

Bushfire Essential Facts

Works on and around Waterways

July 2009

As part of Melbourne Water's role in managing the health of our rivers and creeks in the Port Phillip and Western Port region, we're responsible for permitting any works proposed to be undertaken on and around waterways.

This means that anyone wishing to carry out any works on or near waterways is required to submit an application to Melbourne Water, requesting approval to conduct these works. Melbourne Water assesses these applications and provides a works permit or licence to conduct proposed works on waterways as appropriate.

Such works include earthworks on, over, beside or within a waterway, connecting a pipe or structure to divert water from, or discharge into any river or creek and building of paths, bridges, pontoons.

Works on Waterways

When can I conduct works on or near my waterway?

You can only conduct works once Melbourne Water issues a **permit to work** and contractors have completed Melbourne Water's permit recipient training course to carry out any works on, over, beside or within our waterways.

What kind of works do I need to obtain a permit for?

You will need a **permit to work** to construct any crossing, conduct any earthworks or build any paths, bridges, pontoons, culverts and crossings on, over, beside or within a creek, river, stream or formed channel.

What is a crossing?

A crossing is any bridge or culvert passing over a creek, river, stream or formed channel.

What types of crossings are there?

There are several types of crossings that Melbourne Water approves, depending on what purpose they will be used for and the characteristics of the waterway.

These include single span, culvert and pedestrian crossings and high flow channels crossings with an associated underground pipe.

Does Melbourne Water prefer a particular type of crossing?

The preferred type of crossing considered is a free spanning structure with abutments outside the banks of the watercourse. Culvert designs are considered but less often, and are largely dependent on the characteristics of the waterway.

Do I need permission to build a crossing over the creek that runs in front of my property?

Yes. Melbourne Water provides approval via a **permit to work** prior to constructing any road crossing works, such as a bridge or culvert occurring over waterways or channels.

What if the creek runs on my property, do I still need permission to build a crossing over it?

Yes. You will need approval from Melbourne Water to construct any road crossing or earth works occurring over, in or near waterways or channels.

Obtaining a works permit

What should I do to make an application to conduct works over a waterway?

When making an application to Melbourne Water for a **permit to work** on, over, beside or within a waterway, please include a letter with return address specifying the proposed intended works, their purpose and conceptual plans.

How can I obtain a permit to conduct my works?

To obtain a permit to conduct works, you must have completed Melbourne Water's permit recipient training course and be able to demonstrate an understanding of Melbourne Water's construction requirements when working along a waterway. Training can be arranged through Melbourne Water.

What does Melbourne Water base its assessment for works approval on?

Melbourne Water uses the following guiding principles in determining a crossing type:

- environmental impacts;
- no increase in flood levels to surrounding properties;
- maintenance access & cleaning; and
- safety & risk criteria.

What fees are associated with obtaining a permit to work?

All applications will attract an application fee, security bond, valuations and any legal fees. Fees and bond amounts are subject to change so please see Melbourne Water's website for current fees and bonds.

What do I need to do once I've been given approval to conduct works?

Upon receipt of formal approval of the design drawing, Melbourne Water will provide a letter of conditional approval.

The following must be provided to Melbourne Water before you can commence construction:

- completed acceptance form and relevant fees and/or bonds;
- agreement to be completed and signed;

- submission of a Site Environmental Management Plan;
- method of construction or program of works; and
- a safety & risk assessment.

Do I need to obtain any other works permits?

It is the owner's responsibility to check with:

- your local government authority as to whether a Town Planning permit for construction is required; and
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria for any heritage or Aboriginal artefacts.

Melbourne Water and Southern Rural Water also have a role in licensing water diversions and some dams. You should check our *Farm Water Supply* fact sheet which outlines the steps to consider in managing your farm water supplies.

Contact details

Further information - contact Melbourne Water's Customer Service Centre on 131 722.

Proposed works on, over, beside or within waterways in the:

- **Upper Yarra and Bunyip/Tarago fire affected areas** - call Melbourne Water's Asset Services team on 03 9784 1414; and
- **Kinglake and Murrindindi fire affected areas** - call Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority on 03 5820 1100.

Dams and diversion issues within the:

- **Yarra catchment fire affected area** - call Melbourne Water's Diversions team on 03 9784 6373;
- **Bunyip and Tarago fire affected area** - call Southern Rural Water on 03 5139 3113 for rural dams or 03 5139 3198 for surface water licences; and
- **Kinglake and Murrindindi fire affected area** - call Goulburn Murray Water on 03 5833 5500.

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