

Stockwater Races - Fencing and Stock Access

Water races can become polluted from stock and other farming activities. Appropriate stock access improves water quality for your stock, downstream water users, and freshwater biodiversity.



Stock polluting a water race



Stock using a good drinking bay

Photo credit: Ashburton District Council

Contamination

Water races can easily be polluted by everyday farming activities. Contamination can potentially make the water unsafe for stock to drink.

The Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019 does not allow contamination of the water race by chemicals, nutrients or by backflow from irrigation equipment. It is not permitted to discharge any animal effluent or agricultural fertiliser within 10m of a stockwater race.

Breaches of the Bylaw may be penalised with a fine of up to \$20,000.

There are some easy steps that can be taken to help prevent pollution:

- Fence off water races and provide drinking stations – especially for cattle and deer, as they can cause soil pugging and bank collapse.

- Use another source of water for mixing up spray or sheep dip.
- Make sure effluent runoff doesn't flow into the race.

Fencing

The Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019 does not permit farmed animals to use or disturb a water race including the banks. Fencing is a good way to achieve this.

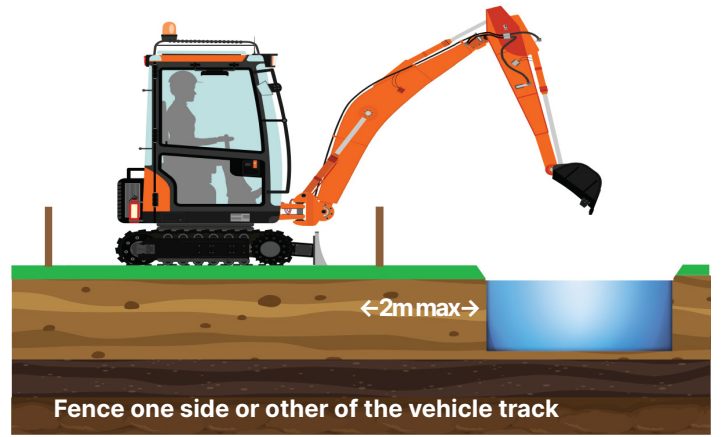
When planning fencing, it is important to keep sufficient access for excavators or other vehicles to maintain the water races. This includes installing gates in boundary and internal fences and careful planning of fence setbacks and height beside water races. Note that high fencing, such as deer fencing, can prevent excavator access.

Please turn over

Ensure fences are an appropriate distance from the top of the water race bank, particularly for the side that is used for race cleaning.

Trees, hedges and other vegetation must not impede access or the ability for people or machinery to enter the drain. Refer to the Council policy 'Planting of Trees and Shrubs Alongside Stockwater Races' for more details.

NOTE: Landowners must apply for permission to construct a bridge or culvert, to plant and/or erect a building of any kind within 10m from either side of a water race using the Stockwater Application Form available at waimakariri.govt.nz



Stock drinking stations

Drinking stations that keep stock out of the race are the preferred method to avoid damage to the water race banks.

When choosing a drinking station location, avoid culverts, gateways, weirs, steep banks, and the outside of a bend where the water flows faster and the bank is prone to erosion. Banks on the inside of bends or a straight reach with good flow are usually suitable locations.

At the drinking station, you can place the fence so that stock can reach their heads under the fence to drink, but not place their hooves in the water, and/or insert a hard raised edge, such as wooden boards to protect the bank. Gravel can be added to the ground that the stock will be standing on.

Crossing water races

Animals and vehicles should cross water races at bridges or culverts provided by the Council, Waimakariri Irrigation Ltd, or constructed with written permission from the Council.

More information

This factsheet is a quick guide.

The Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019 details the rules to protect the water race network. This factsheet focuses on guidance about stock access and fencing for the stockwater race network. Refer to the factsheet 'Stockwater Races' on our Council website for an overview of the Bylaw.

Find the 'Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019' with all of the rules designed to protect the water race network on our website waimakariri.govt.nz

Find out more at waimakariri.govt.nz, or contact Customer Services on 0800 965 468.