

HEADLINE

Some further recovery from water scarcity has been seen across the country following widespread rainfall this week.

North East Scotland still has catchments at Moderate Scarcity as river flows and groundwater levels remain very low.

There are no areas where normal public water supplies have been affected.

Situation summary

The water scarcity situation has improved across the country following further rainfall this week. However this recovery has been limited in parts of the North East, where river levels remain very low.

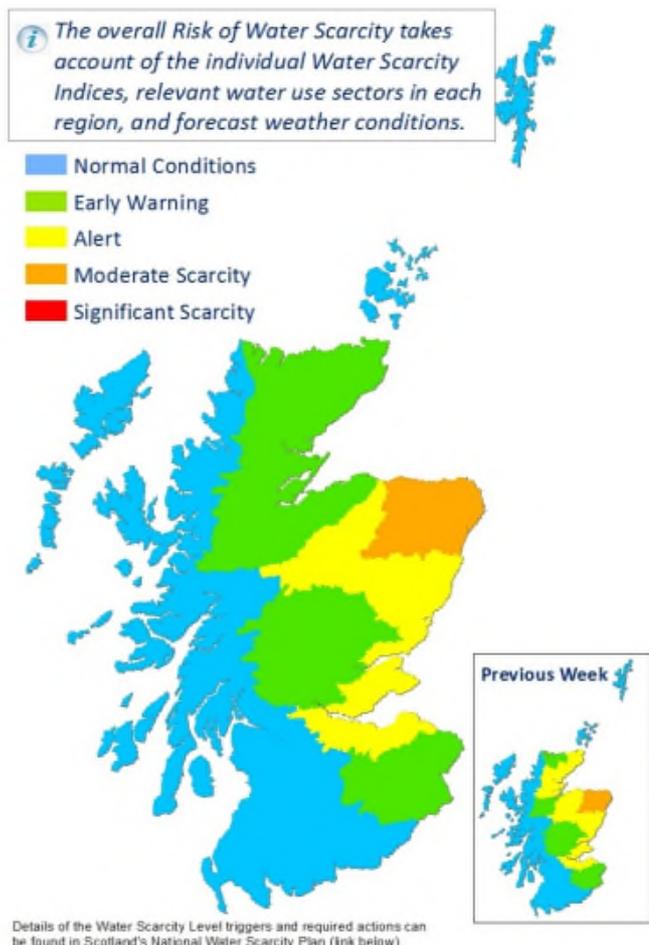
The advice in areas at Moderate Scarcity is still to manage water resources sustainably in order to avoid reverting to the previous situation.

Catchments along the east coast remain at Alert level due to extremely low groundwater levels and dry sub-surface ground conditions. Insufficient rainfall is currently forecast for these areas over the next 5 days to indicate an improvement in these conditions

Groundwater levels and loch storage would normally begin to recover in October. Water resources generally are low going into this recharge period so the amount of rainfall over winter will determine whether there are any knock-on effects into next year. SEPA will continue to monitor this water storage situation throughout the autumn and winter.

We are monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with [Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan](#).

Scottish Water is managing water supplies across Scotland through this extended dry period and will continue to monitor the situation closely. Advice has been issued to all customers to use water wisely nationwide ([link to advice www.scottishwater.co.uk/about-us/media-centre/latest-news/customers-across-scotland-asked-to-use-water-wisely](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/about-us/media-centre/latest-news/customers-across-scotland-asked-to-use-water-wisely)).



SEPA is working with businesses to help ensure abstractions can be sustained and the water environment protected.

General and sector specific advice for abstractors is available: [Advice for abstractors](#).

Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should [contact their local SEPA office](#).

Scottish Water and Local Authorities are working together to help maintain supplies. If your private water supply is drying up you should contact your local authority for assistance and follow the advice about [maintaining your private supply](#).

Forecast (at 27/09/18): Based on information from the UK Met Office

A series of rain bands are expected to cross the country over the next few days with rainfall totals being greatest in the north and west. There is a possibility of some heavy rain on Monday, again, particularly in the north and west regions. Central and eastern areas are expected to remain fairly dry over the weekend.

The longer-term outlook still shows a slightly higher likelihood of drier and warmer conditions than normal over the next two months for the UK. For further details on the seasonal forecast see the latest report at <http://www.hydoutuk.net>.

Further details on the current situation are provided in the following figures:

26/09/2018

Precipitation Indices

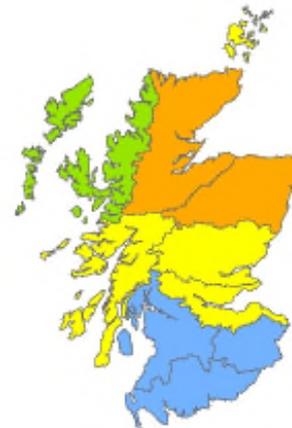
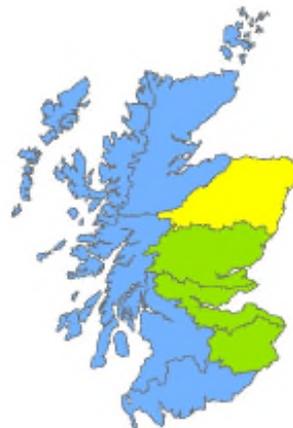
Rainfall over the past 30 days



Rainfall over the past 90 days



Rainfall over the past 180 days



These maps show how low current rainfall totals are for this time of year, relative to historical averages, over the past 30, 90 and 180 days.

