

NRAR Assessing compliance with new metering regulations

22 April 2021

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) has found low levels of compliance within the first group of water users with surface water pumps 500mm or larger, who were required to comply with the new non-urban water metering framework by December 2020.

NRAR's initial assessment of compliance has indicated that water users who own two-thirds of these surface water pumps have not taken action to install accurate, tamper-proof or approved meters or to have them validated by a qualified professional.

This means that water extracted by two-thirds of these pumps is not being recorded to the standard required by law.

Grant Barnes, NRAR's Chief Regulatory Officer, said he is pleased the owners of one-third of the pumps are on the path to compliance and that the regulator will focus on those who have not yet made efforts to comply.

"These initial results are concerning. This first group was made up of water users with pumps 500mm or larger, who generally have entitlements to take large volumes of water," Mr Barnes said.

"Water users who own a third of these pumps are on the path to compliance, some are almost there while others have a way to go. We are focused on those water users who have not yet made genuine efforts to comply."

Throughout April and May, NRAR will contact water users to determine where they are on the path to compliance and to understand what legitimate barriers may exist.

"We have been told by some that there are barriers that have interfered with their ability to comply with these new regulations. We will confirm what legitimate barriers exist when we get out on farm," Mr Barnes said.

"We understand the path to compliance is not always linear, but more than four months have passed since the deadline and those who have not made reasonable efforts to comply can expect strong action to be taken against them."

NRAR's approach to assessing compliance with the new water metering framework is simple. Water users must have installed a tamper-proof, accurate meter and should have had these validated by a certified professional.

"Water users who have not installed an appropriate meter and had it validated by a certified professional will be required to demonstrate that they have made reasonable efforts to do so. Those who are unable to demonstrate their efforts, will be subject to enforcement action," Mr Barnes said.

There are 384 entities that hold 527 approvals for 1,126 surface water pumps which needed to comply with the new regulation by 1 December 2020.

To see the work NRAR does, go to its public register on the NRAR website nrar.nsw.gov.au. Go to 'Reports and data', then 'NRAR Public Register'.

To make a confidential report on suspected water misuse, contact the NRAR Hotline on 1800 633 362 or email nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au (<mailto:nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au>).



Other news

<https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/news/rising-river-alert-snowy-river-below-jindabyne-dam-15-november-2024>

Rising river alert – Snowy River below Jindabyne Dam

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) today issued a 'rising river alert' for the Snowy River between Jindabyne Dam and Dalgety in southern NSW for Thursday 21 November 2024.