



Department of Water
Department of Regional Development



ROYALTIES
FOR REGIONS

watering WA

#wateringWA

Farms

Information for applicants



Department of Water

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Watering WA

What is Watering WA?

Watering WA is a six year, \$30 million State Government initiative funded by Royalties for Regions. It aims to secure regional water supplies for community and agricultural use and to support healthy, sustainable environments.

The program is made up of three strategies (Watering WA Towns, Watering WA Farms and Clean Waterways).

Watering WA Farms extends the Farm Water Rebate Scheme to include applicants with scheme water connections. The same eligibility criteria apply. Please read below for further information.

Information for applicants

What are the aims of the Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme and Farm Water Rebate Schemes?

If you are a commercial farmer experiencing a water deficiency you can apply for rebates under the Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme (FWSPS) to have an audit and site inspection of your farm and the Farm Water Rebate Scheme (FWRS) for undertaking water supply improvements on your farm. The FWSPS and FWRS are available to commercial farmers in dryland agricultural districts receiving less than 600mm average rainfall.

The Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme (FWSPS) and Farm Water Rebate Scheme (FWRS) are linked. It is important to note that an intending applicant for a rebate under the FWRS must first complete and submit a farm water audit under the provisions of the FWSPS.

Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme

The FWSPS encourages commercial farmers in dryland agricultural areas to participate in a comprehensive farm water audit process. This audit process provides farmers with recognised water conservation and management principles and a robust framework on which to base water resource management decisions.

The FWSPS provides a rebate towards the cost of a farm water auditor visiting the applicant's farm to complete a farm water supply audit with the applicant.

It also provides a rebate for a call back service when the auditor returns to the farm to inspect on-farm water supply improvements that are eligible for rebates under the FWRS.

Farm Water Rebate Scheme

The FWRS builds on the FWSPS by offering rebates for on-farm water supply improvement works (which are identified during the planning process).

These rebates are only claimable for plans compiled using the Department of Water's farm water auditing tool in conjunction with services provided by a Department of Water approved farm water auditor. In order to claim, a completed FWRS (works rebate application) form, and original paid invoices must be submitted to the Department of Water.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for the Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme (FWSPS) and / or the Farm Water Rebate Scheme (FWRS) the applicant must meet the eligibility criteria below.

Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme (FWSPS)	Farm Water Rebate Scheme (FWRS)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ must have completed a farm water audit (FWSPS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is a commercial farmer (as defined by the Department of Water) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is a commercial farmer (as defined by the Department of Water)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is in an eligible shire (see table 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is in an eligible shire (see table 1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is registered for GST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is registered for GST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has an active ABN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has an active ABN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ length of ownership does not affect eligibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has been operating the farm for more than 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ scheme water connection does not affect eligibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ applicants without a connection can apply at any time (see FAQs) ○ applicants with a scheme water connection can apply after 1 October 2016 ○ see FAQs for more details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ operates a farming business under one of the approved industries ○ (see table 2 & 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ operates a farming business under one of the approved industries under extensive agriculture (see table 2)

The following definitions are provided in regards to the FWSPS and FWRS.

“Applicant” means a commercial farmer who submits a rebate application form and original paid invoices to the Department of Water under the FWSPS or FWRS. A person employed as a farm manager is not deemed to be a commercial farmer or eligible to be an applicant. A request to identify the persons holding shares in any holding or subsidiary company of the applicant may be made where the applicant is a company. Copies of partnership agreement trust deeds, taxation returns and financial statements may also be requested by the Department of Water. The Department may also request an applicant to supply the following information to verify the type of activities undertaken on the farm:

- actual cash flows
- historical production data
- taxation returns and financial statements for the current and previous financial years.

