



Environment and Heritage Expertise

Technical Guideline

TG 0875.21 – Vegetation

Version: 1.0.

Date: 28 August 2025.

Status: Final.

Document ID: SAWG-ENV-0875.21

Confidentiality: OFFICIAL



**Government of
South Australia**

© 2025 SA Water Corporation. All rights reserved. This document may contain confidential information of SA Water Corporation. Disclosure or dissemination to unauthorised individuals is strictly prohibited. Uncontrolled when printed or downloaded.

Issue & version number

Only the current version of the Technical Standard should be used. Earlier versions of this Technical Standard are superseded and must not be used.

This Technical Standard document is not controlled when printed or downloaded. Only online versions from the SA Water website may be used.

Copyright and intellectual property

© SA Water. All rights reserved.

This Technical Standard has been produced by the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water). SA Water owns the copyright to all material produced by SA Water.

No part of this Technical Standard may be reproduced, copied or transmitted in any form or by any means, except with the express written consent of SA Water.

Where any material is extracted from this Technical Standard, which may occur only with express written consent of SA Water, that material must be attributed to SA Water as:
© SA Water.

Intellectual property

Where any material is extracted from this Technical Standard, which may occur only with express written consent of SA Water, that material must be attributed to SA Water as:
© SA Water.

Unless indicated expressly to the contrary, SA Water (and/or any third-party licensors of SA Water) own the copyright and other intellectual property rights, which is contained in the text, graphics, information, designs, data and other content in this Technical Standard.

This Technical Standard may not, without consent in writing from SA Water, or otherwise except to the extent permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), be reproduced for any purpose, including particularly: purposes associated with government operational activities, commercial activity, or education.

SA Water is committed to upholding the rights of owners of copyright and intellectual property, and SA Water will make every effort to contact copyright owners and request permission to reproduce and make available copyright material. If you believe that any content in this Technical Standard may infringe your copyright or other intellectual property rights, please contact us at legal@sawater.com.au and we will investigate the position, and if appropriate, endeavour to correct the situation.

If you have access to this Technical Standard and the Technical Standard is used by you or any other entity, for purposes other than to progress SA Water's statutory functions, you could be infringing SA Water's copyright, and or SA Water's intellectual property, and you may face penalties under the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), otherwise under law, or under any other policy of SA Water or the South Australian Government that may apply.

Technical Standards are only applicable for intended use

This Technical Standard may be used by only: SA Water staff, SA Water contractors and persons expressly authorised in writing by SA Water to do so.

This Technical Standard may be used only for application to progress activities associated with SA Water's statutory functions described particularly within the *Water Industry Act 2012* (SA), the *Water Industry Regulations 2012* (SA) and the *South Australian Water Corporation Act 1994* (SA). This Technical Standard may not be used for any other activity outside of the scope of the functions described in that legislation.

If you have access to this Technical Standard, and the Technical Standard is used by you or any other entity, for purposes or activity other than to progress SA Water's statutory functions, the Technical Standard may not be applicable to that other purpose or activity, in which you or that other entity intend to engage, and you could be misinterpreting the contents and you may not correctly apply the Technical Standard. This may result in loss or damage to you, the entity or to other parties, and must be avoided.

This Technical Standard has been prepared to address general and not particular circumstances. This Technical Standard is intended to be used in conjunction with designs and project instructions that are prepared in response to particular circumstances and toward particular objectives. Any user of this Technical Standard must ensure, by independent verification, that the application of the Technical Standard is suitable to any design for any particular project, and to ensure that the Technical Standard is in accordance with the latest relevant Australian standards, legislation, regulations and codes and also with any relevant and applicable policy.

SA Water does its best to provide accurate and up-to-date information in the Technical Standards we prepare, but you should use your own skill and judgement before you rely on it. SA Water does not guarantee or warrant the accuracy, completeness, or currency of the information provided. SA Water recommends that you ask for professional advice from your own advisors on any aspect of your own circumstances.

Liability disclaimer

This Technical Standard may be used by only: SA Water staff, SA Water contractors and persons expressly authorised in writing by SA Water to do so.

