

DIRECTIVE 2012-01

August 2, 2012



Suspension of Short-Term Water Use in Northeast B.C.

To: Industry Clients

Effective Date: Immediately

Background:

Many waterways in northeast B.C. are experiencing very low stream flow conditions. Fort St. John and Fort Nelson have received approximately 30–40 per cent of normal rainfall, following a winter where eastern areas received only 60–70 per cent of normal snowfall. As a result, many rivers are currently near or below record low flows for this time of year, with discharges ranging from 10 per cent to 40 per cent of normal flow.

River and lake levels are anticipated to continue dropping until significant rainfall occurs. The [River Forecast Centre](#) has issued a low stream flow advisory for the East Peace region, and the [Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations](#) has issued an information bulletin urging water conservation. Due to the low stream flow conditions, concerns are escalating for impacts to fish and aquatic resources and community water supply in some key river basins.

The BC Oil and Gas Commission (Commission) is authorized through Section 8 of the Water Act to issue short-term use of water permits to industry for use in oil and gas operations.

Requirement:

Oil and gas operators are required to suspend all short-term water withdrawals in northeast B.C., previously approved by the Commission through Section 8 of the Water Act. The Commission will assist in identifying options for an alternative short-term water supply should it be required during this period. The following exceptions, which include five rivers that all currently have near normal levels, apply:

- Withdrawal of water stored in dugouts is not suspended
- Withdrawal of water from the following rivers is not suspended:
 - Peace River
 - Halfway River
 - Pine River
 - Sikanni Chief River
 - Muskwa River

Should you have any questions regarding this Directive, please contact:

Allan Chapman
Hydrologist, Operations Division
BC Oil and Gas Commission
Allan.Chapman@bcogc.ca
Tel: 250-419-4435

**For oil and gas incidents and emergencies, please contact the Commission at:
1-800-663-3456 (24 hours).**