

Water Compliance News

Kia ora,

With NSW opening up, we're looking forward to getting back on the road in the new year.

Since our last edition we've published our quarterly compliance and enforcement data, released our annual progress report and commenced a prosecution against two Murrumbidgee landholders who are alleged to have over-extracted more than 500 ML of water. We also passed the 1 December 2021 deadline for the metering rules in the Northern Inland region NSW.

We hope you all have a safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to another year of ensuring the lawful use of water in NSW so that all communities, and the environment, get a fair share.

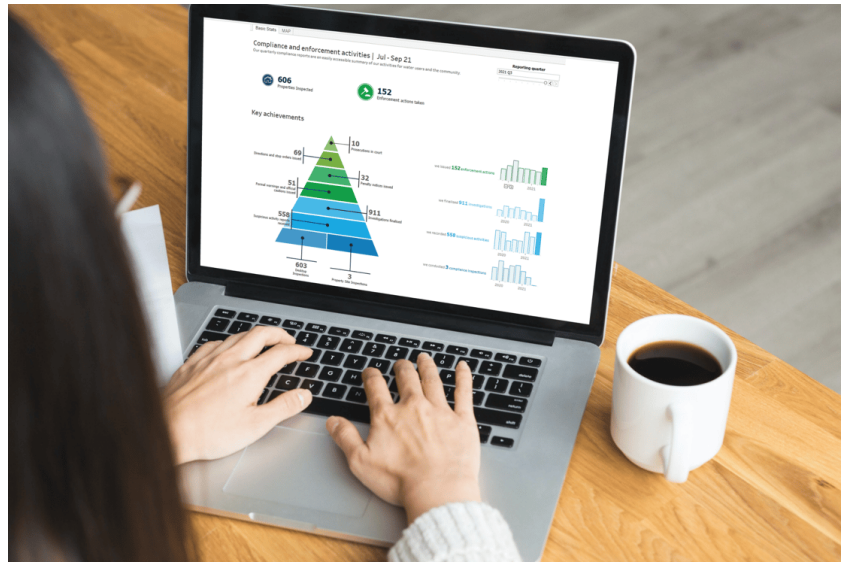
This will be the last Water Compliance News for this year, we will return quarterly next year with the first edition in February 2022.

Until next year, Kia kaha (stay strong), stay safe and merry Christmas.



Grant Barnes
Chief Regulatory Officer
Natural Resources Access Regulator

Our quarterly results are in



Our quarterly compliance and enforcement data for the July-September period are now available on our [interactive digital dashboard](#). Despite the NSW lockdown, we completed 911 investigations. Satellites and smart data allowed us to remotely audit properties, and work through a backlog of low-risk cases.

We had 10 prosecutions in court, and took a range of enforcement actions including issuing 69 directions/stop work orders, 32 penalty notices and 51 formal warnings.

Use the dashboard to view results by region or local government area and see what actions we have taken to ensure water is used lawfully near you.

[Explore our dashboard](#)

Did you need to comply with new metering rules by 1 December 2021?



Early next year, we will kick off the next phase of our metering compliance campaign focusing on water users who needed to comply with the new metering rules this month.

This group includes all works, including pumps 100 mm and above and bores 200 mm and above in the Macquarie, Gwydir, Namoi, Border Rivers and Barwon-Darling regions. As well as some at-risk groundwater sources and smaller pumps with existing metering conditions.

Water users who are unsure if the rules apply to them, or what they need to do can use the department's [online metering guidance tool](#) to get real-time answers to their questions.

[Use metering guidance tool](#)