To the extent that the use of the Technical Standard constitutes you acquiring goods or services from SA Water, as a consumer within the meaning of the Australian Consumer Law set out in the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) sch 2, as amended or replaced from time to time, you may have certain rights and remedies (including: consumer guarantee rights) that cannot be excluded, restricted or modified by agreement.

Nothing in this disclaimer operates to exclude, restrict or modify the application of any implied condition or warranty, provision, the exercise of any right or remedy, or the imposition of any liability under the Australian Consumer Law or any other statute, where to do so would contravene that statute or cause any term of this agreement to be void.

You acknowledge and agree that:

- Except for any non-excludable obligations, SA Water gives no warranty (express or implied) or guarantee that information, services and materials contained in this Technical Standard are accurate, complete, current, or fit for any use whatsoever.
- All such information, services and materials are provided "as is" and "as available" without warranty of any kind. This means, for instance, that you should not rely on the accuracy or completeness of any information displayed within this Technical Standard and its suitability for application to your particular circumstances, and furthermore it is your responsibility to contact an appropriate member of our staff if you have any questions about suitability of the Technical Standard to any particular circumstance, before your use of the Technical Standard.

To the maximum extent permitted by law and subject to any non-excludable obligations, SA Water excludes all liability for any loss or damage arising out of access to, use of, or reliance upon information, services and materials contained within this Technical Standard.

Significant/major changes incorporated in this edition

Not applicable - this is the first edition of the Technical Guideline.


Document controls

Version history

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	28 August 2025	Various	Issued for Use

Template: Technical Guideline Version 8.1, 30 September 2024

Approvers

Approver Name	Approver Role	Signature
Tim Kildea	Manager Environment and Heritage Expertise	<div>16/09/2025</div> <div>X </div> <div>Tim Kildea Manager Environment and Heritage Expertise Signed by: KI000359</div>
Brooke Swaffer	Manager Environment and Recreation	<div>16/09/2025</div> <div>X Brooke Swaffer</div> <div>Brooke Swaffer Manager Environment and Recreation Signed by: SW001471</div>

Reviewers

Name	Role	Version	Review Date
Environment and Heritage Expertise Team	Team review of guidelines.	1.0	28-08-2025

1 Introduction

This guideline relates to the assessment and management of vegetation (including native vegetation, regulated and significant trees, protected species or communities, Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and amenity vegetation) which may be encountered during a project's planning, construction, operations or maintenance activities.

It forms part of the TG 0875 - Environment and Heritage Technical Guidelines and is designed to provide insight into regulatory obligations associated with vegetation, as well as suggested approaches to manage risk.

Note the guideline is not exhaustive, and additional requirements may be necessary based on project- or site-specific activities, geographical location, or approval conditions.

1.1 Environment and Heritage Technical Guidelines Suite

The SAWG-ENV-0875 Environment and Heritage Technical Guidelines suite includes:

- TG 0875.00: General requirements
- TG 0875.11: Aboriginal heritage and Native Title
- TG 0875.12: Non-Aboriginal heritage
- **TG 0875.21: Vegetation (this guideline)**
- TG 0875.22: Fauna
- TG 0875.23: Weed hygiene
- TG 0875.24: Phytophthora
- TG 0875.31: Surface water
- TG 0875.32: Groundwater
- TG 0875.33: Recycled water
- TG 0875.34: Sediment, erosion and stormwater
- TG 0875.35: Dewatering, dredging and earthworks drainage
- TG 0875.41: Site contamination
- TG 0875.42: Acid sulfate soils
- TG 0875.43: Hazardous substances
- TG 0875.51: Dust
- TG 0875.52: Odour
- TG 0875.53: Noise and vibration
- TG 0875.61: Spoil management
- TG 0875.62: Recycling
- TG 0875.63: Waste management

This guideline must be read in conjunction with TG 0875.00: General requirements

1.2 General requirements

TG 0875.00: General requirements apply to all aspects of the work:

