

Community update for Barwon–Darling, Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling–Baaka river

Current conditions

The current heatwave conditions being experienced at Menindee, and much of NSW, is ideal for the development blue green algae blooms. Satellite imagery and observations from the community, indicate the development of algal blooms on the middle and upper parts of Lake Wetherell. As a precautionary measure to minimise the risk of algae entering the Weir 32 weir pool from Lake Wetherell, the Lake Wetherell outlet regulator will be closed today, and the Lake Pamamaroo outlet regulator will be opened.

Lake Menindee outlet continues to be maximised, releasing 2,820 ML/day. From today 750 ML/day is being released from Lake Pamamaroo to maintain water quality within the Menindee weir pool. These releases were previously being made from Lake Wetherell. The combined total release measured at Weir 32 is 3,700 ML/day. As the flow rate continues to fall from the Menindee outlet, the flow and water level will continue to reduce slightly over coming weeks.

Water quality within the Menindee weir pool remains satisfactory for fish health, with the department continuing to closely monitor any changes and ready to alter the release strategy if required, particularly given the very hot weather we are currently experiencing.

We are seeing some declines in dissolved Oxygen levels due to temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius, but expect a recovery when cooler conditions arrive this weekend on late Saturday / Sunday. The department and WaterNSW continue to monitor the multi-depth monitoring pontoons in the Menindee area that measure key parameters such as temperature, dissolved oxygen and turbidity.

A more detailed update will be provided next week.

Algae Alerts

On 8 January 2026, WaterNSW issued a [red alert for blue green algae on Lake Menindee](#).

Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: water.enquiries@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To view community updates issued, visit water.nsw.gov.au/menindee-updates
- If you've got any questions regarding this update or other water matters **contact your local implementation officer, Kate McBride on 0458 945 149** or kate.mcbride@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the **NSW Department of Primary Industry Fisheries Phonenumber 1800 043 536** or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills-2019-2020/info-sheet
- Information on recent fish deaths is available at: [Fish kills in NSW](#). When reporting, please include the name of the river/waterbody, location and date of your observation and provide photographs. If possible, please also record what species are affected and an estimate of number of each species observed.
- Further information on blackwater events can be found at the department's website at: water.nsw.gov.au/hypoxic-blackwater
- Additional information is also available on the Murray–Darling Basin Authority website at: www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths
www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes
- WaterNSW operational updates are available in [WaterInsights](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill
- Real-time water quality data from The department – Strategic Science & Engagement monitoring buoys can be accessed from the [Darling–Baaka River Health Project dashboard](#)
- Data from the WaterNSW gauging network can be found in WaterInsights at: <https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>