


Rural Drainage
Services
Customer Information





This document has been prepared in consultation with representative stakeholder groups for drainage services. It provides information on the drainage services we provide and on the obligations of land owners in serviced areas.

Our Commitment

The Water Corporation provides water, wastewater, drainage and irrigation services to almost two million people across the Western Australia.

Our customers are our highest priority and we strive to be recognised for excellence in customer service.

This document supports the Corporation's Customer Charter. It has been developed to outline the service standards we provide and to help you fully understand your rights and responsibilities when it comes to drainage services.

Our Operating Licence is issued and regulated by the Economic Regulation Authority and we are required to meet all of the Licence conditions. The service levels set out in this brochure reflect these standards.

Constant monitoring of our performance ensures we maintain these high standards and we strive to continually improve them.

The Corporation is also committed to respecting the environment and to the sustainable development of water resources. While the drainage service provides flood protection, the Water Corporation also considers drainage an important component of the natural water cycle that enables recharge of ground water supplies.

Customer Service Standards

At the Water Corporation, we value any ideas and suggestions that can enhance our services.

We regularly consult with our Customer Advisory Council and Urban Development Advisory Committee, hold community focus groups and undertake customer surveys

To speak to one of our experienced Customer Service Representatives or report a fault or emergency, see the back cover for our contact details.

Rural Drainage Service Standards

The Water Corporation's Operating Licence defines the level of service to our customers.

Service Standards

– Drain Operations and maintenance

Rural drains are not designed to give flood protection at all times and some inundation of land can be expected.

The Water Corporation maintains its existing drains to ensure they are capable of clearing water from adjacent rural properties within three days of a storm event – where contours and internal drainage make this physically possible.

We have an Asset Management Plan (AMP) to specify the frequency and maintenance of assets and to continually review and modify procedures in light of performance.

Where flooding occurs we will investigate the cause and undertake remedial action where possible.

Any spoil that we remove from drains during cleaning operations will generally be spread on the access track adjacent to the drain. If the drain is in a developed area, or a location with insufficient space, the spoil will be offered to landowners or removed from the property.

One outlet to the drain is allowed for each farming arrangement, or part of that arrangement, served by a Corporation drain.

Additional outlets may be allowed in the following circumstances.

1. The length of the drain through the property exceeds 600 metres.
2. Physical barriers, such as rock, make it impractical to take internal drainage to one outlet.
3. Where catchment areas make a single outlet impractical.

Service Standards – Flood management

Areas that are protected from flooding by our rural drainage assets are recorded in the Operating Licence together with the degree of protection provided.

The following flood protection works are currently recorded in our Operating Licence, to cater for peak flows of stormwater runoff from the rainfall events shown below:

Preston River Levees	Bunbury	1 in 100 year
Vasse River Diversion	Busselton	1 in 20 year
Buayanyup Drain	Busselton	1 in 100 year
Vasse & Wonnerup Floodgates	Busselton	1 in 100 year
Capel River Levees	Busselton	1 in 100 year
Serpentine River Levees	Baldivis	1 in 25 year

Flood Damage

It should be acknowledged that flooding can create significant disruption and financial loss to the community. In Australia the average annual cost of flood damage is approximately \$350 million.

Source: Department of Water

Responsibilities

Water Corporation Responsibility

The Water Corporation will operate and maintain the following.

- All water courses designated as main drains in the Harvey, Roelands, Busselton, Mundijong, Waroona and the Albany Drainage Districts as recorded on our asset register.
- All assets on the designated drains that are necessary for the efficient operation of the drain.
- All bridges and culverts, including guardrails, that have been provided by the Corporation and recorded on our asset register.
- All flood protection assets designated under our Operating Licence.

Information on Water Corporation rural drains can be obtained from Busselton, Albany and Canning Vale offices.

Landowners, or other agencies, are responsible for the following.