- Normal Conditions
- Quite Dry
- Dry
- Very Dry
- Exceptionally Dry

26/09/2018

Soil Moisture Deficit Maps

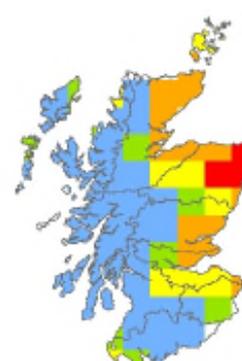
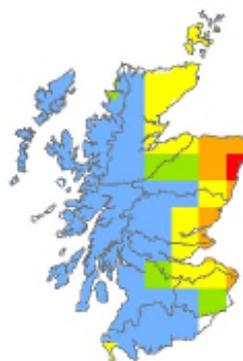
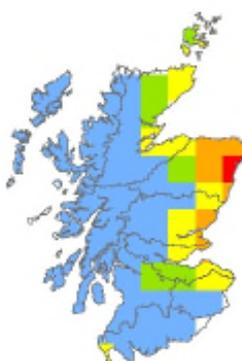
Soil Moisture Deficit Current



Soil Moisture Deficit 7 days prior



Soil Moisture Deficit 14 days prior



These maps depict the latest Soil Moisture Deficit (SMD) data and the SMD 7 and 14 days prior.*

* MORECS data obtained from MetOffice

- No Data
- No Deficit
- Quite Dry
- Dry
- Very Dry
- Exceptionally Dry

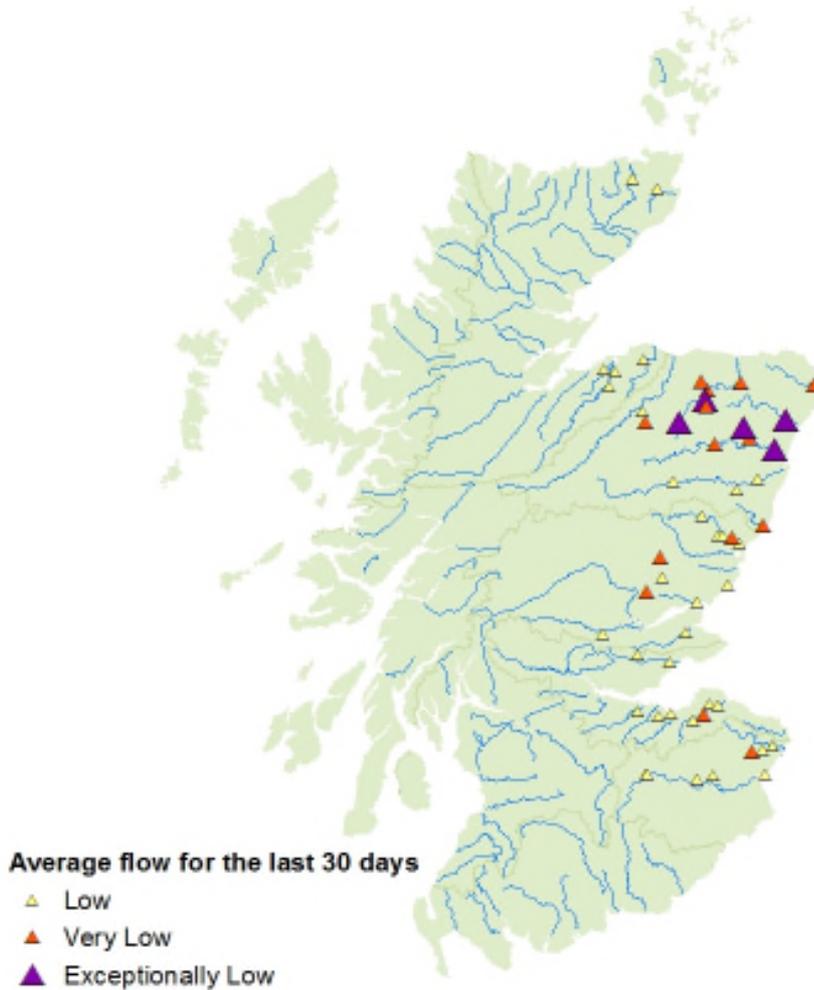
Average flow over the last 30 days

25/09/2018



This map shows the average flow at SEPA's gauging stations over the past 30 days, highlighting sites which have been at very low flows for this period.

Evidence shows that river ecology is at high risk when very low flows are maintained for this length of time.



Notes on exceptionally low flows:

- In the figure above, those sites marked as exceptionally low have had the types of low flows normally seen only a few days per year, persisting for at least a month.
- Even in areas where flows have not reached this extremely low level the advice to use water wisely still applies.

Further information from SEPA's water level stations can be found at <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/waterlevels/>.



Natural water storage situation

In each river catchment there is some degree of water storage, which can maintain river flows even when it is not raining. This natural water storage is mainly held in lochs and groundwater. When natural storage has been depleted it will take a lot of rainfall for levels to recover.

Please note that the map below does not reflect conditions in managed water supply reservoirs.

27/09/2018



North East

**Groundwater levels - very low
Loch storage – low**

Very low groundwater levels in the Northeast area compared to the long-term record. With current conditions it will take a long time for levels to return to normal.

Loch levels in this area are also low following the dry summer but have shown some recent recovery following rainfall, particularly in the North Highlands.

West and South – Recovering

Loch level data indicate that storage is recovering in this area.

Where groundwater level data is available, it shows that levels are largely within the normal range, and some recovery of levels is evident.