

Water affecting activities

Commonly asked questions

What are water affecting activities?

Water affecting activities are actions that can potentially have adverse impacts on the health and condition of water resources, other water users and ecosystems that depend on water resources.

These water resources include watercourses, lakes or dams, floodplains, groundwater, springs, wetlands, waterholes and catchment landscapes. Management of water affecting activities is essential to maintaining water quality, minimising impacts on other water users and protecting our natural systems and water dependent ecosystems.

Activities requiring a permit

Water affecting activities outlined in the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* which may require a permit include:

- the construction or enlargement of dams or structures to collect or divert water
- building of structures, obstructing or depositing solid materials in a watercourse, lake or floodplain, (e.g. erosion control, construction of water crossings or dumping material)
- excavating material from a watercourse, lake or floodplain (e.g. excavating or cleaning soaks and waterholes)
- destroying vegetation in a watercourse, lake or floodplain (e.g. removal of reeds)
- draining or discharging water or brine into a watercourse or lake (e.g. desalination waste, stormwater including urban discharge, drainage and salinity control)
- drilling, deepening and backfilling wells, bores and groundwater access trenches
- the use of effluent or water imported to an area for commercial activities (e.g. irrigation).

Landholders, property managers, organisations, local government and industry must lodge permit applications for the above-mentioned activities with the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board.

What activities do not require a WAA permit?

The following do NOT require a WAA permit:

- de-silting, which is often referred to as 'cleaning out' an on-stream or off-stream dam
- vegetation removal within 20 meters of a watercourse. This is now a 'current recommended practice' and can be viewed here:

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adalaidemtloftyranges/water/managing-water/water-affecting-activities

What information needs to be provided with the WAA application?

- provide as much detail as possible
- certificate of title / council rates
- application fee

- diagram / engineering drawings of intended works
- photos of site if possible
- if works are to take place on a property not owned by the applicant, the written permission of the landowner is required.

Where can information be found with regard to WAA activities?

Further information can be found at:

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/water/managing-water/water-affecting-activities

just search for 'Water Affecting Activities' on the home page.

There are two permit application forms which can also be found on this page:

- *Permit for works on a dam or other structure to collect or divert water* (covers building of any structure which will capture and hold water)
- *Permit for all other water affecting activities* (covers vegetation removal, construction of crossing, fencing).

How long does the assessment process take?

Up to 40 working days (six to seven weeks) depending on the nature of the application and what additional information and input we may need to aid its completion.

Will someone come out to my property?

Possibly. If more information is required we will arrange a suitable time with the landowner.

How long is the permit valid for and can an extension be granted?

A permit is valid for 12 months from the date of issue. It can be extended if required. All that is needed is a request in writing to the Policy Officer – Water Permits detailing the date to which the extension is required.

Can I talk to someone about my water licence, bore or well permit, water test result, groundwater?

Yes, the Department for Environment and Water can help with these types of questions. Contact the Water Licensing Team on (08) 8463 6876.

I have litter in the watercourse which flows through my property. Can staff provide assistance?

Landowners are responsible for the section of watercourse which flows through their property. Local Natural Resources staff can provide advice on how to remove waste and organic matter from the watercourse, but cannot assist in the physical clean up.

I am about to purchase a property with a watercourse on it. Where can I find more information?

Landowners can go to the Water Affecting Activities webpage to find suitable information regarding property purchases.

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/water/managing-water/water-affecting-activities

Can I build or extend a house on / in / next to a watercourse?

Queries of this nature should be directed to the local council as they are the decision makers when building consent is required and can provide further information regarding the process.