

## ABOUT QUICK LICENSING

### What is “quick licensing”?

Quick licensing is a “fast track” process for adjudicating water licence applications. It is used for both new licences and amendments to existing licences.

### When is quick licensing used?

Quick licensing is only used for applications for small quantities on sources where the withdrawal would have no impact on other water users. Further, there must be no significant environmental, First Nations, or fisheries concerns. Water managers may include additional criteria.

### What applications are eligible?

To be eligible for quick licensing, an application must **not** be on an “excluded stream” and it must either be:

- for a domestic use with an allocation volume not exceeding 500 gallons/day, or
- for “minor agricultural” use with an allocation volume not exceeding 2,500 gallons/day or 1 acre-foot/year.

In addition, if the proposed works will cross, flood or otherwise affect another person’s land, the landowner(s) must provide prior written consent.

If an application does not meet these criteria, it is adjudicated by the standard process.

### What are the benefits of quick licensing?

An application can be processed in a shorter time under quick licensing. This allows applicants to construct works, divert water, or make approved changes sooner. Also, attaching the landowner's consent to the application indicates that the proposal is non-controversial and saves time.

### Why is the quick licensing process shorter than the standard adjudication process?

Since applications eligible for quick licensing are uncomplicated and have a negligible impact, they do not require investigations and referrals and can be dealt with efficiently.

The *Water Act* has been amended to permit time savings. For example, previous restrictions on the exercise of various licensing powers have been relaxed for quick licensing. This allows more flexibility and improves efficiency for simple proposals. Since quick licensing is used only for non-controversial applications, previous requirements for such time-consuming activities as providing downstream notification, considering objections and hearing appeals have been omitted from the process.

### Why was a shorter adjudication process developed?

It was developed to provide better client service while not compromising water resources. A backlog of applications causes delays for clients and potentially hinders economic development and resource management.

Quick licensing allows some applications to be fast-tracked, by bypassing certain technical and clerical processes and streamlining the legal requirements.

### What is a “minor agricultural use”?

Minor agricultural uses for quick licensing include irrigation, stockwatering, greenhouses, nurseries, residential lawn or garden watering, flood harvesting, crop suppression and frost protection.

### What is an excluded stream?

If quick licensing is not appropriate for a particular stream, the stream is designated as an “excluded stream” and all applications on that stream proceed by the standard adjudication process rather than by quick licensing.

The reasons for designation vary, but many relate to concerns about the overall supply of water and the interests of other users or First Nations.

“Sensitive streams” designated under the *Fish Protection Act* are excluded.

If a stream is excluded, its tributaries are automatically excluded as well.

### How can I find out which are the excluded streams in my region?

Lists of excluded streams can be obtained from regional offices of Land and Water British Columbia Inc. or viewed on the ministry Website. (See the last page of this brochure for addresses.)

### How do I apply for a quick licence?

File the standard application for a water licence including the usual attachments.

If the proposed works will physically affect (e.g. by crossing or flooding) another person’s land, a signed “Landowner’s Consent Form” and drawing must be submitted for each parcel affected.

### Does a water licence or licence amendment cost more if it is issued by quick licensing?

No. The application fees and annual rentals are identical for quick licensing and the standard adjudication process.

### Are the rights under a quick licence different from those under a “standard licence”?

No. The adjudication process used has no affect on the legal status of the licence. Once the licence is issued, the licensee has exactly the same legal rights and obligations under the *Water Act* as all other licensees.

### Can third parties object to a quick licence?

No. Provisions in the *Water Act* about third party objections do not apply to quick licensing.

To be valid, an objection must show that another person’s rights would be prejudiced if the licence was issued. Since quick licensing is used only for small volumes on sources where water is relatively plentiful, the impact on others is negligible.

