

Onshore petroleum and water extraction licence process in the Northern Territory

The management and administration of water resources in the Northern Territory is covered by the Water Act 1992 and Water Regulations 1992. The water legislation covers a broad range of purposes, including: licensing surface and groundwater take, issuing permits for interference with a waterway, waste discharge management, and aquifer reinjection. The Act also provides a range of offences and penalties and empowers authorised officers to undertake compliance action.

The Act allows the Minister to appoint a person to be the Controller of Water Resources (Controller). The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (the department) is the current Controller.

Water management and reform a Northern Territory Government priority and has been accelerated for the petroleum industry as a result of the Government's acceptance of the recommendations in of the *Final Report by the Scientific inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory* (April 2018). The major change is the water legislation requirement for all petroleum activities to obtain a water licence in order to continue to legally access water for their operation.

A water extraction licence application will take approximately 90 days to approve. This timeframe commences the day a complete application is submitted to the department and concludes upon decision by the Controller, **providing the applicant pays their invoice for advertising immediately upon receipt.**

A brief overview of the steps involved, matched with the process and timeframes for the approval of an Environment Management Plan (EMP) has been provided for context and understanding. For further information visit the [DENR website¹](#).

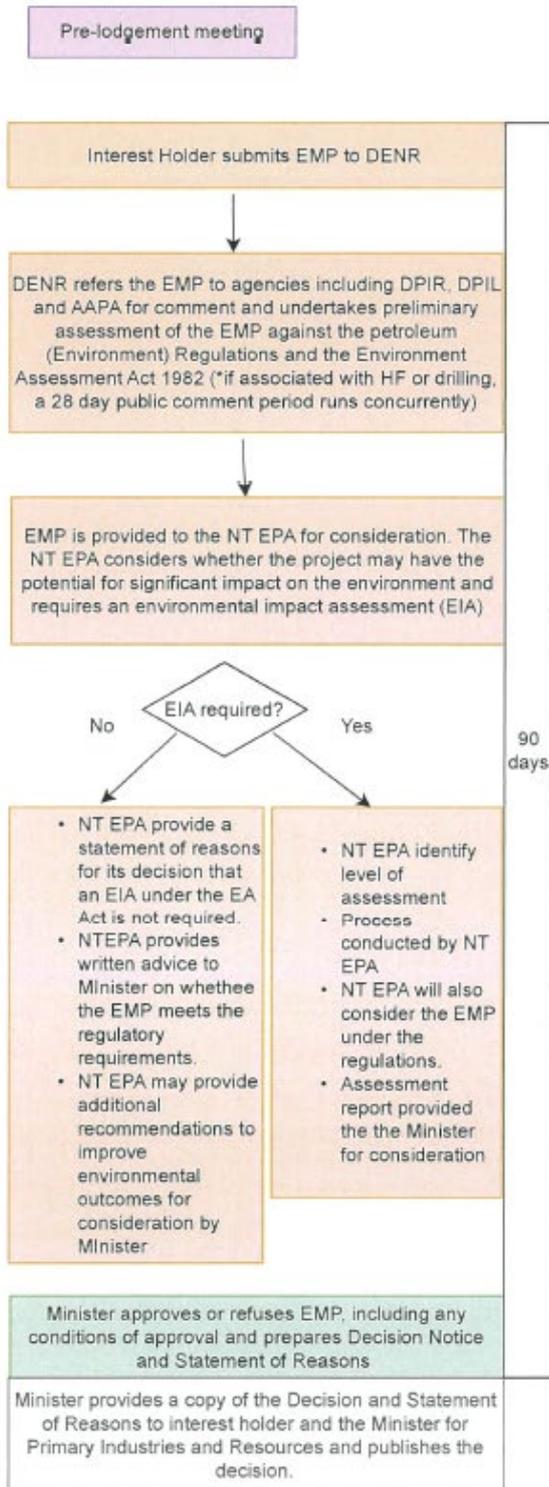
The types of information required as part of an application for groundwater extraction licence includes:

- a completed *Application to take groundwater* form,
- a letter or similar that confirms the application is empowered to act on behalf of the company,
- ASIC notice or similar, confirming company registration in Australia,
- a map with the location of the existing or proposed bores,
- a development plan (Environment Management Plan),
- identification of the lands in the immediate area – including lot, portion, section, lease numbers and boundaries,
- the method and route of moving the water from the extraction point to point of use.

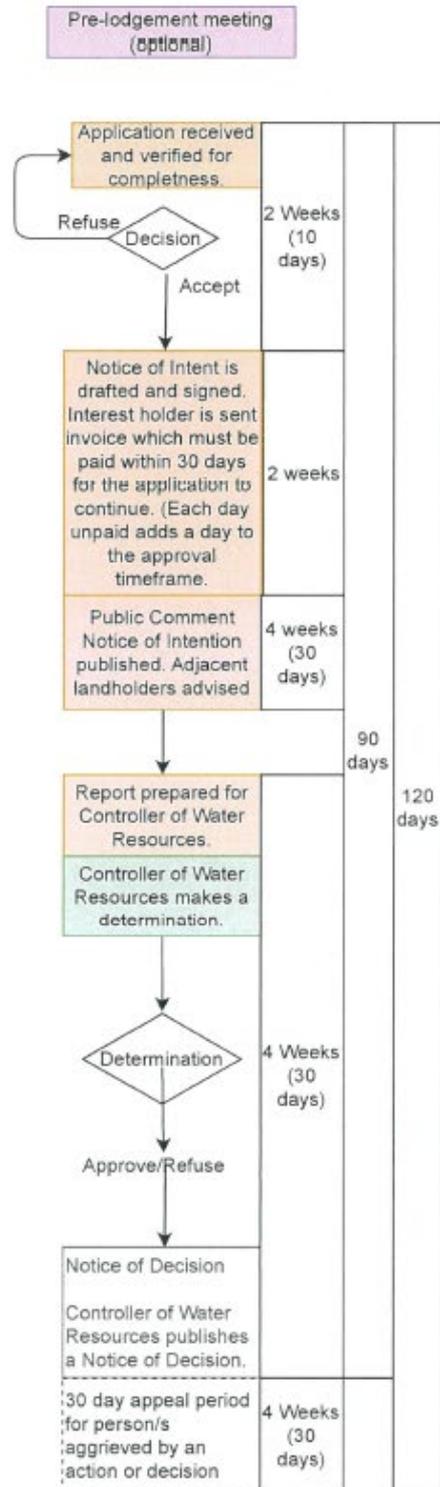
¹ <https://denr.nt.gov.au/water/policy/water-licensing-policies>

Fact sheet: Onshore petroleum and water extraction licence process in the Northern Territory

Environment Management Plan (EMP)



Water Extraction Licence (WEL)



Monitoring and Compliance

Minister oversees compliance with environmental approvals established through the EMPs. This is supported by DENR and DPIR staff as set by the Compliance and monitoring Strategy

Water Licensing and Regulation team oversee compliance with licence conditions for the life of the licence