



Farm dams in the Western Division of NSW

In the Western Division of NSW, most farm dams do not require a licence.

The size of farm dams is not restricted in the Western Division, unlike other areas of the State, for several reasons:

- in many places runoff water does not reach major rivers;
- runoff events are usually few;
- the amounts of water intercepted are not likely to significantly affect natural resources; and
- because most properties are already fully watered for stock and domestic purposes.

Therefore the harvestable rights provisions of the *Water Management Act 2000* do not apply in the Western Division.

Do I need a water licence?

Table 1: Water licence requirements

Type of dam or structure	Used for stock or domestic purposes	Used for irrigation or other commercial purpose
Dam not on (or supplied from) a river, lake or floodplain	No	No
Existing dam on (or supplied from) a river	Yes*	Yes
New or enlarged dam on (or supplied from) a river, lake or floodplain	Yes*	Yes
Block banks, diversion banks, and other water diverting structures on a river, lake or floodplain	Yes	Yes
Existing dam on lake or floodplain	No	Yes

* Unless the dam is under 7 ML and was constructed before 1 January 1999.

Definitions

Rivers, lakes and floodplains are defined as:

- streams (drainage lines) which show on 1:100,000 scale topographic maps produced by the Department of Lands, as 3rd order streams or greater, see Figure 1;

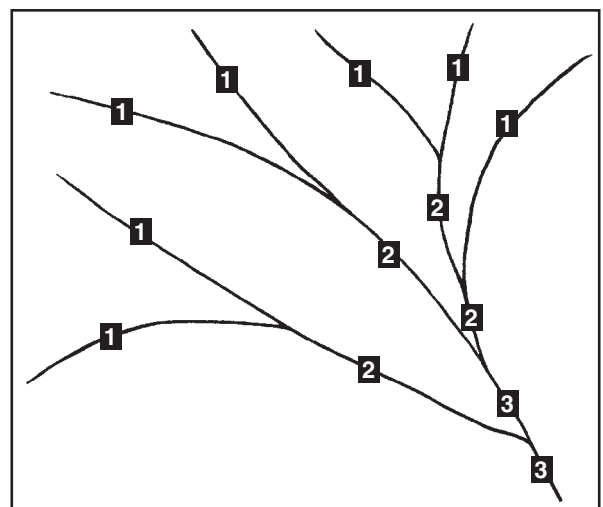


Figure 1: Strahler stream ordering

- effluent creeks (ie. creeks running out of streams), billabongs and anabranches;
- lakes which are described as “perennial or intermittent” and generally coloured blue on the maps; and
- those areas of the active floodplains of the main rivers which are hatched on 1:100,000 scale topographic maps and marked “land subject to flooding”. In some cases 1:50,000 maps are used (see Table 2).

Table 2: Map sheets where 1:50,000 scale applies:

Annuello	Collarenebri	Geera	Monak	Toms Lake
Balranald	Cowl Cowl	Kiacatoo	Murrawombie	Tooleybuc
Billybingbone	Culpataro	Kyalite	One Eye Tank	Walgett
Booligal	Euabalong	Marra	One Tree	Wanourie
Cal Lal	Eulalie	Maude	Oxley	Weimby
Cargelligo	Euston	Lake Mildura	Perekerten	Wentworth
Colignan	Hillston	Mogil Mogil	Tarwong	Womboin

Where dams existing prior to 1 January 1999 now require licensing, the process has been streamlined by having:

- advertising and objection provisions waived; and
- no requirement to obtain (by water trading) the volume necessary unless the use is being changed from stock and domestic to irrigation or some other commercial purpose. Where a farm dam licence is required, a fee of \$95 will licence all dams on a property for five years.

Other approvals needed

If you are considering building a dam, you should be aware that approval is required to:

- clear land of native vegetation for cropping or sowing pastures;
- cultivate land on Western Lands Grazing Leases;
- harvest yabbies or fish for commercial purposes; and
- construct irrigation water storages for water pumped from any surface water source.

Where do I get more information?

Contact the water licensing officer at your local Department of Water and Energy office (contact details are on the website or phone 1800 353 104), or email information@dwe.nsw.gov.au

More information sheets on water management in NSW are available on our website www.dwe.nsw.gov.au