

## **Information on the works in the field of reclamation and water management in Azerbaijan**

Beginning from the second half of the 19th century, the development of agriculture in Azerbaijan has increased the demand for water. In such a situation, proper distribution of irrigation water and its management were of great importance. Since there are fields that require irrigation for agriculture and there are not enough water reserves in our country, a large land reclamation and water management complex was created in our Republic. During these years, large water reservoirs, hydro junctions, irrigation and collector-drainage systems, pumping stations and other facilities were built and put into use, the total area of irrigated land increased more than 2.6 times. In accordance with the development and improvement of this field, the forms of management have changed year by year.

Centralized management of water management systems started in the beginning of XX century. Since 1966 the Ministry of Reclamation and Water Management was in charge in this field, later in 1993, the name of the Ministry of Reclamation and Water Management was changed to the Reclamation and Water Management Committee under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic. On October 23, 2004, the State Reclamation and Water Management Agency was established under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

With the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On measures to improve management in the field of land reclamation and water management" dated February 23, 2006, on the basis of the State Reclamation and Water Management Agency under the Ministry of Economy, the Azerbaijan Reclamation and Water Management Open Joint-Stock Company was established.

As a sign of high respect for the decent work of water engineering and reclamation workers, the head of state signed a Decree dated May 14, 2014, on celebrating June 5 as a professional holiday "Water conservancy and reclamation workers' day".

On March 30, 2023, President signed a decree on improving management in the field of water resources, water management and land reclamation. According to the document, the State Agency of Water Resources of Azerbaijan is being created on the basis of the State Agency of Water Resources of the Ministry of Emergency Situations. JSC "Azersu" and JSC "Reclamation and Water Management" are transferred to the subordination of the new agency.

Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency (hereinafter - the Agency) provides activities in the field of extraction, processing, transportation and supply of water in the Republic of Azerbaijan, operation of state-owned reclamation and irrigation systems, drinking water supply, rain and waste water processing and discharge systems, as well as organizing the provision of services in this field, carrying out regular control of the technical condition of the water management facilities in the balance, surface and underground water resources in the Republic of Azerbaijan, water and water management facilities, hydrotechnical facilities (marine facilities located in the section of the Caspian Sea (lake) belonging to the Republic of Azerbaijan, except for the main and auxiliary equipment that ensures their maintenance and protection), is the central executive authority that implements a unified state policy and regulation in the areas of monitoring water supply systems (hereinafter - the relevant area).

While performing its duties and exercising its rights, the Agency interacts with state bodies (institutions), local self-government bodies, international and non-governmental organizations,

as well as with other legal and natural persons. Maintenance costs and activities of the Agency, as well as material and technical support, are financed from the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other sources not prohibited by law.

The main duties of the Agency include:

- to provide monitoring, state water cadastre, and state accounting of surface and underground water in water facilities, hydrotechnical facilities, water supply systems located in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as with the participation of relevant state bodies (institutions);
- to monitor the use of water bodies according to their purpose and take appropriate measures;
- to make proposals on banning the commissioning of technical facilities, equipment, enterprises (or part of them) and other objects that have a harmful effect on the state of water, as well as on limiting, stopping and banning their operation;
- Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Reclamation and Irrigation" to keep the register of Unions and implement state control over their activities through the subordinate institution;
- to prepare and implement national and regional programs in the field of land reclamation and irrigation;
- to carry out the distribution of water taken from water and water management facilities and through the institution included in the water use control structure;
- to organize and monitor the accounting of irrigated and meliorated lands through the subordinate institution;
- to carry out the state expertise of the projects of reclamation and irrigation systems through the subordinate institution;
- to control the state of irrigated and meliorated lands, the operation of state-owned melioration and irrigation systems through a subordinate institution;
- to ensure the establishment of protective forest strips along the melioration and water management facilities in the balance of subordinate institutions, their maintenance and protection;
- to participate in the formulation of tariffs (prices) applicable to the state regulation of water use and to make proposals in this field;
- except for sanitary, hydrotechnical and reclamation measures, to take measures through the institution included in its structure to prevent the creation of piles in rivers, river tributaries, reclamation and irrigation systems, arbitrary interruption of water flow, water release from lakes and ports;
- to approve the general system plans for water use on national and inter-regional irrigation systems;
- to determine the limits of water use for a certain period of time through the subordinate institution, to allow the use of water resources in the cases and in the manner established by law;

