

Community Bulletin # 18

Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry Implementation

Stronger Protections for Surface and Groundwater

Parliament this week passed amendments to the *Water Act 1992* that fulfil several key recommendations (7.6, 7.8(a), 7.9 and 7.17) of the *Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory* (the Inquiry).

This means:

- The disposal of hydraulic fracturing waste to surface water and aquifers is prohibited (s17A);
- The use of surface waters for petroleum activities is prohibited (s45A); and
- Any proposed groundwater extraction for hydraulic fracturing within 1km of an existing bore will be required to have the written agreement of the bore owner or be supported by a detailed hydrogeological investigation to the satisfaction of the Controller of Water Resources which demonstrates there will not be adverse impact on the existing bore (s60A).

Passage of the [Water Amendment Bill 2019](#) through Parliament removed any discretion the Controller of Water Resources previously had in relation to implementing these recommendations of the Inquiry Report.

This ensures future decision makers are held to the same high standards of water resource protection.

The Bill also eliminates the potential for legal challenges and future weakening of the required protections, and provides certainty to industry regarding water related requirements and to the community that these high standards of protection will continue to be applied into the future.

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To read the Implementation Plan or access additional information, please visit hydraulicfracturing.nt.gov.au