
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2009 No. 254

Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009

PART 3

Authorisations

Discharges that may be authorised

16. Notwithstanding regulations 14 and 15, provided it does not compromise the achievement of any of the environmental objectives relating to groundwater in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive, the Department may grant an authorisation for—

- (a) the injection of water containing substances resulting from the operations for exploration and extraction of hydrocarbons or mining activities, and injection of water for technical reasons, into geological formations from which hydrocarbons or other substances have been extracted or into geological formations which for natural reasons are permanently unsuitable for other purposes, provided that the injection does not contain substances other than those resulting from the above operations;
- (b) the reinjection of pumped groundwater from mines and quarries or associated with the construction or maintenance of civil engineering works;
- (c) the injection of natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas for storage purposes into geological formations which for natural reasons are permanently unsuitable for other purposes;
- (d) the injection of natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas for storage purposes into other geological formations where there is an overriding need for security of gas supply, and where the injection is such as to prevent any present or future danger of deterioration in the quality of any receiving groundwater;
- (e) construction, civil engineering and building works and similar activities on, or in the ground which come into contact with groundwater;
- (f) discharges of small quantities of substances for scientific purposes for characterisation, protection or remediation of water bodies limited to the amount strictly necessary for the purposes concerned;
- (g) reinjection into the same aquifer of water used for geothermal purposes;
- (h) inputs of pollutants that are the result of—
 - (i) interventions in surface waters for the purposes, amongst others, of mitigating the effects of floods and droughts, and for the management of waters and waterways;
 - (ii) artificial recharge or augmentation of groundwater bodies for the purposes of groundwater management.