

Correspondence 8

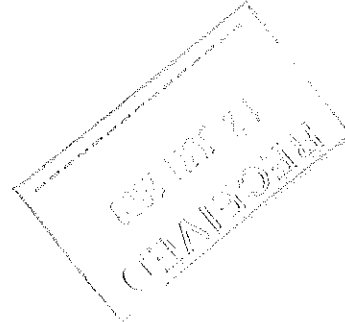
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Environment Agency

Mr David Elliott
Surface Engineering Association,
Federation House
10 Vyse Street
Birmingham
B30 1LS



9 June 2009

Dear Mr Elliott,

Charges For Discharges To Controlled Waters

We are writing to you concerning our charging scheme for discharges to controlled waters. As you may be aware we are planning to improve the way we charge for water discharge consents so that the charges are risk based and more closely reflect the amount of work we have to put into regulating sites.

We originally intended introducing the revised charging methods from April 2010 and would have carried out a detailed public consultation in the autumn 2009 ahead of this. In view of the current economic situation we have revisited our timetable.

We are aware that introducing risk based charges will generate increases for some charge payers as well as reductions for others. Overall we intend that this move would be cost neutral. For operators who hold a large number of permits we expect that these increases and reductions would largely cancel each other out. Operators who hold an individual permit would not have the benefit of this outcome. We are aware that the economic climate for our charge payers is difficult and are anxious not to impose any further burdens at this time. We have therefore taken the decision to postpone the introduction of these changes until 2011. We hope that you will see this as a positive step to help charge payers.

We will use this additional time productively to communicate fully and engage with you on the proposed changes. The delay does not change out intention to move to a risk based approach as part of our Better Regulation agenda.

The delay will not affect the implementation of Operator Self Monitoring (OSM) Phase 2, which is still planned for January 2010.

If you have any queries or issues please contact the Environment Agency Charges Team on:

Email: charges_query@environment-agency.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Nigel Reader
Director of Finance

Tricia Henton
Director of Environment and Business



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