

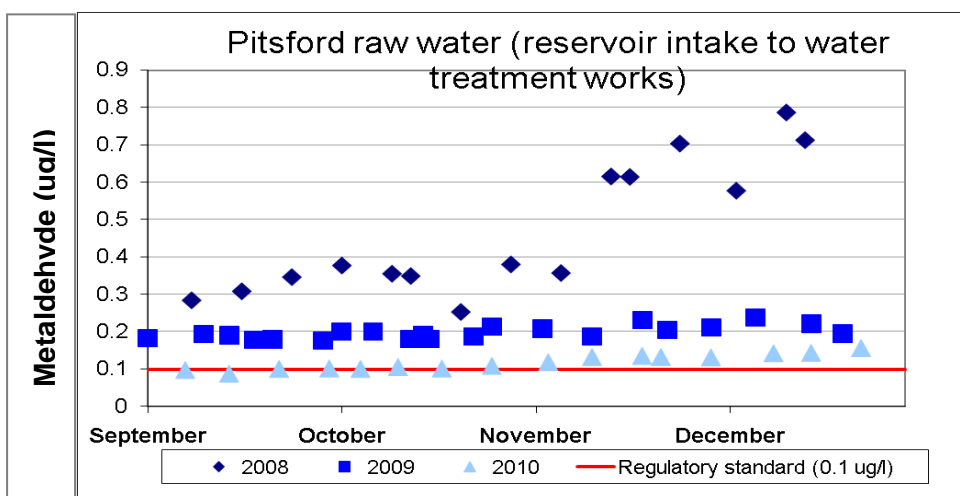


## Nene Catchment Partnership - Newsletter Spring 2011

### Metaldehyde slug pellets - RATE, RATE, RATE!!!

The good news is that in some catchments, and most reservoirs, the levels of metaldehyde in water have declined since 2008; however the Pitsford catchment has been identified as being a particular problem in keeping the active ingredient of the most used slug pellet out of surface water. Much of this is due to the soil type, slope of fields and cropping. It is for these reasons that the Metaldehyde Stewardship Group (MSG) of companies, Anglian Water, Environment Agency, Catchment Sensitive Farming and River Nene Regional Park are working with farmers in the area to provide a model example of what can be achieved through voluntary measures. The MSG have put forward a number of guidelines for usage of metaldehyde slug pellets and these can be summarised as RATE, RATE, RATE:

- **RATE – minimise** per ha.
- **RATE – absolute maximum** between 1<sup>st</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> December 210g active/ha but preferably < 160g active/ha with BASIS advice ( i.e. < 3kg/ha of 5% product, 4kg of 4%, 5kg of 3% or 10kg of 1.5% product). E.g. one application will of 5 kg/ha of 3% pellets will put on 150g active, or 75 g of 1.5% pellets (i.e. 2 applications 150g). Where each application gives 40 pellets or more/m<sup>2</sup> these are backed by most manufacturers as being very effective in controlling slugs.
- **RATE – application accuracy** is important in two ways. Firstly, to give an even spread, work has shown that driving the quad bike at 12 to 14 m centres is best. Secondly, to avoid any pellets getting into ditches drive the quad at least 20 m from the top of the watercourse bank i.e. around the length of a cricket pitch, or a chain in old money, away from the bank!!





## A clear solution for farmers

ENGLAND CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING DELIVERY INITIATIVE

Last year two peaks in water occurred, one in early October due to soil surface run off (drains were not running) and the second in early November mostly through drain flow (drains had started to run). By taking the above action together we can do much to reduce the problem next autumn after which we could meet to discuss results and what happens next.

### Nene Catchment Partnership to continue

The project partners are pleased to announce that the Nene Catchment Partnership has funding to continue the project for a further two years. The River Nene Regional Park, Environment Agency and Catchment Sensitive Farming will be working in partnership to offer free advice to farmers with the aim of raising awareness of diffuse pollution, and to help farmers take action to reduce the impact of diffuse water pollution from agriculture on rivers in the Nene catchment. Feedback from farmers on the advice offered in the project so far has been very positive about the quality of service and the value in the Catchment Sensitive Farming approach.

The project will continue to offer farmers help and advice on a 1-1 basis as well as offering a series of events across the catchment area. If you are interested in receiving a free visit please contact RNRP using the contact details at the end of the newsletter.



*Recovered cattle drinking area*

We have now got to the end of our first two years of the project and before we look forward to the next two years here are some of the activities we have completed so far:

- Specialist Advisory Services contract used to offer technical advice to farmers to help reduce diffuse pollution.



## A clear solution for farmers

ENGLAND CATCHMENT SENSITIVE  
FARMING DELIVERY INITIATIVE

- Seven farmer events have been held, on topics including nutrient management, soil management and using HLS to reduce the impact of diffuse pollution. 40 farmers have undertaken Slug Pelleting Seminars and all passed the assessment. Over 150 farmers have benefited from the specialist advice and training which has been made available.
- 105 Farm One to One visits have been made by the project team who have given farm-specific advice and recommendations to farmers helping them to reduce costs and protect the environment.
- Environment Agency has undertaken water quality monitoring in the Upper Nene and Pitsford catchment in an attempt to identify key contributing sub-catchments. This information will help us be more targeted in our work in the future, as well as helping explain what the most important issues are to farmers in the catchment.
- The Metaldehyde Stewardship Group has worked closely with the project by using Pitsford Reservoir as a trial catchment for a communications campaign on metaldehyde stewardship. Thank you to all farmers and agronomists who have taken part in this, we will be working with MSG to see what action we need to take next in order to continue to reduce metaldehyde levels in Pitsford.
- Anglian Water provided a tour of Pitsford Water Treatment Works as part of the metaldehyde campaign. They are using Pitsford Reservoir as a pilot catchment to help them develop their future catchment work.



*Fenced off river to protect from poaching*



## A clear solution for farmers

ENGLAND CATCHMENT SENSITIVE  
FARMING DELIVERY INITIATIVE

**More free visits:** The Nene Catchment Partnership will be targeting our free advisory activities at farms in the target areas of the Upper Nene and Upper Ise catchments. Farm advisory visits to assist with soil, nutrient, and pesticide management are also available.

**A range of events will be organised:** These are for your benefit so if you have any good ideas for events please let us know. Watch the next newsletter for details.

*If you are interested in finding out more about the free advisory services available from the Nene Catchment Partnership please contact us at:*

Email: [RNRP@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:RNRP@northamptonshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01604-236764 Web: <http://www.rnrp.org/CSF>

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Or return this slip to:

River Nene Regional Park  
C/o Northamptonshire County Council  
PO Box 163, County Hall  
Guildhall Road,  
Northampton, NN1 1AX

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Address:

Post code:

Telephone:

email address:

I would like to have a visit please