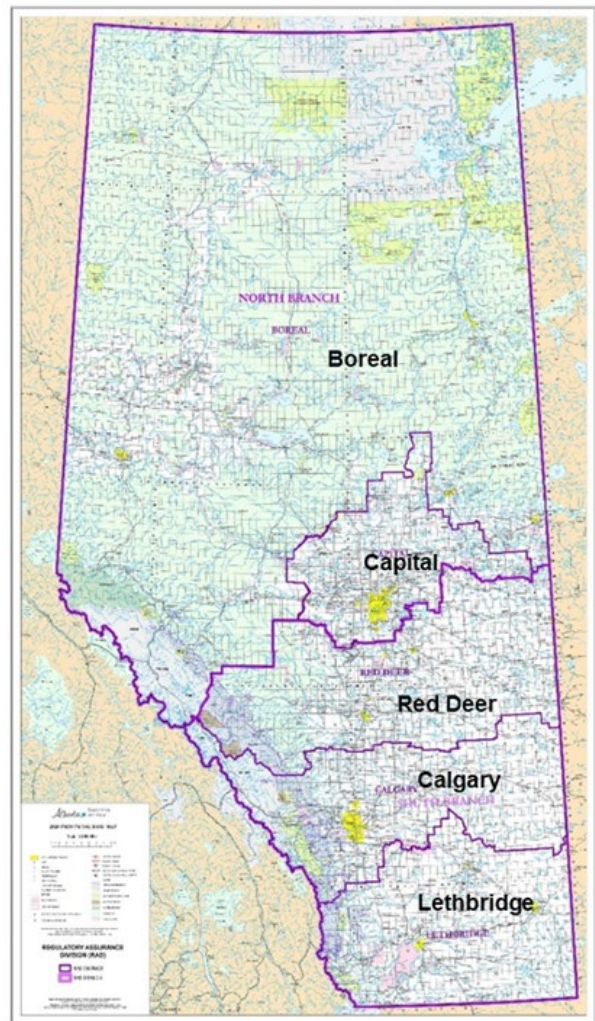
For additional information on other 2024 drought support activities, visit [Alberta.ca/Drought](#).

The [Alberta River Basins](#)⁶ website provides simple, geography-based access to river, lake, precipitation, and snow pillow stations and their data in Alberta.

EPA district office contact

Boreal District	epa.epeaborealregion@gov.ab.ca 780-538-5260
Capital District	epa.epeacapitalregion@gov.ab.ca 780-427-7617
Red Deer District	epa.epeaaapprovrd@gov.ab.ca 403-340-7052
Calgary District	epa.epeaapprovcal@gov.ab.ca 403-297-7602
Lethbridge District	epa.epeaapprovlet@gov.ab.ca 403-381-5322

EPA district office boundary map



² <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/5668185>

³ <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/drought-support-expedited-water-act-approvals-support>

⁴ <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/stormwater-use-regulation-amendment-removing-barriers>

⁵ <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/managing-treated-effluent-release-under-drought-conditions>

⁶ <https://rivers.alberta.ca/>