

Water Licensing Branch – Shell River Watershed

The Water Licensing Branch is the regulatory body that is responsible for issuing authorizations (e.g. permits, licences, etc.) under *The Water Rights Act* for the use of water for agricultural, municipal, industrial, irrigation or other purposes. Water used for domestic purposes does not require a licence. A more detailed description of the Water Licensing Branch's mandate and contact information are available on the Manitoba Water Stewardship website.

The intent of water rights licensing is to protect the interests of licensees, domestic users, the general public and the environment with respect to the use or diversion of water or the construction and operation of water control works under licence. Licences are issued on the "first in time – first in right" principal", established by the date the application is submitted. The general and specific conditions that are included on all licences reflect, in part, the information received from the technical and management studies that have been carried out for the project and/or water body. For surface water projects, this determination is based on an analysis of stream flow data, riparian needs, the water use requirements of senior water users, domestic needs, and instream flow requirements. For groundwater projects, this determination is based on an assessment of hydrogeological information including; geological information on aquifers, aquifer sustainable yield estimates and water allocation budgets, where available, as well the water use requirements of senior users and domestic needs.

Aquifer or stream water budgets have not been established for the Shell River watershed. Therefore, the total amount of water available for allocation in the Shell River watershed has not been determined. The amount of water allocated in this watershed is small compared to many other areas of the province. The water supplies in the watershed include the Lake of the Prairies and the Hatfield Buried Valley Aquifer, neither of which has been significantly developed to date. There are presently six surface water projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch in the Shell River Watershed of which four are for irrigation projects and two are for other purposes. There are presently five groundwater projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch of which one is an agriculture project, one is for irrigation, one is for industrial use, and two are for municipal distribution systems in Inglis and Roblin, utilizing approximately 60 and 375 dam³ per year respectively.

The following tables present all of the projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch for licensing in the Shell River watershed:

Licences:

Purpose	Licences		Total Licences
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	1	0	1
Industrial	0	0	0
Irrigation	0	2	2
Municipal	2	0	2
Other	0	3	3
Total	3	5	8

Applications:

Purpose	Applications		Total Applications
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	0	0	0
Industrial	1	0	1
Irrigation	0	1	1

Municipal	0	0	0
Other	0	3	3
Total	1	3	5

Allocations:

Purpose	Allocated Under Licence (dam ³)		Total Allocation
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	5.55	0	5.55
Industrial	0	0	0
Irrigation	0	24	24
Municipal	424.67	0	424.67
Other	0	152.08	152.08
Total	430.22	176.08	606.3

State of the Watershed Report Card Recommendation:

© No allocation limits have been set for the major rivers in this watershed. Current allocations are believed to be below the sustainable yield of the major streams, based on site specific water budget evaluations carried out during the course of issuing water rights licences.