

# About NRAR

## Fact sheet

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is an independent regulator established under the *NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator Act 2017*.

**We ensure the lawful use of water, so communities and the environment get their fair share.**

We were created to deliver effective, transparent and accountable enforcement of the water laws, and we work to maintain public confidence in the enforcement of those laws.

We are equally committed to making it easy to follow the water management rules as we are to enforcing them when they are broken.

We work closely with the Department of Planning and Environment – Water and WaterNSW.



## Helping people comply

We know most people want to do the right thing, and we work with the community to make sure they understand their responsibilities as water users.

We meet and consult with members of the NSW water community to make it easier to understand and follow the rules. We are committed to openness, transparency and engaging community and stakeholders in meaningful, two-way communication. Some of the ways we connect with people include:

- field days
- property visits, as part of our regional outreach program
- industry conferences
- other events, including roadshows and customer advisory group meetings.

## Monitoring compliance

NRAR has teams across NSW who actively monitor and audit the use of surface and groundwater.

Our officers use a variety of methods to check compliance with NSW water laws, including:

- inspecting properties and works
- auditing water licences, approvals and reporting information
- sophisticated technology such as satellite imagery, drones and state-of-the-art survey equipment.

Combined, these techniques give us continuous intelligence about what is happening on the ground and inform the actions we take to protect water resources and make sure everyone understands their rights and obligations under the water laws.

## Investigation and enforcement

NRAR's investigators respond to suspected breaches of water law. When a breach is detected, NRAR takes appropriate action. The more serious the offence, the more serious the response.

Our responses range from giving information to help people to comply with water laws; issuing stop work orders and directions to protect groundwater; issuing cautions and fines; and prosecuting offenders.

Individuals found guilty of an offence in court can face fines of up to \$1.1 million and prison terms of two years. Courts can also impose fines of up to \$5.005 million on corporations and additional per-day penalties can apply.

## Our regulatory priorities

We focus on solving problems that have the greatest impact on communities, the environment or the state of compliance in NSW.

By analysing a wide range of information, from ecological and hydrological assessments to community reports of potential non-compliance, we are able to identify:

- areas where there is high likelihood of non-compliance
- instances of non-compliance that would have significant environmental and hydrological consequences, and an effect on fair use and public confidence.

This information helps us to determine and update our regulatory priorities on an ongoing basis to include new developments and improvements in our data and analytical tools.

Read about our current regulatory priorities at [nrar.nsw.gov.au/regulatory-priorities](https://nrar.nsw.gov.au/regulatory-priorities)

## How to help stop illegal water activities

Unlawful water take can harm our precious water sources, threatening supply for legitimate waters users and the environment.

You can help stop illegal water activities by reporting any suspicious activities or circumstances to NRAR, such as:

- pumping from a stream during periods when pumping is not permitted
- water flow in a river suddenly stopping
- a dam or earthworks being constructed in a creek or river
- water being diverted from a creek or river
- healthy looking crops when pumping is banned
- water carriers replenishing from rivers or creeks.

## To report a suspected breach of water laws:

- use NRAR's online reporting form at [nrar.nsw.gov.au/report-suspicious-water-activities](https://nrar.nsw.gov.au/report-suspicious-water-activities)
- phone 1800 633 362 during business hours.

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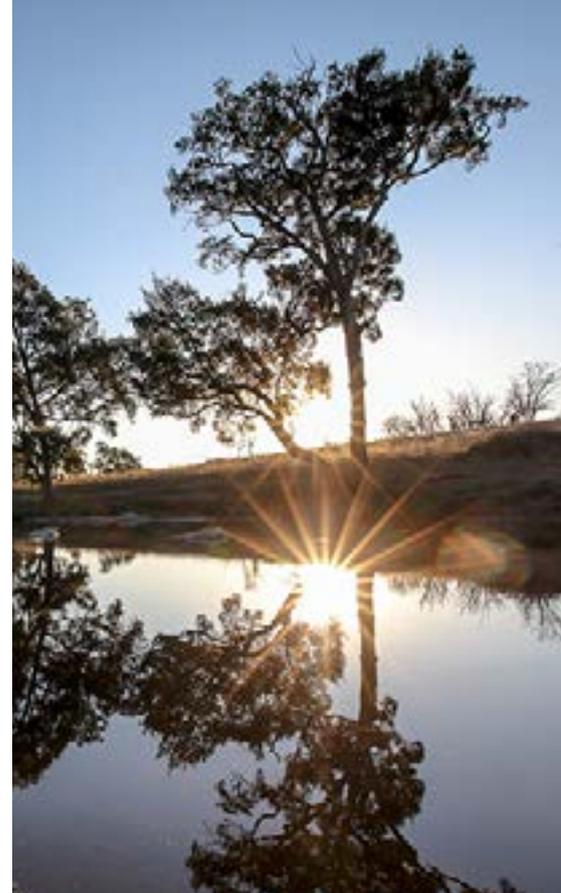
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## More information

To contact NRAR, you can write to us at [nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au)

Copies of the Acts and associated Regulations are available at [legislation.nsw.gov.au](https://legislation.nsw.gov.au)

**Find more information about who we are and how we ensure compliance with the water laws on the NRAR website at [nrar.nsw.gov.au](https://nrar.nsw.gov.au) or scan the QR code below.**

