



Water Act 2003

2003 CHAPTER 37

PART 1

ABSTRACTION AND IMPOUNDING

Claims and compensation

24 Claims arising out of water abstraction

(1) After section 48 of the WRA there is inserted—

“48A Civil remedies for loss or damage due to water abstraction

- (1) Subject to subsection (7) below and to section 79 (including that section as applied by section 79A(9)) below, a person who abstracts water from any inland waters or underground strata (an “abstractor”) shall not by that abstraction cause loss or damage to another person.
- (2) A person who suffers such loss or damage (a “relevant person”) may bring a claim against the abstractor.
- (3) Such a claim shall be treated as one in tort for breach of statutory duty.
- (4) In proceedings in respect of a claim under this section, the court may not grant an injunction against the abstractor if that would risk interrupting the supply of water to the public, or would put public health or safety at risk.
- (5) Except as provided in this section, no claim may be made in civil proceedings by a person (whether or not a relevant person) against an abstractor in respect of loss or damage caused by his abstraction of water.
- (6) Nothing in this section prevents or affects a claim for negligence or breach of contract.

Changes to legislation: *Water Act 2003, Section 24 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 04 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- (7) This section does not apply, and no claim may be brought under this section, where the loss or damage is caused by an abstractor acting in pursuance of a licence under this Chapter and is loss or damage—
- (a) in respect of which a person is entitled to bring a claim under section 60 below (or would be so entitled if there were a breach of the duty referred to in that section);
 - (b) in respect of which a person would have been entitled to bring a claim under section 60 below but for an express provision (including, for example, section 39(1A) above and section 59C(6) below) disapplying that duty; or
 - (c) constituting grounds on which a person is entitled to apply to the Secretary of State under section 55 below (or would be so entitled but for subsection (2) of that section) for the revocation or variation of that licence,
- but without prejudice to the application of section 48 above.”

- (2) In section 48 of the WRA (general effect of licence), in subsection (2), after “supply” there is inserted “ (other than an abstraction in respect of which a claim could be brought under section 48A below, in which case that section shall apply) ”.
- (3) In relation to loss or damage suffered before the coming into force of this section—
- (a) section 48A of the WRA inserted by subsection (1) of this section does not apply, and
 - (b) section 48 of, and paragraphs 1(2) and 2 of Schedule 7 to, the WRA continue to have effect as if subsection (2) of this section were not in force.

Commencement Information

II S. 24 in force at 1.4.2005 by S.I. 2004/641, art. 5 (with Sch. 3 para. 47)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 52(9) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 7 para. 133\(3\)](#)