- Stock barriers in drains (commonly referred to as Cattle Stops) – they are considered to be part of the fencing requirements of your property.
- Structures required to control erosion of land at the entry to the Corporation's drain (outlet structures).
- Any structure constructed or provided by the landowner or another agency.
- Earthworks and sealed approaches to crossings, together with necessary signs or road markings, are the responsibility of the road manager.
- Minor drains which are internal to a private property or serving to provide outlet to a private or agency's property or facility.
- Drains that have a primary function of removing irrigation wastewater from a property or channel are an irrigation responsibility.

Local Government responsibility

- Drains that exclusively serve urban, industrial or special rural subdivision lots.
- Ensuring floodplain level information is included in Council planning processes and that such information is readily available to property owners.

Department of Water responsibility

- Natural watercourses, not designated as main drains, and not included in the Corporation's asset register.
- Management of floodplains for the benefit of the whole community such that risk and damages are minimised and environmental values protected.
- Environmental sustainability of waterways including water allocation.
- Sets the framework for integrated drainage management from regional planning to catchment based water management strategies.
- Identifies practical management measures and quantifies expected outcomes in terms of social, environmental and economics factors.

Sedimentation

Sediments deposited in the drains, estuaries and ocean are not only expensive to remove but tend to carry nutrients which can contribute to problems such as the death of aquatic life and the formation of algal blooms.

Under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945, land owners and occupiers must prevent uncontrolled erosion on their property. Compliance with this requirement will not only prevent siltation of the waterway but also allow maximum opportunity for nutrient uptake by pastures.

Let's work together

Small drains, which serve the majority of properties, are greatly reduced in capacity by debris such as branches, which are a major cause of flooding and a severe threat to drainage structures. Please remove debris which is likely to cause minor obstructions.

Please ensure access to the drains, for maintenance purposes, is not obstructed by trees, fencing or buildings. In particular, planting of trees (streamlining) must be carried out so as not to deny access to the drain by our machinery. It is an offence to obstruct the drain with illegal structures, fences or pipes. If any person or authority wants to place anything within the waterway of a Corporation drain they are required to provide design data and gain approval from the Corporation prior to installation.

Pollutants such as animal waste and rubbish must not be intentionally disposed of in the drainage system.

Your farm and stock management practices should not cause damage or erosion to the drains or associated structures. An agreement or lease is required before stock are allowed to graze on reserves vested in the Corporation.

The quality of water in drains varies considerably and must not be assumed to be safe for use for stock or domestic purposes. Pumping from drains requires approval and signing of indemnity agreements.

Development Proposals

Proposals for subdivision or other developments that may be effected by rural drainage service levels and may also increase the demand on Water Corporation drainage infrastructure, need to be referred to the Corporation. Proposals must recognise the limited capacity of rural drains. The design of compensating basins must be designed to give a discharge rate that does not exceed the rate prior to the development.

Environmental Commitment

The Water Corporation, while fulfilling its primary obligation to provide rural drainage services in compliance with its Operating Licence, is committed to maintaining its drains in order to minimise the negative impacts on water bodies that receive the drainage water.

This is assisted by the adoption of engineering or landscaping practices where appropriate and economically achievable.

Assistance to landowners or catchment groups may be offered where improvements to water quality and financial management advantages are identified.

In addition to our legal obligations to control declared plants and animals, we will endeavour to eradicate weeds and vermin over the area of our works when landowners undertake eradication programs on properties adjoining Water Corporation drains.

Our Environmental Policy is available on our website or by request.

Entry to property

Maintaining the rural drainage service is a job we take extremely seriously. We have ongoing routine maintenance programs to ensure our drainage systems are in good working condition and, when unable to make contact we may need to enter your property without prior notice utilising the powers vested in us under the Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984. This will be done during regular business hours unless there is an emergency.

During an emergency, we will inform the occupier of the land or premises of the work being undertaken or leave an information card.

