



Water Compliance News

Kia ora,

Here at NRAR we know how precious and valuable water is; it brings communities together, keeps industries moving and sustains life.

For the first time a dollar value has been put on access to water resources in NSW, with [a report](#) we commissioned estimating the market value of the state's water access licences at \$29 billion and rising.

This increasing value of water entitlements is driven by demand from growers, with irrigated agriculture production contributing on average between \$2.45 and \$3.5 billion to the NSW economy each year.

We take proactive action to ensure water is used lawfully, and all communities and the environment get a fair share.

Read about our [January-March compliance and enforcements results](#), recent prosecutions, and other changes and activities below.

Stay safe, strong, and know the water laws.



Grant Barnes
Chief Regulatory Officer
Natural Resources Access Regulator

Our compliance and enforcement results for January – March 2022



During January-March 2022 we conducted 2,589 property inspections, issued 44 enforcement actions, finalised 265 investigations and had 15 active prosecutions in court.

We issued less penalty infringement notices, warnings and directions than previous quarters, which represents an encouraging shift towards voluntary compliance.

Since we started quarterly reporting on these results in mid-2019 our field officers have finalised 4,115 investigations, with about 30 per cent of these resulting in an enforcement action.

Checking compliance with the non-urban water metering rules in the Northern Inland



Accurate measurement of water take is critical to building public confidence in how water is managed in NSW. The deadline for water users in the Northern Inland region with medium and large-sized pumps and bores to comply with the non-urban water metering rules was 1 December 2021.

We are now checking compliance with these rules in Narrabri and surrounds.

We will soon move to other suburbs in the Northern Inland including Armidale, Glen Innes, Gwydir, Inverell, Liverpool Plains, Moree, Narrabri, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Uralla and Walcha.

You should now have compliant metering equipment installed, or at a minimum have a valid contract with a certified meter installer before 1 December 2021.

If you haven't done so, act quickly to demonstrate to NRAR that you are making a reasonable effort to comply.

Find out more about the rules

NRAR takes action to enforce the NSW water laws



A Lane Cove company has been ordered to pay fines totalling more than \$250,000 for offences that damaged environmentally sensitive land near Great Lakes Marine Park. The company was [found guilty](#) of four offences including building two unauthorised dams and unlawfully clearing vegetation.

In another case a Riverina landholder has entered an [enforceable undertaking](#) with NRAR after overdrawing his water accounts by 2,280 ML between 2018 and 2020. Under the terms of the agreement the licence-holder has agreed to pay hundreds of thousands in financial costs, surrender some water entitlements and conduct three years of weekly monitoring.

We enforce the rules to ensure fairness to those who comply.

[See more prosecutions](#)

Large water users' licence approvals move from NRAR to Department of Planning and Environment



Service delivery to the state's largest water users has been simplified with the responsibility for the management and approval of their water licences and approvals moving from NRAR to the Department of Planning and Environment.

The department is also managing all integrated development referrals for works on waterfront land and applications for controlled activity approvals.

The transfer aligns licensing approvals more closely with the technical, scientific and water planning expertise within the department's water group.

WaterNSW will continue managing water licences and approvals for all other water users in NSW, while NRAR continues to oversee all water users' compliance with NSW water rules.

All water users can use the [Water Assist tool](#) to find more information about how to apply for a water approval or licence.

[Find out more](#)

High compliance rates in the Lower Murrumbidgee



Bore audits conducted by NRAR have revealed water users in the Lower Murrumbidgee appear to be doing their bit to protect at-risk groundwater sources.

In the 19-20 financial year, we found 25 instances of bore extraction limits being exceeded in the Murrumbidgee. This is equal to almost 10 per cent of approval holders with a bore extraction limit in the region.

In the most recent audits for the 20-21 financial year we have found no evidence of water users in the area exceeding their bore extraction limits.

[Read more about these results](#)

Want help to comply with the NSW water laws?



Field days

Recently we attended AgSmart, Tocal and Riverina Field Days where we spoke with more than 300 visitors about water use and where they can find answers to their questions. You can still catch us at [AgQuip](#), [Henty](#), [Murrumbateman](#), [ANFD](#) and [Primex](#) field days later this year.

To learn more about NRAR and your obligations as a water user, come and see us at one of this year's field days or visit our website.

[View website](#)



Are you a member of a water user group or association?

We are working with TAFE and other vocational education providers to run workshops to help educate the next generation of water users.

We're currently taking requests from water user groups, or other associations, who may benefit from a similar workshop.

Click the button below to get in touch.

[Contact us](#)

How to avoid overdrawing your account



Like a bank account, you can't take more out of your water account than you have in it. It is an offence to take more than the available water in your water account and go into a negative balance.

Make sure you:

- have sufficient water allocation in your account before taking water
- only take water in line with your licence and approval conditions
- enter any outstanding meter reads or non-metered water take in [iWAS](#).

Overdrawing your account breaches the conditions of your water access licence, restricts access to water for other users downstream, and can negatively affect water sources and dependent ecosystems.

[Learn more](#)

NRAR in the news



We share information on our recent prosecutions and other activities on both our website, and with the media.

Check out some recent stories below and keep an eye out for us in the news!

- [Leppington Pastoral removes dam from dairy farm, returns water to environment | ABC Online](#)
- [Investigations by NRAR found hundred of water laws were broken on the North Coast | Prime7 Local News](#)
- [The market value of water entitlements in NSW could increase by more than \\$6 billion in the next five years | Sunraysia Daily](#)
- [Water users in the lower Murrumbidgee doing their bit | The Narrandera Argus](#)

[Visit our news page](#)

If you have a friend or colleague who might enjoy this newsletter, they can [subscribe here](#), simply hit forward.

Keep in touch with us



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