

Features of the Exe catchment:

- A pumped storage scheme – In winter, when there is more water in the river, some is pumped to Wimbleball reservoir for use during the dry summer months.
- Fish farms such as Exe Valley Trout at Exebridge – Water is diverted from the river, used to rear fish and returned after treatment.
- Industrial use of water such as J Heathcoat Textile Manufacturer at Tiverton. They use river water in their manufacturing process, and return it to the river after treatment.
- At many locations liquid waste is applied to land. This soaks into the soil where bacteria treat and purify it before clean water re-emerges from springs.
- Removal of water – abstraction – for spraying farm crops. This results in the majority of the water being lost to evapotranspiration, although a little may soak deeper into the soils and remain in the cycle.
- Flood defence channels – These remove water from rivers and return it further downstream, reducing flooding fears in between.
- South West Water abstracts water at Pynes water treatment works, treats it and supplies it to us via the water mains. We use it, dispose of it down the foul sewer where the water company treats it at its Countess Wear sewage treatment works before returning it to the river.

Front cover photo: Exeter Quay

SOUTH WEST REGION ADDRESSES

REGIONAL OFFICE

Environment Agency
South West Region
Manley House
Kestrel Way
Exeter EX2 7LQ
Tel: 01392 444 000
Fax: 01392 444 238

CORNWALL AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency
Sir John Moore House
Victoria Square
Bodmin PL31 1EB
Tel: 01208 78301
Fax: 01208 78321

NORTH WESSEX AREA OFFICE

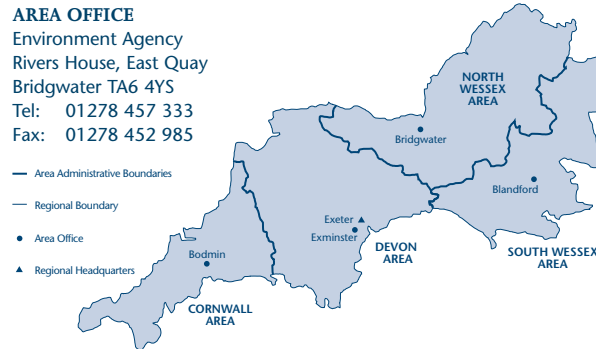
Environment Agency
Rivers House, East Quay
Bridgwater TA6 4YS
Tel: 01278 457 333
Fax: 01278 452 985

SOUTH WESSEX AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency
Rivers House
Sunrise Business Park
Higher Shaftesbury Road
Blandford DT11 8ST
Tel: 01258 456 080
Fax: 01258 455 998

DEVON AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency
Exminster House
Miller Way, Exminster
Devon EX6 8AS
Tel: 01392 444 000
Fax: 01392 442 109



Internet World Wide Web
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE**

0645 333 111

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
EMERGENCY HOTLINE**

0800 80 70 60



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The River Exe



*The Environment
Agency's Role*



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The natural water cycle

Water evaporates from seas and oceans to form clouds and rain.

Some of the rain that falls on land runs off to form streams and rivers. The rest is soaked up by the soil and rocks, or is taken up by plants and evaporated – transpiration.

Much of the run-off and that soaked up by the land eventually finds its way back to the seas to complete the cycle.

Cycles within cycles

There are very few locations where the natural water cycle occurs without people adding additional cycles – water being taken out, used and returned to the river system.