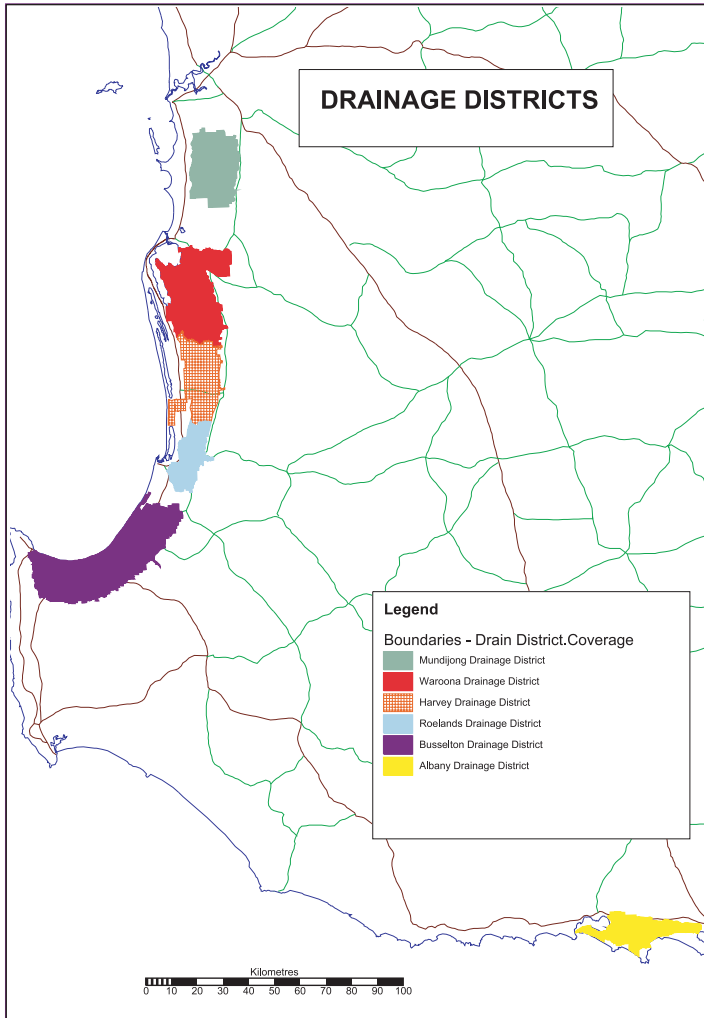
Property reinstatement

The Water Corporation takes great care to leave your property as it was after we have finished any service or maintenance work. If damage does occur due to our activities, we will reinstate your property as close as possible to its original condition.

We are committed to this, however we are not liable for any loss or damage suffered, unless it arises from our negligence.

Drainage Districts

To stimulate agricultural development, existing watercourses have been improved and extensive drainage networks created by the Government. Beginning some 30 kilometres south of Perth the drainage schemes extend south for 200 kilometres, plus an area immediately to the west of Albany servicing an area of about 200,000 hectares. For details, see the diagram on previous page.





Complaint resolution

Should you have a complaint, we will investigate it and do all we can to resolve it within 21 days.

If you are still not satisfied, you may refer your complaint to the Department of Water during office hours.

For more information

Statewide Customer Service

(8am - 5pm weekdays)

General Enquiries: 13 13 85

TTY users FREECALL: 1800 063 508

Service Faults & Emergencies

(24 hours): 13 13 75

TTY users FREECALL: 1800 652 897

Please provide: Fault being experienced and the property details, including the Shire, Lot/Location number and nearest Road name.

Customer Centre Address

Locked Bag 2

Osborne Park WA 6916

Customer Advisory Council

C/- Customer Service Division

John Tonkin Water Centre

PO Box 100

Leederville WA 6902

Web site: www.watercorporation.com.au

Email: cust_centre@watercorporation.com.au

Customer Feedback

The Water Corporation is committed to providing quality products and services and we are continually reviewing the way we do things to improve customer satisfaction.

We welcome and encourage your feedback and questions.

How To Comment

Complete this form and return it to the Water Corporation or simply pass it to one of our Customer Service Representatives.

Your comments will be logged on our computer system and you will be provided with a unique number to identify your contact. A Customer Service Representative will contact you as soon as possible.

Please send this completed form to the following address:

Customer Centre

Locked Bag 2

Osborne Park WA 6916

or

Email: cust_centre@watercorporation.com.au

Customer Comments

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Fax: _____ Email _____

Best time for us to telephone you? _____ am/pm

Comments: _____

Your signature: _____

Thank you