- to approve safety declarations for the purpose of hydrotechnical installations through the institution included in its structure;
- to conduct scientific-practical research in the field of water and reclamation, risk assessment based on scientific principles, as well as the preparation of drafts of technical normative legal acts in this field and conducting research through its subordinate institution;
- to carry out the design of water management and reclamation facilities, water supply, waste water processing and discharge systems through the subordinate institution;
- to organize activities in the field of extraction, processing, transportation and sale of water for water supply;
- to carry out activities in the field of rain and waste water collection, purification, reuse, disposal through a subordinate institution;
- to ensure the organization, management and improvement of the "Electronic water management" information system;
- to make proposals for creating a favorable investment environment in the relevant field;
- to participate in the preparation of state programs in the relevant field;
- to organize the preparation of forecasts and projects according to the main directions of socio-economic development of the relevant area;
- to organize the conduct of scientific research and experimental-constructive works in the relevant field;
- to prepare methodological documents of a recommendatory nature in the relevant field and approve them;
- to ensure statistical accounting in the relevant field;
- to provide personnel training in the relevant field, as well as take measures for training and additional education of specialists;
- to ensure efficient use of budget funds, loans, grants and other financial funds not prohibited by law for their intended purpose;
- to inform the population about its activities, to create a website, to post public information that it has and the list of which must be disclosed by law, and to ensure that this information is constantly updated;
- to ensure the application of scientific and technical achievements in the relevant field, taking into account advanced international experience;
- to ensure the implementation of human and civil rights and freedoms and to prevent their violation;
- to consider the applications received in connection with its activities in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Citizens' Applications", "On Administrative Proceedings" and "On Obtaining Information" and to take measures in the prescribed manner;
- to perform other tasks determined by the acts of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On March 12-14, 2024 Baku Water Week exhibition, was organized for the first time in Azerbaijan, at the Baku Expo Center. About 90 companies from 16 countries participated in the Baku Water Week organized with the support of the Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency. In addition to Azerbaijan, the countries represented by participating companies included Germany, USA, Austria, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Israel, Switzerland, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Russia. The main goal of organizing the Baku Water Week was to attract new technologies, equipment and investments to the country for the further development of this field in Azerbaijan, as well as to strengthen drinking water supply in the direction of the restoration and reconstruction of Garabagh, and to discuss important issues, new projects and cooperation.

Achieving reliable water supply in Azerbaijan is one of the priority directions of the state policy. Thus, after liberation of Azerbaijani territories from Armenian occupation massive restoration and reconstruction works are underway in Garabagh Economic Region.

During last 3 years the construction works have been completed in the Sugovushan reservoir located in Tartar district with water capacity of 5.86 mln. cubic meters and on the 5.2 km main canal, in Khachinchay reservoir with water capacity of 23 mln cubic meters and on the 7 km main canal funded by state budget allocations for the reconstruction and restoration of territories liberated from occupation. Opening ceremonies of the Sugovushan Reservoir and the Khachinchay Reservoir were held in October-December 2023.

Restoration of amelioration and water management complex in the liberated territories of Agdam, Fuzuli, and Jabrayil districts, as well as the work was carried out on the preparation of technical and economic justification and project documents of the main canal with a length of 56 km and consumption of 65.0 cubic meters/second from the Giz Galasi Reservoir, Hekarichay reservoirs located in the Lachin region with a water capacity of 90.8 million cubic meters, and Bargushadchay reservoirs located in the Gubadli region with a water capacity of 67 million cubic meters.

In the construction of the Zangilan-Lachin road, which falls into the flood-lands zone of the reservoir, the rock soil was blasted, and excavation and casting works were carried out. The design and construction of the Zabukhchay reservoir and main pipelines with a water capacity of 26.7 million cubic meters in the territory of Lachin region in order to provide irrigation water to the agricultural fields located on the right and left banks of the Hakari river and works for the construction of a flood barrier have been completed, soil excavation was carried out for the construction of the bottom water transmission tool of the warehouse and the construction of the 51.6 km section of the main pipeline has been completed.