

Melbourne Water is working with private landholders to rebuild and repair fences that border land and vegetation adjoining waterways such as creeks, rivers or wetlands (riparian areas) or that border Melbourne Water land damaged by the recent Victorian bushfires.

Melbourne Water works with landowners to protect, improve and manage their river frontages by assisting to replace or repair fences. Funding assistance, technical advice and educational opportunities are offered to landowners with frontages to important rivers and creeks through Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program.

Repairing or replacing fences is part of Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program and includes rehabilitating riparian areas, re-establishing plantings, weed control and repairing or replacing off-stream stock watering facilities. Funding may continue for several years if a project needs to be done in stages.

If a property borders Melbourne Water land, then assistance is available through our Shared Fencing program. Melbourne Water will contribute to the cost of a standard fence in line with our obligations under the Fences Act 1968.

Riparian Fencing

How can I receive assistance from the Stream Frontage Management Program to repair or replace my fence?

Melbourne Water can arrange a site inspection or discuss options for your waterway frontage fence. Contact Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program - details are at the end of this fact sheet.

Will Melbourne Water pay to replace or repair my bushfire damaged riparian fence?

Melbourne Water will provide funding assistance to repair and/or replace riparian fences damaged or destroyed by the bushfires.

Under current Stream Frontage Management Program cost sharing principles, we can provide funding of \$4.50 per metre (with a 10 metre setback) or \$7.00 per metre (with a 20 metre setback).

Will Melbourne Water pay to replace or repair my fence damaged by fire suppression activities?

No. Fences damaged by official fire suppression activities are likely to be covered by the Victorian Government under the *Fencing and Fire Control Line Rehabilitation Policy*.

Can Melbourne Water help me to prepare my site so that I can rebuild or repair my riparian fence?

Yes. Melbourne Water can provide a one off payment of \$400 to assist you in removing and/or disposing of the damaged fence or preparing the site to build a new fence.

What advice can Melbourne Water give me to help me rebuild my riparian fence?

Melbourne Water can advise on site preparation, materials, fence design and labour (including contractors and/or volunteers) as per normal Stream Frontage Management Program practices.

Can I receive funding assistance through the Stream Frontage Management Program as well as claim on my insurance?

No. Where the replacement of streamside fencing is claimed under property insurance, funding for the same items is not available through the Stream Frontage Management Program.

Can I get assistance to replace my non-riparian or internal fence damaged or destroyed during the bushfires?

No. Melbourne Water only provides assistance to riparian fencing or fencing that borders Melbourne Water property. The Department of Primary Industries can help with advice on this.

What's the difference between the Stream Frontage Management Program and the Victorian Government's fencing assistance?

Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program offers funding assistance for assets such as stream side fencing, off-stream stock watering and plantings at the programs standard rates.

This assistance is available to all landowners who have private stream-frontage or licensed Crown Land frontages.

The Victorian Governments Bushfire Replacement Fencing Policy states that the Victorian Government will reimburse reasonable insurance excess costs to a maximum of \$400 for insured fences bordering Crown Land that were destroyed or damaged by bushfires.

Can I lodge a claim to repair or replace my stream frontage fence on insurance or seek funding assistance from Melbourne Water?

Yes. Assets such as streamside fencing or off-stream stock watering facilities should be claimed through property insurance if it is available.

Where no property insurance exists, funding may be available through the Stream Frontage Management Program.

Shared Fencing

Will I have to pay my share of a new fence that's burnt or damaged if it borders Melbourne Water property?

Yes. Melbourne Water contributes to the cost of a standard fence where properties border Melbourne Water land. This is in accordance with the Fences Act 1968, which is underpinned by the understanding that bushfire risk management is a shared responsibility between governments, community, individuals and landholders.

Can I receive funding assistance to repair or replace my fence through the Shared Fencing program as well as make an insurance claim?

Yes. Melbourne Water contributes half the cost of a standard fence towards the replacement or repair of a fence that borders Melbourne Water land and is damaged or destroyed by bushfires. This is in accordance with the Fences Act 1968. The other half of the fence cost should be covered by you, and if applicable, through your insurance.

Contact details

Stream Frontage Management Program – call 03 9235 2231 or visit melbournewater.com.au/bushfires (> Impacts on rivers and creeks)

Shared Fencing program – call 03 9235 7160

Fencing and Fire Control Line Rehabilitation Policy – to see this policy visit www.dse.vic.gov.au

This fact sheet is also available at melbournewater.com.au/bushfires