“Commercial farmer” means a person or a company who or which operates alone or together with other commercial farmers a farm as a business and who or which:

- either owns or holds a lease for a term of not less than 5 years over the farm
- genuinely operates the farm as an occupation, business or income-earning activity
- generates sufficient income from the operation of the farm to cover the farm’s operating costs and the cost of replacement plant and machinery. It must also provide an income for the farmer equal to or exceeding the applicable *Newstart Allowance rates, taking into account normal seasonal conditions and commodity prices. The salary of any farm manager employed on the farm must be included in the farm’s operating costs for the purpose of this definition
- For existing and recently purchased farms, a business plan or budget estimates may be considered sufficient to assist the Department of Water in determining commercial farmer status
- hobby farmers are not eligible

*Newstart Allowances are based on the current payment rates.
Please refer to www.centrelink.gov.au for current rates.

“Farm” means a parcel or parcels of land operated for agricultural purposes by a commercial farmer.

Physical features such as fence lines, tracks, roads, creeks and rivers are not deemed to separate a farm into several farms. A farm may consist of one or more smaller farmlets which are physically separated by land owned by another company or person. The distance between farms may be up to 100kms.

A search of land titles may be undertaken to confirm land ownership. A copy of the applicable lease document may be requested by the Department of Water. Company and business names searches may also be required. Businesses such as strata companies, managing agents, tourism companies, superannuation funds, land development companies, government agencies, building and development companies, unincorporated associations and unincorporated joint ventures (also known as consortiums) are ineligible to apply for either scheme.

Table 1.
Eligible shires

Albany	Corrigin	Goomalling	Lake Grace	Nungarin	Wagin
Beverley	Cranbrook	Greater Geraldton	Merredin	Perenjori	Wandering
Boddington	Cuballing	Irwin	Mingenew	Pingelly	West Arthur
Boyup Brook	Cunderdin	Jerramungup	Moora	Plantagenet	Westonia
Brookton	Dalwallinu	Katanning	Morawa	Quairading	Wickepin
Broomehill - Tambellup	Dandaragan	Kellerberrin	Mt Marshall	Ravensthorpe	Williams
Bruce Rock	Dowerin	Kent	Mukinbudin	Tammin	Wongan-Ballidu
Carnamah	Dumbleyung	Kojonup	Narembeen	Three Springs	Woodanilling
Chapman Valley	Esperance	Kondinin	Narrogin	Toodyay	Wyalkatchem
Chittering**	Gingin**	Koorda	Northam	Trayning	Yilgarn
Coorow	Gnowangerup	Kulin	Northampton	Victoria Plains	York
<i>** The communities in the Chittering and Gingin shires are only eligible if they are east of the Brand Highway</i>					

Table 2.
Approved extensive industries. The Department of Water’s definition of an extensive industry notes that a farmer who runs an extensive farming practice may also for short periods of time “fatten” stock, usually for no longer than 6 to 8 weeks.

Extensive agriculture
Grain
Sheep
Beef
General livestock
General cropping

Or any combination of the above

Table 3.
Approved intensive industries

Intensive agriculture
Pig
Deer
Poultry (meat)
Poultry (eggs)
Cattle(feedlot)
Sheep
Goat

FAQs

What can be claimed through the rebate schemes?

Under the FWSPS, there are two rebates claimable. The first (FWSPS – Part one) is payable for the compilation of a farm water audit. The rebate payable is 50 per cent of the farm water supply auditor's fee up to a maximum of \$500.

The FWRS and Watering WA Farms scheme provide rebates for on-farm water supply improvements that are listed on both the rebate schedule (current at the time of farm water audit completion) and the Schedule of approved works (which is issued by the Department of Water following lodgement of the completed farm water audit).

The amount claimable depends on the date of audit and if there is a scheme water connection.

- Applicants who have their audits undertaken prior to 1 July 2017 and are **not on scheme water** are eligible for \$15 000, claims can be made at any time after the works and callback have been completed. If an audit is completed after 1 July 2017 the applicant is eligible for \$20 000 or the balance of \$20 000 if they have previously received a rebate.
- Applicants who have their audits undertaken after 1 October 2016 and **have a scheme water connection** are eligible for \$20 000. Claims cannot be paid until 1 July 2017,

Once the on-ground works have been completed, part two of the FWSPS –is claimable. Part 2 provides a rebate for a call back service when the auditor returns to the farm to inspect any completed on-farm water supply improvements which are eligible for rebates under the FWRS. The return visit must be undertaken within 18 months of the farm water audit completion date and is essential should you wish to apply for rebates through the FWRS. The return visit rebate covers 50 per cent of the farm water supply auditor's fee up to a maximum of \$250.

