

How to comply with the water allocation limit(s) set on your water licence.

WATER IS A PRECIOUS RESOURCE

Under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (the Act), and in an effort to protect and manage at risk water resources in South Australia, some water use areas have been 'prescribed'. Prescription allows for water resources to be managed in line with established limits, providing security for all water users, now and into the future. It is acknowledged that the vast majority of water users are responsible and use water within set allocations.

As a holder of a water allocation, it is important that you only use up to the volumes of water allocated to you. A water allocation is the total quantity of water permitted to be taken by you from a particular water resource (groundwater, surface water or watercourse water) per annum (also known as a water use year). A water use year runs from 1 July – 30 June, the same as a financial year.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A LICENCE HOLDER

As the holder of a water account or water licence (referred to as 'water licence' in this fact sheet), it is your responsibility to comply with the conditions of your water licence and to monitor your water usage so that you do not exceed your water allocation(s). This obligation applies to all licence holders listed on the water licence.

Please note that if you lease your property (or allow another party to use water on your land), the obligation to comply with the conditions of the water licence remains with you (as the licence holder) unless the licence/allocation is transferred.

It is also important to note that should you hold more than one water licence, your water use is accounted for against each individual water licence and you cannot automatically combine the allocations on the various licences. Please contact us as the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) to discuss how we can assist in aligning your water licences with your business practices.

You should also be aware that if the conditions on your water licence require you to submit meter reads, you are required to provide these meter reads within the timeframes specified in the conditions of your water licence.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO MANAGE WATER USE WITHIN SET ALLOCATIONS

DEW is committed to pro-actively educating our customers on managing your water use to prevent using water in excess of your allocation and to maximise the economic benefit of your allocation (through the trade of unused water).

An important first step to ensure that you do not use greater than your annual water allocation(s), is to regularly self-audit your water use against your allocation throughout the water use year and to plan for your water needs for the remaining months up until 30 June when the water use year ends. This will allow you to make an early assessment as to when you might exceed your water allocation and take steps to bring water use within allocation limits (including any transfers).

One way you can monitor your water use is by submitting an interim self-meter read at any time throughout the year. This can be submitted (in addition to your required annual or quarterly reads) via our online Meter Reading Form and electing to receive a Water Usage Advice summary (like a bank statement for your water account) by SMS or email. The online Meter Reading Form can be accessed at: <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/water-resources/planning/water-licences-and-permits/water-meter-self-reads>.

If you require additional water above your allocation, you can seek a permanent or temporary trade from another water allocation holder. Trade of part or all of a water allocation is a private arrangement between the buyer and the seller. It is possible, but not essential, to use a water broker to facilitate the trade. The Australian Water Brokers Association will be able to assist you in identifying a water broker active in your area (<http://www.awba.org.au/>).

The approval of an application to trade is subject to meeting the principles outlined in the water allocation plan relevant to your area. To request an assessment of your transfer you are required to submit an application form and make payment of an application fee. This application needs to be lodged prior to 30 June for the transfer to be credited for the current water use year. DEW highly recommends that you submit your application well before 30 June to ensure that you have time to make alternate arrangements should the application not meet the relevant principles and be refused on these grounds.



Further information is available on our website <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits/water-licence-and-permit-forms> or by calling one of our water licensing officers on the number below.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF EXCEEDING MY ALLOCATION?

Failing to stay within your water allocation limit is a breach of your water licence conditions and is considered to be a significant act of non-compliance as this activity could negatively impact the water resource and therefore the water users who rely on it. As such, financial penalties apply in all instances where water is used in excess of, or without, an allocation. Different penalty rates apply commensurate with the proportion of water that is taken in excess of your allocation so that a higher degree of overuse is penalised more heavily. For information on the current penalty rates that apply in your region, please go to our website at: <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/compliance/water-compliance/risk-based-water-compliance>.

Penalties are just one measure provided for under the Act to encourage licence holders to comply with set allocation limits. Please note that other sanctions such as those listed below may apply in certain circumstances, in addition to imposition of a financial penalty:

- The addition of new/varied licence conditions which may include new or additional monitoring requirements, measures to ensure self-assessment of water use and planning throughout the water use year or even a reduction of water allocation (where you have an opportunity to comment before any condition is imposed);
- Possible suspension or cancellation of water licences; and
- Commencement of criminal proceedings with Court imposed sanctions and potentially additional fines.

These other sanctions may apply if you:

- repeatedly take excess water contrary to the allocation endorsed on your water licence;
- take water from sources not endorsed on your licence; or
- take water contrary to the conditions on your licence.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU – GETTING IN TOUCH

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further queries or would like further information on the limits set by your licence or the options available to you to monitor and manage your water use. Contact details for your local water licensing office are provided below.

If you require an interpreter or translator, the Interpreting and Translating Centre provides interpreting services to public and private sector agencies and to individuals in over 140 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For bookings, send an email to itc@sa.gov.au or phone 1800 280 203. In an emergency, phone 1800 280 203 any time, any day. Website: <http://www.translate.sa.gov.au>.

For more information

Contact details for your local water licensing office are provided below.

Office Contact Numbers	Areas managed by this office
Adelaide (08) 8463 6876	McLaren Vale, Northern Adelaide Plains, Western Mount Lofty Ranges, Far North
Berri (08) 8595 2053	River Murray, Angas Bremer, Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges, Mallee, Marne Saunders, Peake Roby and Sherlock, Clare Valley, Barossa Valley, Eyre Peninsula
Mount Gambier (08) 8735 1134	South East Region

Email (all areas): DEWWaterLicensing@sa.gov.au

www.environment.sa.gov.au

DISCLAIMER

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide a consistent framework and interpretation of the legislation administered by the Minister regarding unauthorised or unlawful water use. While this document has been prepared with care it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. DEW accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. You may wish to consider seeking independent professional advice external to DEW on any proposed course of action.

