



# Dams

## When you need a permit & how to apply

The *Water Act 1989*, defines a dam as ‘anything in which by means of excavation, a bank, a barrier or other works water is collected, stored or concentrated’.

Dams are a common feature within farming and rural living settings in the Golden Plains Shire and hence Council officers regularly field a range of enquiries regarding new dams, and extension of existing dams. Dam construction can be the cause of concern for residents adjoining or downstream of a new dam construction site.

Council is rarely the responsible authority for the approval or regulation of dams, however this document has been prepared to provide basic guidance and advice to residents.

### Why control dam development?

New dam development must be managed to ensure a balance is maintained between dam owners, existing water users, and water-dependent ecosystems. If there were no controls for the building of dams, there could be:

- reduced flows to downstream users;
- reduced flows or changes to the timing of flows to ecosystems that depend on a certain flow regime;
- erosion and/or sedimentation.

### Will I need a Planning Permit to construct my dam?

Contact Council to seek advice and determine if you will need a planning permit for the construction of your dam.

### Will I need a licence to operate my dam?

You may need a licence to obtain water from your rural property, depending on how you wish to use the water, and where it comes from. Licences are issued by Southern Rural Water. You should seek advice from Southern Rural Water to build any dam for irrigation or commercial purposes. A construction license must be obtained for building of:

- a dam on a waterway;
- any large dam that is potentially hazardous.

Contact Southern Rural Water to discuss licensing requirements before starting any works:

**Phone:** 1300 139 510

**Email:** [srw@srw.com.au](mailto:srw@srw.com.au)

### Where can I go to find more information?

There are many online resources for the maintenance and construction of dams. If you wish to find out more about dams and how to apply for a planning permit:

#### Visit our website:

<https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/residents/my-home/planning/planning-permits>

**Contact the Planning Department:** 5220 7111

Monday-Friday 8:30am – 5pm.

**Email:** [enquiries@gpains.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@gpains.vic.gov.au)

#### Other online resources:

Southern Rural Water:

<http://www.srw.com.au/water-systems/dams-private-property/>

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning  
*'Your Dam, Your Responsibility':*

<https://gwmwater.org.au/component/edocman/35-connecting-services/725-your-dam-your-responsibility>