The FWSPS rebate is only claimable for audits compiled using the Department of Water's farm water planning tool in conjunction with services provided by a Department of Water approved farm water auditor. In order to claim them, the completed farm water audit must be submitted to the Department of Water by the auditor (see the "How do I apply" section for further information).

Please note:

- Rebates cannot be claimed for items which are purchased prior to the original audit date or which are not listed in the rebate schedule regardless of whether or not they appear on the farm water audit or the approved schedule of works. The rebates listed in the rebate schedule are available to assist commercial farmers address an identified deficiency or shortfall in on-farm water supply. A water deficiency may become evident during the audit process and the applicant's status in this regard will be considered in determining the rebates that are recommended for approval.
- Please note that the rebate schedules may change periodically at the Department of Water's discretion. To view the most current schedule, please check the Department of Water website or call the Watering WA section to request a copy on 1800 780 300.
- Farms operating under the intensive agriculture categories in Table 3 are currently only able to claim rebates for actual expenditure associated with the measuring of water usage under the Farm Water Rebate Scheme (eg Flow meters).

What items are not eligible for rebates?

Only the water supply improvements listed on the *Rebate schedule* are eligible for a rebate. Items not listed on the rebate schedule will not be claimable under either the FWSPS or FWRS. Examples of the types of water supply projects that will not be eligible for farm water supply rebates include:

- water treatment equipment including de-salination or filtration units
- exploratory drilling for groundwater
- water supplies specifically for aquaculture, viticulture, horticulture and dairies
- irrigation works
- new or enlarged farm dams with inadequate catchment provision
- domestic plumbing
- water carting tanks
- reticulation from a scheme water supply
- works associated with proposed building construction

- works that seek to replace an appropriate on-farm maintenance program, e.g. de-silting of dams, pump repairs, replacement of rusted gutters, pump upgrades
- fencing of dams, engineered catchments and soaks
- mains power supply to water pumping equipment.
- items purchased prior to the original audit date

Please note:

- Rebates are also not claimable for renting, leasing or hiring arrangements. Rebates will not be paid for replacement items which have been claimed through insurance or warranty claims or for on-farm water supply improvements already provided for wholly or in part through grant or rebate programs run by the State or Commonwealth Governments.

How are rebates calculated?

Rebates listed on the rebate schedule are set at 50 per cent of the estimated standard industry rate for those on-farm water supply improvements. Rebates paid may be less than that listed on the rebate schedule if an invoice shows the cost to be less than the industry standard.

For example a tank that has a volume of >146kL is listed in the August 2016 rebate schedule as having a rebate of \$6 500 (so the expected total cost is \$13 000 ex GST). If an applicant spends an amount equal to or greater than \$13 000 purchasing the tank, the rebate paid will be \$6 500. If they spend less than the expected cost of \$13 000, they will be paid 50 per cent the cost of the tank (ex GST).

On-farm water supply improvements that are not constructed to the minimum specifications outlined in the rebate schedule will be ineligible for rebates. On-farm water supply improvements for which a rebate is claimed must be installed as specified and paid for in full. Invoices or itemised receipts sent to the Department in order to claim a rebate must be original or certified original documents and contain the following information:

- suppliers name
- ABN and contact details
- purchase date
- purchasers name and address
- item details (make/model/size/quantity/capacity/description/etc.)
- purchase and installation costs showing the amount due as paid in full (for invoices which do not include this information, a copy of the payment receipt must be attached to the claimed invoice).

How are rebates paid?

All rebates will be paid by electronic funds transfer direct to the successful applicant's nominated bank account.

