

# Drilling a bore

## Domestic and stock rights

Licensing groundwater works and monitoring the levels of extraction, helps us to sustainably manage our groundwater sources, protecting their quality and the ecosystems that depend on them. This fact sheet will assist you to learn more about drilling a bore.

### Who can drill and construct a Basic landholder rights (BLR) bore?

Landholders must engage a driller who holds a current NSW Driller's Licence of the correct class to construct the BLR Bore. It is an offence under section 346 of the *Water Management Act 2000 (WMA)* for a person to construct a BLR bore without a current NSW Driller's Licence. Your Licensed driller must comply with the current version of the [Minimum Construction Requirements \(MCR\)](#).

For more information about Driller's Licences, visit [waternsw.com.au/drillers](http://waternsw.com.au/drillers). For a list of licenced drillers in your area, contact the Customer Service team on 1300 662 077 or email [Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au](mailto:Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au)

### Do I require approvals to construct a BLR bore?

To access water under basic landholder rights, landholders **must obtain** a Water Supply Works Approval to construct a bore, well or spearpoint. It is an offence under the WMA to construct or use a Water Supply Work without an Approval.

### How deep should the bore be?

A licensed driller will be able to assist you in selecting a depth for your new bore. The geology beneath your property is important. Whilst groundwater can be found in most places across NSW, the yield and quality vary significantly. A deeper bore may help to limit the impacts during periods of drought.

### What regulations guide where a bore for domestic and stock rights can be drilled?

The groundwater source from where the landholder wants to pump water will generally be subject to a Water Sharing Plan (WSP). WSPs outline specific rules for particular water sources and are legally binding instruments (they must be complied with like any other law). WSPs are unique to each water source and are in place to protect each water source, depending on its type and health.

The position of a BLR Bore may be subject to distancing (and other) conditions outlined in the relevant WSP. These rules may include distance conditions relating to a property boundary, a potential contamination source such as septic tanks, fuel or chemical storage or a high priority groundwater dependent ecosystem and other bores. These rules were designed to protect your new bore, other groundwater users and the environment.

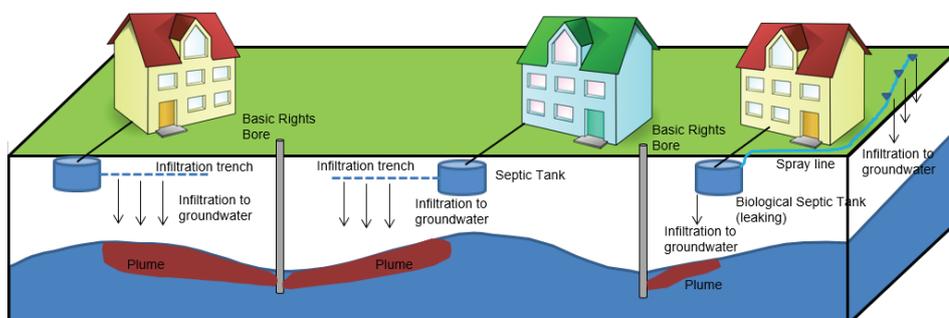
**Note:** Septic tanks are an example of a non-town sewage disposal system. Other forms of local sewage disposal systems include aerobic systems e.g. Bio-Cycle. For full details see [Australian Government Department of Health Website](#)

For a list of all Water Sharing Plans and their current rules, visit:  
[industry.nsw.gov.au/water/plans-programs/water-sharing-plans/status](http://industry.nsw.gov.au/water/plans-programs/water-sharing-plans/status)

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#### Effluent migration from septic systems and the potential risk to human health by water extraction from Basic Landholder Rights bores



#### How do I test the bore's supply?

A bore's supply can be tested by pumping the bore in a controlled manner and measuring the change of the water level in the pumping bore and/or nearby bores. From the analysis of the pumping test data the appropriate depth to install the pump and the potential yield from a bore can be determined. A pumping test can be carried out by a licensed driller or some pump suppliers. It is recommended that the analysis is conducted by a suitably qualified person such as a hydrogeologist.

#### How do I get the bore water quality tested?

The quality and quantity of groundwater can vary widely across NSW. Groundwater is untreated and should not be considered safe for human consumption without proper treatment. For testing groundwater to be used for purposes other than human consumption, to arrange a water sampling kit contact the DPIE Water. Details can be found at [dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/services/laboratory-services/water-testing](http://dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/services/laboratory-services/water-testing).

#### Do BLR bores require metering?

Currently, water that is taken under BLR does not require metering. However, please note that a condition may be imposed on the Water Supply Work Approval for metering equipment to be applied to a BLR Bore to measure water flows. If this is the case, landholders will need to ensure that they comply with metering requirements under the WMA.

**Note:** DPIE - Water are currently reviewing metering requirements under the NSW Government's Water Reform Action Plan, please see the NSW non-urban water metering framework website here:

[industry.nsw.gov.au/water-reform/metering-framework](http://industry.nsw.gov.au/water-reform/metering-framework).

DPIE - Water have indicated they are committed to public consultation on the topic of whether BLR water should be metered as a mandatory requirement. The position may change and, if it does, landholders must be aware of how the changes may impact any works that access water pursuant to BLR.

#### More information

If you have any questions, please contact one of our friendly Customer Service team on 1300 662 077 or email [Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au](mailto:Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au)