



Cambridge Water



A guide to best practice in the catchment

Working together to deliver a consistent
supply of high-quality water

In Cambridgeshire, the drinking water we supply is predominantly taken from groundwater sources. The quality of this raw water can be negatively affected by any harmful activities that take place within each source's catchment.

A catchment is a defined area of natural landscape that collects precipitation and forms a body of water, such as a river.

We are collaborating with local communities within catchments, from residents to business owners, to encourage their best environmental practice and ultimately ensure a supply of high-quality water.

How you can help protect the local water supply

Properly maintain oil tanks and septic systems: If you have an oil tank or septic system, have them inspected regularly. If possible, you could also create a secondary barrier against leakages, like a retaining wall.

Limit or eliminate pesticide and fertiliser use: If you use pesticides or fertilisers on your property, use them sparingly and follow the instructions carefully. Consider using natural alternatives instead. Correct storage will ensure that spills don't contaminate the environment, so please store them indoors or on impermeable surfaces. If these chemicals are often used or stored on your property, contact our catchment team to learn more about chemical best practice and our catchment schemes, which may benefit you.

Properly dispose of hazardous waste: Proper disposal of hazardous waste will prevent contamination of the water supply. Contact your local municipality to find out how to properly dispose of hazardous waste.

Properly maintain vehicles and equipment: Proper maintenance of vehicles and equipment can prevent leaks and spills that can contaminate the water supply.

Properly manage outdoor animal enclosures (e.g. chicken coops, horse paddocks): Remove animal waste regularly to prevent run off into nearby water supply, position animals and their enclosures a reasonable distance from bodies of water, shelter the enclosure to prevent run off and sedimentation.

Ensuring the best raw water quality possible reduces water waste and the use of generated energy for treatment.

Reporting to the Catchment Team

As a local within the catchment, you are a valuable set of eyes and ears to us. If you know of any harmful activities or incidents in your area that may impact the water supply, please report to our Catchment Team.

What to look out for:



Fuel spills



Flytipping (particularly chemicals)



Livestock in watercourses



Heating oil tank spills



Watercourses/ditches with slurry and sludge (identifiable by odour, discolouration or algae)



Muck/manure heaps near Cambridge Water sites



Overflowing septic tanks/sewage drains



Illicit waste sites/storage



No risk is too small - report whatever you believe to be a threat to the water supply.

Out in the community

The Catchment Team regularly visit catchments to identify and analyse risks to the environment and water supply. When you see us out and about, come and chat with us about all things catchment!

Contact us

For further guidance on best practice in the catchment, reporting of harmful activities or general enquiries, please contact the Catchment Team at:

catchment.management@south-staffs-water.co.uk