

Earthworks and water management

Dams, streams and waterways

If your planned works (dams, drains, re-alignment of waterways) involve or affect a stream or waterway under the Water (Irrigation Farm Dams) Act 2002, then approval must be obtained from your local Rural Water Authority. A licence will be granted if the proposal meets certain standards of construction and has no significant environmental or other impact. If you are not sure if your planned works are located on a waterway, contact your local Rural Water Authority office for a waterway determination. Penalties apply for illegally altering or damaging waterways.

Any works that alter flow regimes on the floodplains will require approval from your local Catchment Management Authority (CMA). In some municipalities, drainage works on private property also require a planning permit to minimise impacts on neighbouring land.

Water disposal

Under the Water (Irrigation Farm Dams) Act 2002, you are liable for damage occurring to neighbouring properties (private or public) which results from any works. Always make sure you have the necessary approvals if you are altering or concentrating surface flows. Contact your local Rural Water Authority and Catchment Management Authority for advice if you have any doubts.

Farm dams for stock and domestic water

A construction licence will be needed if the dam is to be located on a waterway or if it is a large dam that requires conditions on the licence concerning dam safety. If the proposed dam is for stock and domestic purposes only, is not on a waterway or does not exceed the size requirements, neither a construction licence or licence to use the water will be required. Contact your local Rural Water Authority for further details. A planning permit may also need to be issued - contact your local Council.

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Farm dams for irrigation

Under the Water (Irrigation Farm Dams) Act 2002, all dams that are to be used for irrigation or commercial purposes must have a 'take and use' licence issued for the proposed volume of the dam, prior to the construction of the dam. It doesn't matter whether the dam is on a waterway or general catchment. Most dams will also need a construction licence and some large dams will have conditions on a licence concerning dam safety. Water meters will be required on all new 'take and use' licences.

Reuse dams

Guidelines have been developed for irrigation regions to ensure that new irrigation reuse dams are constructed to stop nutrient rich drainage water leaving the farm and entering waterways. Under the Water (Irrigation Farm Dams) Act 2002, reuse dams do not require a take and use licence, as the water stored should already be licensed. However, the licencing implications for nutrient buffer dams installed in dryland cropping regions with the potential for the re-use of nutrients on irrigated crops is not yet known. Contact your local water authority and DSE for more details.

Where to go for more information

Department of Sustainability and Environment

W: www.dse.vic.gov.au
E: customer.service@dse.vic.gov.au
T: 136 186

Department of Primary Industries

W: www.dpi.vic.gov.au
E: customer.service@dpi.vic.gov.au
T: 136 186

Water Authorities

Southern Rural Water

W: www.srw.com.au
E: srw@srw.com.au
T: (03) 5139 3100

Local Councils

See listings in White Pages directory

Catchment Management Authorities

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority

W: www.ccma.vic.gov.au
E: info@ccma.vic.gov.au
T: (03) 5232 9100

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority

W: www.glenelg-hopkins.vic.gov.au
E: ghcma@ghcma.vic.gov.au
T: (03) 5571 2526



UPDATE

DO YOU NEED TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR YOUR RAISED BED WORKS?

This is a companion to the Hi-Grain Update 'Best Practice for Raised Bed-Controlled Traffic Cropping'.

Development of raised beds can involve considerable changes to your farm. It is your responsibility to ensure all works are undertaken in accordance with the law. The following issues give an indication of where and when you will need to seek approvals or permits for works in Southwest Victoria. However, local government planning schemes and by-laws can vary between shires and need to be considered. If you are in doubt or require advice then see the details of relevant contacts on the back page. Permits, licences and approvals may take up to 3 months to process.

Native flora and fauna

Removal of native vegetation

Native vegetation includes indigenous trees, shrubs, understorey plants, wetlands and native grasslands. Penalties may apply where native vegetation is removed without permission. Check with your local Council whether a planning permit is required. Contact your local Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) office for native vegetation advice.

Removal of rock mounds and other habitat for native species

The clearing of rocky outcrops and removal of rock mounds can generally be undertaken without permission, although in some cases a planning permit will be required. Check with your local Council. It is important for growers to understand the importance of these areas in providing habitat for native birds, reptiles and native vegetation. Contact your local DSE office for more details.

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CORANGAMITE CMA
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