

Water Management (Water Supply Authorities) Regulation 2025

Changes to rules that apply to water supply authorities and their customers

Introduction

The Water Management (General) Regulation 2018 (2018 Regulation) was repealed on 1 September 2025 and replaced by 2 separate regulations:

- Water Management (General) Regulation 2025
- Water Management (Water Supply Authorities) Regulation 2025 (WSAs Regulation).

The rules that apply to water supply authorities (WSAs) and their customers are now wholly contained in the WSAs Regulation. This makes it easier to review, update and remake this regulation in the future.

The WSAs Regulation applies to the 4 WSAs declared under the *Water Management Act 2000*:

- Fish River Water Supply Scheme (managed by WaterNSW)
- Cobar Water Board
- Sydney Olympic Park Authority
- Essential Energy (also known as Essential Water).

Most of the content of the WSAs Regulation is the same as the provisions that applied to WSAs and their customers in the 2018 Regulation, but some changes have been made to provide more consistency, remove duplication and clarify and simplify the rules so they are easier to understand and use.

This fact sheet summarises those changes.

Clarifying how WSAs must record service charges

The 2018 Regulation stated that a WSA must keep records of service charges in a manner approved by the Minister. However, the way in which these records had to be kept was not clear.

The WSAs Regulation:

- states that a WSA can keep records in written or electronic form instead of ‘in a manner approved by the Minister’
- specifies the information that a WSA must record in relation to service charges.

This change clarifies and simplifies the requirements but does not change existing practices used by WSAs to record service charges.

WSAs to give reasons

Under the 2018 Regulation, a person liable to pay a service charge levied by a WSA could object to the levying of a service charge, an increase to a service charge, or the refusal of a WSA to adjust a service charge.

Under the WSAs Regulation, a WSA must now give the objector written reasons for its decision. This addition clarifies that WSAs are not only expected to give notice of decisions in writing, but also reasons for their decisions in that notice. This should not affect processes since most, if not all, WSAs are already providing reasons for their decisions when they advise objectors of their outcomes.

Advertising water restrictions in the NSW Government Gazette

The 2018 Regulation allowed a WSA to implement water restrictions in times of drought or other emergencies by publishing a notice of restrictions in a newspaper circulating in its area of operations.

Under the WSAs Regulation, a WSA is now required to publish a notice of water restrictions in the NSW Government Gazette (the Gazette) in addition to publishing the notice in a way that the WSA is satisfied will bring the notice to the attention of persons on the area of operations of the authority (for example, newspaper circulating in the area). This should increase transparency and consistency, because the Gazette records all notices. It also ensures certainty to the legality of the restrictions and that there is a permanent, accessible record of the time the restrictions are in force, which makes it easier to verify when and where restrictions applied.

Statement of compliance for completed plumbing work

The 2018 Regulation required that, in issuing a certificate of compliance to a WSA following the completion of plumbing work, a person must not provide false or misleading information.

This offence has been removed from the WSAs Regulation because the general offence for providing false or misleading information already applies under the *Crimes Act 1900*. This change removes duplication.

Annual report on performance of functions

The 2018 Regulation includes a requirement for each WSA to provide a report to the Minister each financial year relating to the performance of its functions.

This requirement has been removed from the WSAs Regulation. WSAs are expected to be transparent in their reporting of performance and can be guided by the department's expectations as set out in the Regulatory and Assurance Framework (the Framework) for local water utilities. More information on the Framework can be found on the department's website at water.nsw.gov.au
> [Our work](#) > [Local water utilities](#) > [Regulatory and assurance framework](#)

Essential Energy (Essential Water)

Requiring consistency with the WSA Regulation

The 2018 Regulation allowed Essential Energy to issue discharge approvals and plumbing permits with certain conditions.

A change has been included in the WSAs Regulation to ensure that Essential Energy cannot alter these conditions if they are set by the WSAs Regulation or if the changes would conflict with it. This ensures that the conditions set by the WSAs Regulation cannot be overridden by Essential Energy, providing clarity for both Essential Energy and its customers.

Suspension or cancellation of discharge approvals and plumbing permits

The 2018 Regulation specified the situations in which Essential Energy could suspend or cancel discharge approvals and plumbing permits, which are also known as authorisations.

The WSAs Regulation makes it clear that Essential Energy can suspend or cancel a discharge approval or plumbing permit either unconditionally or with certain conditions. These conditions may include those that were on the approval right before it was suspended or cancelled. This change aims to provide more certainty for everyone involved by clearly stating what Essential Energy can and cannot do regarding suspension and cancellation of authorisations.

Essential Energy may place conditions on exemptions

Under the 2018 Regulation, Essential Energy could grant exemptions to the requirements to hold a plumbing permit, complete a certificate of compliance for plumbing work and only use authorised plumbing fittings for plumbing work.

The WSAs Regulation clearly states that Essential Energy can place conditions on these exemptions. This change aims to make it clear for all stakeholders what Essential Energy can do and allows the WSAs Regulation to be more targeted and effective.

Further information

NSW legislation is published online on the NSW legislation website. Visit legislation.nsw.gov.au/browse/inforce to find the Water Management (Water Supply Authorities) Regulation 2025 under 'W'.

For more information on the repeal and replacement of the 2018 Regulation, visit the department's website: water.nsw.gov.au > About us > Legislation and policies > Acts and regulations

If you require further information on the changes outlined in this factsheet, please contact Water Enquiries on 1300 081 047 (Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm) or water.enquiries@dcceew.nsw.gov.au.