

Seine River Watershed – SoW Report

Water Licensing & Allocation

MB Water Licensing Branch is the regulatory body authorizing permits, licences, etc. under *The Water Rights Act* for the use of water for agricultural, municipal, industrial, irrigation, or other purposes. Water use for domestic purposes [up to 25,000 litres or 5,500 Imp. gal. per day] does not require a licence. Contact information and a more detailed description of Water Licensing Branch's mandate are available on Manitoba Water Stewardship's 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 of water. Licences are issued on a "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 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 the analysis of stream flow data, riparian needs, water use requirements of 'senior' licensees, domestic needs and environmental needs (instream flows). For groundwater projects, this determination is based on an analysis of pump test data, regional water level information, water use requirements of senior licensees, domestic needs and aquifer 'safe' yield budgets where available.

Aquifer or whole-stream water budgets have not been established in the Seine River Watershed. Therefore, the percentage of water available for allocation or licensing in the Seine River Watershed could not be calculated. Despite the watershed's abundant surface water supplies, residents of this watershed are heavily reliant on groundwater. The Carbonate Aquifer, in particular, offers significant groundwater development potential.

There are presently 22 surface water projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch in the Seine River Watershed. Nineteen of these projects are for irrigation purposes. There are presently 144 groundwater projects in the Seine River Watershed. Eighty-seven of them are for agricultural purposes. These projects are associated mainly with livestock production, generally using less than 20 dam³ per year each. There are also five groundwater-sourced, municipal distribution systems in the watershed, mostly small villages and subdivisions but also including the City of Steinbach which is allocated 1817 dam³ per year.

The following tables present details on all of the licensed projects:

Licences:

Purpose	Licences Issued		Total Licences
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	74	0	74
Industrial	5	0	5
Irrigation	12	13	25
Municipal	5	2	7
Other	12	0	16
Total	108	15	122

Applications:

Purpose	Applications		Total Applications
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	13	0	13
Industrial	7	0	7
Irrigation	6	6	12
Municipal	5	0	5
Other	5	1	6
Total	36	7	43

Allocations:

Purpose	Allocated Under Licence (dam ³)		Total Allocation (dam ³)
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	1650.4	0	1650.4
Industrial	1384.9	0	1384.9
Irrigation	478.3	653.2	1131.5
Municipal	2217.7	0	2217.7
Other	2199.0	0	2199.0
Total	7930.3	653.2	8583.5

Watershed Report Card Recommendation:

☺ No allocation limits have been set for the major rivers in this watershed. Current allocations are believed to be well 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.