



Slug it Out Trial Covenham 1 Catchment



What is the problem?

Water destined for drinking water must adhere to the drinking water standards; an individual pesticide must not exceed 0.1µg/l (0.1ppb).

Metaldehyde, which is the active ingredient in some slug pellets, is detected in water above 0.1µg/l and is not treatable by Anglian Water treatment work processes.

Raw water for Covenham reservoir is supplied from two sources – the Louth Canal catchment (371 km²) and a pumped abstraction from the Great Eau (Covenham 1). The Louth Canal and the Great Eau both have had exceedances in metaldehyde previously and the decision was made to enter Covenham 1 catchment (Great Eau and Long Eau rivers) into the Slug it Out (SiO) Trial.

What did we do?

The introduction of the SiO trial into the Long Eau & Great Eau Rivers was an important, progressive step in catchment management as it was the first time that SiO had been trialled in a large pumped catchment. The catchment also had the largest number of farmers engaged with under the SiO trial to date; 92 farmers, covering 12,500 ha.

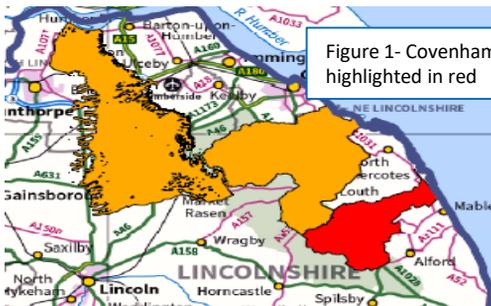


Figure 1- Covenham 1 catchment highlighted in red

What did the trial show?

During the SiO trial period, **no metaldehyde exceedances were seen** at all that season.

This reduction is due to the SiO intervention in the Covenham 1 catchment, as in the previous cropping season (2016/2017), the catchment had 25 metaldehyde exceedances, with the maximum peak at 3.82ug/l on the 14th November 2016. The three year average number of exceedances in the Covenham 1 catchment was 14 incidences - again demonstrating that direct intervention via SiO can reduce the number of metaldehyde exceedances to zero.

The intervention of **SiO in the Covenham 1 catchment** in 2017/18 led to a **96% reduction** in the maximum levels of metaldehyde seen.

Lessons Learnt

Key to the success of the SiO trial was the co-operation of the farmers in the Covenham 1 catchment. Below are comments from two farmers after taking part in the trial:

‘using ferric phosphate was similar to using metaldehyde in terms of efficacy in controlling slugs and the ferric phosphate also lasted longer compared to metaldehyde’. Mr Gibson

‘using ferric phosphate was very good, same as using metaldehyde, and the main thing to get used to was not seeing the dead slugs’. Mr Hallgarth

We would like to thank the farmers in the Covenham 1 catchment for taking part in the trial as their co-operation and willingness to try something new was paramount to the success of the SiO trial.



Kelly Hewson-Fisher
Catchment Management Team
07802 856663

khfisher@anglianwater.co.uk

More information about Anglian Water’s work in catchment to improve the quality of our drinking water can be found at <http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/environment/our-commitment/our-plans/catchment-management.aspx>

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