

Fact Sheet – Qualification of Rights

What are “Qualified Rights”?

If on a seasonal basis there is insufficient water in a water supply system to meet critical water needs, a water shortage may be declared by the Minister of Water and rights to water may be “qualified” temporarily.

A “Qualification of Rights” changes a legal entitlement.

Rights that may be qualified include licenses, water shares, bulk and environmental entitlements. Private Rights may be suspended, reduced, increased or otherwise altered after a water shortage has been declared.

Does a “Qualification of Rights” apply to my system this season?

The Minister has “Qualified Rights” to water for all the regulated water systems within Goulburn-Murray Water for the 2008 / 2009 season. Unregulated systems are not affected by the “Qualification of Rights”

How long will “Qualification of Rights” for water last?

The rights are “qualified” for the Goulburn, Murray and Broken Systems until a 20% allocation is exceeded. On the Loddon, Campaspe and Bullarook systems rights are “qualified” until a 50% allocation is exceeded.

What water will be supplied by G-MW under the “Qualification of Rights”?

The Minister has approved qualification of rights to allow access to water for restricted essential domestic and stock supplies and for specific commercial purposes. This includes water taken in for:

- in house uses – this does not include watering gardens and lawns
- stock watering
- fire fighting
- eligible Commercial and Industrial Businesses that use water in a manufacturing system (this includes intensive livestock systems such as piggeries, and feedlots).
- Dairy wash down (with customers encouraged to minimise water use; refer www.dairyaustralia.com.au for useful water saving information.

How much water can I use under “Qualified Rights”?

Under the “Qualification of Rights” your usage cannot be greater than the volume of your high reliability water share (HRWS) and water may only be used for the purposes specified above.

Are permanent plantings (e.g. fruit trees, olives, grape vines etc) allowed to be irrigated under the “Qualification of Rights”?

The “Qualification of Rights” does not allow for any irrigation use at all. Customers can irrigate permanent plantings, but they must have allocation (carryover water, traded water etc) to do this.

Is there enough water in all Irrigation Systems to meet essential human needs if we continue to receive low inflows into storages?

There is enough water in the irrigation systems to meet essential human needs and they will operate throughout the season, but water levels and flows into channel and river systems will be lower than usual.

Do I have to pay for this “Qualification of Right” water?

All water usage will need to be paid for and will be accounted through metering or deeming.

What is deeming?

Where water usage is not metered, usually on small pipes supplying water for domestic & stock purposes, in house use etc a “deemed” usage is applied. Water usage through these outlets is limited to the purposes allowed under the qualification of right.

Can I use or trade my carryover or allocation and meet my essential needs using the “Qualification of Rights”?

If you plan to use or trade your allocation (which includes carryover water), you should plan to retain enough allocation to meet your essential needs throughout the season

If I do not have sufficient carryover or allocation to meet my essential needs for the entire season am I entitled to water under the “Qualification of Rights”?

Any use will be debited against water held in your ABA. Once all allocation in your ABA has been exhausted if you require further water for essential human needs then that would be provided under the “Qualification of Rights”