

Dam Safety Responsibilities

A new streamlined, risk-based approach for the approval of farm dam construction has been developed by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment. This is the result of amendments to the *Water Management Act 1999* (the Act) that came into force on 1 January 2016 resulting in two kinds of dam works permits. Each type of dam has an associated Dam Works Code, which describe the minimum construction standards that must be complied with. These codes apply to both new constructions along with modifications to and removal of existing dams.

Once a dam has been completed and a Notice of Completion of Dam Works has been submitted, there are ongoing monitoring requirements for the dam owner. Having a well-maintained and regularly inspected dam will greatly reduce the chance of a dam failure or incident.

The dam owner is the person who owns the dam or the person who owns the land covered by water when the dam is full.

All dams will have some requirement for ongoing safety. Dams assessed as a higher risk by a qualified professional using ANCOLD guidelines have specific safety requirements. ANCOLD define the National Standards for dam safety.

Dam Safety Requirements

- All dam owners are to maintain and operate their dam in safe manner.
- For high risk dams, where a population is at risk if the dam fails, dam owners must undertake appropriate safety surveillancing.
- A dam safety emergency plan may be required where there is the potential for loss of life if a dam should fail.

More information on Dam Safety is on the DPIPWE website at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/water/dams/dam-safety

Please be aware that dam safety is the responsibility of the dam owner. DPIPWE may conduct random audits of dams to ensure that safety requirements are being complied with.