



Stormwater Use Regulation Amendment

Removing barriers to stormwater use

What changes were made?

Under specified conditions, stormwater diversions of up to 6,250 cubic metres per year are now exempt from requiring a *Water Act* licence. This will make it easier for Albertans to access and use stormwater instead of higher quality water sources.

What is a stormwater pond?

A stormwater pond is a purpose-built storm drainage facility that stores surface water runoff from precipitation falling on land or sites primarily developed for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. Dugouts, borrow pits and end pit lakes are not stormwater ponds.

How does the exemption work?

The exemption provided in the Water (Ministerial) Regulation states that water may be diverted from a stormwater pond without a licence if all of the following conditions are met:

- The total diversion of stormwater from a pond is less than 6,250 cubic metres per year.
- The stormwater pond is authorized under the *Water Act*, the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, the *Coal Conservation Act*, the *Geothermal Resource Development Act*, the *Mineral Resource Development Act*, or the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*.
- The quality of water meets approved discharge standards in the regulatory authorization.
- The holder of the authorization diverts the water or gives permission to a third party to divert the water.
- The stormwater pond is not part of a wetland replacement project.
- Water has not been pumped into the stormwater pond.
- There is no adverse impact on the aquatic environment, a household user, licence holder or traditional agricultural user, or any parcel of land.

What does this mean for stormwater management system design?

This exemption does not affect provincial or municipal stormwater design or regulatory requirements. The sizing of stormwater ponds must meet existing requirements for registration or approval.

What can I use stormwater for?

If all the conditions of the exemption are met, stormwater can be used for any suitable purpose. The exemption only applies to the diversion of water. All other regulatory requirements for the management, handling and release of water continue to apply.

For projects with public exposure, such as fountains, public street cleaning or toilet flushing, water users should follow the Alberta Public Health Guidelines for Water Reuse and Stormwater Use.

What if my project does not meet the conditions for the exemption?

If any of the conditions are not met, a *Water Act* licence must be obtained to use stormwater.

The Interim Accepted Practice for the Diversion of Storm Drainage will remain in place, pending a review.

Why is the exemption 6,250 cubic metres?

This volume of water is aligned with other exemptions in the Water (Ministerial) Regulation, including exemptions for agricultural purposes and for wetland restoration projects.

Benefits of stormwater use

Some benefits of using stormwater are:

- offsetting freshwater withdrawals from rivers and lakes
- reducing pollutant loading to systems
- increasing resilience of the water supply
- localized drought mitigation