

Excavation dewatering taking 3 ML or more of groundwater per year

This document answers frequently asked questions about excavation dewatering exemptions in the Botany Sands Groundwater Source.

Where does the exemption apply?

The exemption only applies in the Botany Sands Groundwater Source.

What activities does the exemption apply to?

The exemption only applies for groundwater taken through dewatering to conduct excavation for buildings, roads and infrastructure.

Is this a permanent exemption?

No, it will only apply until 30 June 2025 or until a controlled allocation of access licences occurs, whichever happens first. During this time, longer term arrangements for managing temporary take by infrastructure dewatering activities will be considered.

What if I take less than 3 ML?

You can rely on the water access licence exemption for take by aquifer interference activities of 3ML or less per year per groundwater source.

Is the exemption conditional?

Yes, you can rely on the exemption if:

- an extraction limit has been put on your approval
- your water take is recorded using a datalogger and an approved meter
- a record of your water take is made weekly and provided to the Minister by 29 July each year.

What about the potential impacts of water taken under this exemption?

The department still requires an assessment of the local impacts of the activity and an approval, unless an approval exemption applies. A major benefit of the exemption for water management is that proponents must meter and report the volume of groundwater taken.

Do the non-urban metering rules apply?

Yes. Proponents are required to use a meter approved under the NSW non-urban metering regulations to measure the water they take. They must also use a datalogger, but this does not need to meet approved specifications under the metering regulations.

Do I need telemetry?

No. The regulations specify that the record of water take must be given to the Minister (or delegated representative) and the way to do this is set out on the recording form.

How do I report my water take?

For the 2022- 23 water year, you can use the [form](#) on the department's website.

Why do I have to report water taken under this exemption?

Records of water taken under a licence exemption provide a greater understanding of the full volume of water being taken from a groundwater source under licences, basic landholder rights and exemptions each year. This will inform decision-making and enable better management of the groundwater source.

More information

This fact sheet is one in a series explaining water management and associated issues. You can find this series and more information about licensing and approvals on the department's website at www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/water > Licensing and trade.

Copies of the acts and associated regulations are available on the NSW Government legislation site at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

For enquiries call the department on 1800 633 362 or email at nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au.