Progress continues for NRAR

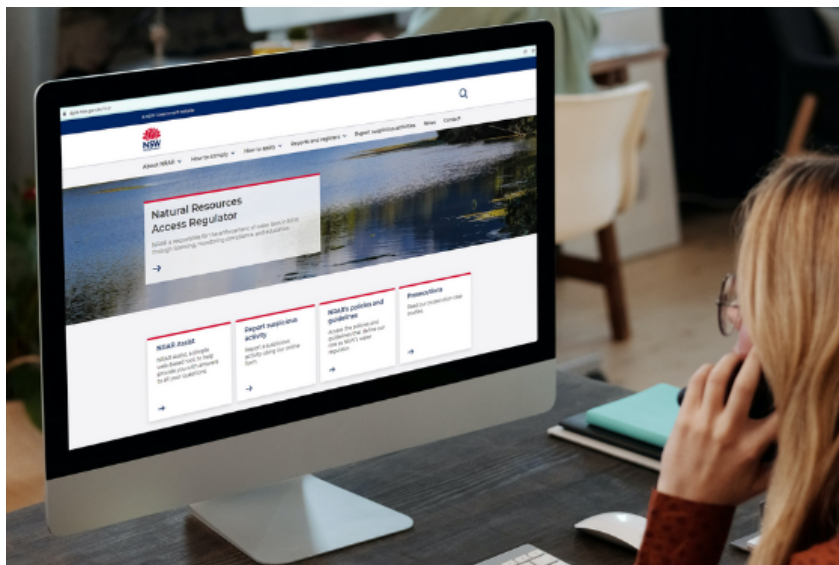


We're getting the job done despite the challenges of the pandemic. Our annual progress report shows NRAR has completed more inspections than ever before, helping water users understand what they need to do to comply with the law.

We were able to safely inspect more than 5,000 pumps and bores during the last financial year. The good news is we see most people doing the right thing. We found more than 70 per cent compliance across 2,623 sites.

[Read our progress report](#)

How would you improve our website?



Would you like to help improve our website? We'd love to hear from you!

We want our website to be your go-to hub for resources, handy e-tools and information to help you understand and comply with NSW water laws. We're running short sessions with the water community to collate feedback, suggestions and ideas about how we can improve our website to better suit your needs.

Each session will last 30 minutes and requires no preparation. The sessions can be done over the phone or on a video call. Your feedback will remain anonymous.

[Have your say!](#)

Changing notifications about applications



There are changes coming to the way NRAR and WaterNSW advise the water community about the applications we receive.

Under amendments to Clause 26 Section 7 of the Water Management (General) Regulations 2018, applications made to the respective agencies that require advertising will no longer need to be featured in newspapers.

As of this month, all applications submitted to WaterNSW and NRAR, that require advertising, will be listed on the respective agency's website for the required 28 days.

For more information and to view a list of current applications please visit the relevant agency below.

[NRAR public notices](#)

[WaterNSW public notices](#)

Post approvals change for state significant



From 15 November 2021, NRAR and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Water will respond separately to submissions for state significant development (SSD) and state significant infrastructure (SSI) post approval management plans.

You must submit via the [Major Projects portal](#) to NRAR if your conditions of consent require you to consult or report on any of the following:

- water licensing under the *Water Management Act 2000*
- works typically requiring a Controlled Activity Approval (e.g. water course realignment, riparian rehabilitation)
- specific requests from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- breach of Water Licence Conditions. Please lodge these directly via [the NRAR website](#).

This new process aims to improve customer experience by making it easier for proponents to seek feedback and comments from the right agency.

[Read the FAQs here](#)

Exceeding bore extraction limits in the Riverina



We commenced a new prosecution against two Murrumbidgee landholders who are alleged to have over-extracted more than 500 ML of water.

We detected the alleged offending through [Operation Drawdown](#), a pilot project which focused on enforcing bore water extraction limits.

[Read more](#)

13 charges laid in the state's south-west



We are also prosecuting a landholder from the western Riverina for allegedly overdrawing 2,700 ML of water from a Water Access Licence (WAL). This is an important case to remind water users that every time they go into debit on their water account it is an offence.

Overdrawn water accounts are a regulatory priority for NRAR. We have been looking at these accounts for the past year or so and investigating those overdrawn by larger amounts.

[Read more](#)

Narrabri irrigator fined over unlawful water take



A Narrabri based landholder has been fined \$10,000 following a prosecution by NRAR for alleged breaches of the *Water Management Act 2000* (WM Act).

The irrigator appeared in Narrabri Local Court on three separate charges related to exceeding the extraction limit attached to a works approval by more than 1,200 ML over a three-year period (2017-2020). In addition to the fine, the magistrate made a publication order and directed the farmer to pay \$9,476.20 in court costs.

[Read more](#)

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