

Water Affecting Activities

Do you want to enlarge, remove or build a dam, pipe a watercourse or construct a water crossing point? These are just a few examples of water affecting activities that require a permit.

What are water affecting activities (WAA)?

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

Water resources in the Murraylands and Riverland landscape management region are precious and need to be managed sustainably. This includes our watercourses, lakes, dams, floodplains, groundwater, springs, wetlands, waterholes and catchment landscapes.

Water affecting activities must be managed to:

- protect our water-dependent ecosystems
- maintain water quality
- minimise impact on other water users

Permits for water affecting activities

Some water affecting activities can have an adverse impact on the health and condition of water resources and need to be managed carefully, and may require a permit.

Water affecting activities outlined in the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (the Act) which may require a permit, include but are not limited to, the activities listed below.

Surface water and watercourse water

- The construction, enlargement or removal of dams or structures to collect or divert water.

- Building structures, or obstructing, or depositing solid materials in a watercourse, lake or floodplain (eg depositing material for erosion control or construction of water crossings)
- Excavating material from a watercourse, lake or floodplain (eg excavating or cleaning soaks, waterholes and on-stream dams)
- Destroying vegetation in a watercourse, lake or floodplain (eg removal of reeds)
- Draining or discharging water or brine into a watercourse or lake (eg desalination waste, stormwater including urban discharge, drainage and salinity control)

Landholders, property managers, local governments, industry and organisations must lodge permit applications for the above mentioned activities with the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board (the landscape board).



Photo 1 – A stock crossing or bridge built in or over a watercourse requires a permit



Photo 2 – Dam construction or enlargement will require a WAA permit or a development authorisation

Groundwater, imported water and recycled water

- drilling, deepening and backfilling wells, bores and groundwater access trenches
- the use of effluent or imported water for commercial activities (eg irrigation)
- draining or discharging water into a well

Landholders, property managers, local governments, industry and organisations must lodge permit applications for the above mentioned activities with the Department for Environment and Water. Please visit www.environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits/water-licence-and-permit-forms/statewide for further information.

Duty of care

In South Australia, everyone has a general statutory duty of care to act reasonably and responsibly in relation to landscape management. This includes an obligation to maintain and not damage a watercourse, floodplain or lake.

Permit application process

Apply for your permit at least two months before you intend to undertake the activity. Permits are usually valid for one year from date of issue.

It is recommended that you contact the Water Planning and Assessment Officer on 0448 699

514 prior to submitting your application to discuss the details of your proposal.

Step 1 Download a permit application form

Permit application forms for various activities and additional fact sheets and guides can be downloaded from www.landscape.sa.gov.au/mr/water/managing-water-resources/water-affecting-activities or contact the Water Planning and Assessment Officer on 0448 699 514.

Step 2 Complete your application

Provide information about the proposed activity in accordance with the [Guide to Applying for a Water Affecting Activity Permit](#). Clear and detailed information helps us to assess your application as soon as possible.

Applications should include:

- a site plan
- any other plans, photographs and detailed drawings of the proposed activity
- consultant or engineering reports (where applicable)
- supporting information as required under the water affecting activities control policy or relevant water allocation plan

Step 3 Lodge the application

Permit applications, accompanied by the prescribed fee, must be lodged with the landscape board. Information about the fee and lodging instructions are on the application form.

Step 4 Provide additional information

When you apply for a permit you may be requested, in writing, to provide extra information. The timeframe to assess the application and make a decision may be extended to take account for delays in obtaining this additional information

Step 5 Site Assessment

An officer of the landscape board may visit your property to assess the application and identify any possible impacts that may result from the proposed activity.

Step 6 Permit notification and conditions

The Landscape board will notify you of the decision in writing. You may be required to undertake additional actions in accordance with the conditions of an approved permit. If your permit application is not approved, or you disagree with any of the permit conditions, you may appeal to the Environment, Resources and Development Court within six (6) weeks of the decision.

Step 7 Site audit

Upon completion of the works, you must fill out and return a water affecting activity completion notice. An officer may then conduct a site visit to ensure permit conditions have been met.

Penalties may apply

Undertaking a water affecting activity without a permit, or in breach of permit conditions, is an offence under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.

If you are unsure whether the work you propose to do will require a permit, contact the Water Planning and Assessment Officer on 0448 699 514 for advice before conducting any works.

Breaches of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* can result in protection orders or criminal/civil enforcement notices being served by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board or the Department for Environment and Water

Financial penalties or prosecution may also apply.

Note: a permit may not be required if the activity has been authorised under other legislation, for example *the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, the *Environment Protection Act 1993* or the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. Please check with the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board to confirm.

More information

Water Planning and Assessment Officer

Phone: 0448 699 514

www.landscape.sa.gov.au/mr/water/managing-water-resources/water-affecting-activities

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