The Environment Agency

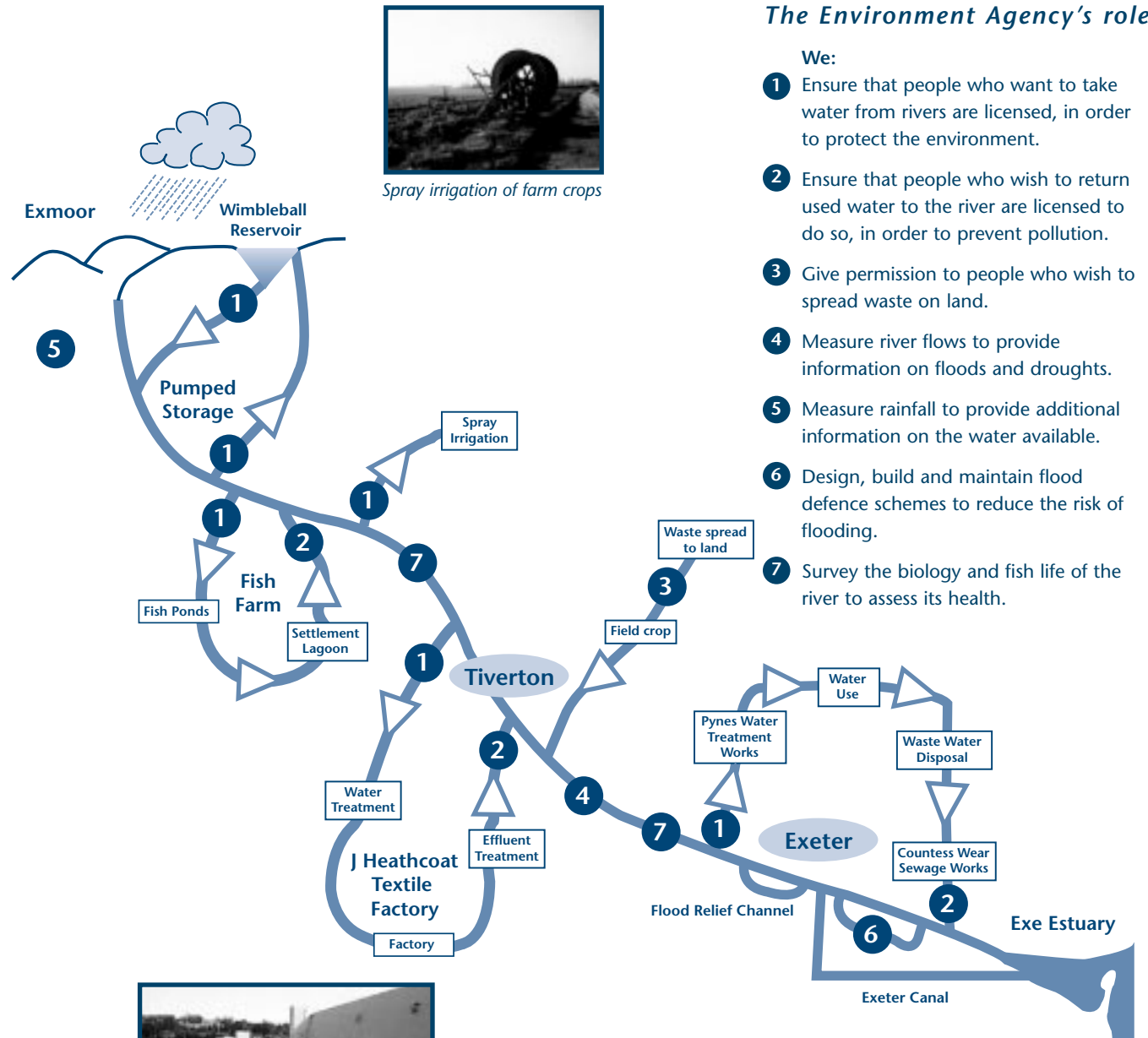
We ensure that the cycles within cycles don't get out of control and damage the environment.

The River Exe

There are so many cycles within cycles in the Exe catchment that this leaflet cannot go into detail – a simplified version is given.



The River Exe at Bickleigh



The Environment Agency's role

We:

- 1 Ensure that people who want to take water from rivers are licensed, in order to protect the environment.
- 2 Ensure that people who wish to return used water to the river are licensed to do so, in order to prevent pollution.
- 3 Give permission to people who wish to spread waste on land.
- 4 Measure river flows to provide information on floods and droughts.
- 5 Measure rainfall to provide additional information on the water available.
- 6 Design, build and maintain flood defence schemes to reduce the risk of flooding.
- 7 Survey the biology and fish life of the river to assess its health.



Radial gates, Exeter flood relief channel

Schematic of the River Exe