To claim the rebate for the return visit, you need to send the auditor's invoice, along with a completed FWRS (works rebate application) form to the Department of Water. This is required regardless of whether you have completed any of the listed on-farm water supply improvements or not.

What about GST?

All water rebates paid by Department of Water are subject to GST.

An applicant not registered for GST and unable to provide a valid active ABN will not be eligible to claim rebates.

Are tax invoices required?

In certain circumstances the agency (Department of Water) making the payment can raise a tax invoice on behalf of an applicant (supplier). This is known as a recipient created tax invoice. The Department of Water will issue these invoices on behalf of the applicant at the time of each rebate payment.

The Department of Water will provide the applicant with a copy of the recipient created tax invoice showing the amount of GST payable to the Australian Taxation Office. The applicant – not the Department of Water - is responsible for remitting the amount of GST shown on the recipient created tax invoice to the Australian Tax Office via their Business Activity Statement.

NB. The Department of Water does not provide taxation or legal advice. You should not rely on any GST information contained in this booklet. If you have not already done so, we recommend that you seek expert advice on tax invoice requirements, the GST registration process and the general application of the GST to your business.

How do I apply?

To apply for a rebate under the FWSPS you must:

1. Meet the FWSPS eligibility criteria.
2. Have a Department of Water approved farm water auditor visit the farm and complete a farm water audit.
3. Ensure your auditor sends in the completed farm water audit to the Department of Water

Once your audit has been lodged and approved, you will receive an approval letter and schedule of works confirming your works program.

To apply for rebates under the FWRS or Watering WA Farms scheme, you must:

1. Meet the eligibility criteria
2. Have completed steps 2 and 3 above and also received an approval letter and Schedule of approved works form from the Department of Water
3. Have undertaken on-farm water supply improvements strictly in accordance with the farm water audit within 18 months from the date of the audit.
4. Have a farm water auditor revisit the farm to verify that the on-farm water supply improvements that were approved on the schedule of approved works

have been completed in accordance with the plan and within 18 months of the date of the audit.

5. The auditor will then send the call-back form to the Department of Water
6. You will receive an application form once the call-back has been received.
7. Send in the your completed *application*) form, and completed *schedule of approved works* forms to the Department of Water by post, along with the paid tax invoice for the farm water auditor's return visit and with all original paid invoices showing proof of purchase for the works that are being claimed within 18 months from the date of audit.

If you lodge a completed farm water audit, but did not complete any eligible on-farm water supply improvements you may still claim for Part one of the FWSPS. To do so you need to have completed steps 1, 2, 3, then contact the Department of Water for an application form. Fill in and post with, , the farm water supply auditor's invoice. . Please note that the 18 month claim period still applies.

Please note: Applicants should not complete on-farm water supply improvements listed in their farm water audit prior to receiving the *schedule of approved works* form. Only those on-farm water supply improvements listed on the *schedule of approved works* form will attract rebates subject to funding availability.

How do I contact an approved farm water auditor?

A list of farm water auditors is available from the Department of Water website or by contacting the Watering WA section. Please note that the persons on the list are not agents, contractors or employees of the Department of Water and operate independently from the Department. If you have a farm water audit completed by an auditor that is not a Department of Water approved auditor you will not be able to claim through either scheme.

Can I get an extension?

Once the Schedule of approved works form has been issued, applicants have 90 days from the date of the approval letter to request changes to it. Changes to schedules can be requested by the farm water auditor who completed the audit or the applicant can contact the Watering WA section directly. After the 90 day period has lapsed, no further variations can be made. Extensions outside this timeframe may be granted in extenuating circumstances by the Watering WA section as long as they are contacted well in advance of the expiry date for the eligible claim period.

When do I find out if my application has been successful?

Applications are reviewed and assessed within 30 days of being received from the farm water auditor. Once your application has been assessed you will be sent a letter advising you whether or not you have been successful or if further information is required.

Can I query a rejection or dispute?

If you disagree with a decision made, please contact the Watering WA section.

How can I get further information?

If you require further information please contact the Watering WA section Water Planning office.

Contact

Watering WA

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