1. Purpose
2. Application
3. Scope
4. Statutory obligations
5. Strategic alignment
6. Terms and abbreviations

2 Vegetation

2.1 Overview

MANAGEMENT	
Commitment	Trees, shrubs, grasses and ground covers can be negatively impacted by SA Water's work activities (such as trenching, excavations, earthworks, stockpiling materials and maintenance activities). Native vegetation, regulated and significant trees, protected species or communities and MNES are protected under federal and state environmental and planning legislation.
Strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Corporate Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our culture creates empowerment, increased accountability for environmental decisions and demonstrates proactive leadership Our communities live in greener environments with thriving ecosystems Asset Management Corporate Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An integrated approach enables the sustainability outcomes our customers, community and owner expect
Key Performance Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KPI 1: Preliminary assessment completed (with subsequent detailed investigations if required) to identify potential impacts to vegetation. KPI 2: Evidence of following the mitigation hierarchy is required to be present in all phases of project documentation including design reports, management plans and construction plans. KPI 3: All vegetation impacts are recorded and provided to SA Water in accordance with reporting requirements. KPI 4: No breaches of regulatory requirements with respect to native vegetation, regulated trees, protected species or communities.
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1991 (Cth) Native Vegetation Act 1991 (SA) Native Vegetation Regulations 2017 (SA) National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 (SA) Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (SA) Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 Biosecurity Act 2015 (Cth) Biodiversity Act 2025 (SA)
Regulatory approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native Vegetation Clearance Development Approval State and Commonwealth-listed flora species

MANAGEMENT	
Statutory obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (SA)</i>, Section 8: A person must act reasonably in relation to the management of natural resources within the State. • <i>Biodiversity Act 2025 (SA)</i>: Section 11: An entity must not undertake an activity that harms or has the potential to harm biodiversity unless the entity takes all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise any resulting harm • <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1991 (Cth)</i>; Part 3: Requirements for environmental approvals relating to MNES: A person must not take an action that will or is likely to have a significant impact on a MNES without approval from the Commonwealth Minister.
Reference material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of where the South Australian Native Vegetation Act 1991 applies • Native Vegetation Fact Sheet – Understanding the Mitigation Hierarchy • Matters of National Environmental Significance: Significant impact guidelines 1.1 • Native vegetation management - CFS • AS 4970: Protection of trees on development sites
Related guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TG 0875.22: Fauna • TG 0875.23: Weed Hygiene • TG 0875.24: Phytophthora Management

2.2 Planning and design

MITIGATION MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS
<p>A preliminary vegetation assessment (desktop) must be undertaken to identify any potential vegetation constraints and risks, covering native vegetation, significant and regulated trees, and Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). For threatened species or communities of MNES, an EPBC self-assessment may be required.</p>	<p>Environmental Officer Asset Planner</p>
<p>Potential vegetation impact minimisation options must be identified to influence options selection and decision making, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid impacts to vegetation. 2. Minimise the duration, intensity and/or extent of impacts to vegetation. 3. Rehabilitate or restore ecosystems that have been degraded at the site of clearance. 4. Offset to compensate for any significant adverse impacts that cannot be avoided, minimised or rehabilitated or restored. <p>Ensure that all project documentation including design reports, data records and management plans, report on implementation of the mitigation hierarchy (in order of preference).</p>	<p>Design Manager Environmental Officer Project Manager</p>

MITIGATION MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS
Where new facilities and/or assets are located in high bushfire prone areas, consider measures to increase the bushfire rating of buildings etc in order to minimise vegetation clearance envelopes [insert Bushfire Standard] Refer to Native vegetation management - CFS	Design Manager Environmental Officer Project Manager
Where further investigations are required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For impacts to native vegetation, a Native Vegetation Clearance Assessment must be undertaken by an Accredited Consultant. For impacts to regulated or significant trees, an arborist tree impact assessment may be required by a suitably qualified arborist. For impacts to state and commonwealth listed threatened species or communities, an assessment must be undertaken in accordance with state and Commonwealth guidelines. For amenity trees or vegetation, consent from the landholder is required to damage or modify. An arborist assessment may be required to confirm the potential impact.	Environmental Officer Project Manager Consultant Design Manager
The appropriate approval pathway for any vegetation clearance must be identified and all relevant approvals obtained prior to undertaking the activity, demonstrating implementation of the mitigation hierarchy .	Environmental Officer Project Manager
The level of stakeholder engagement and community engagement on potential vegetation impacts should be determined on a project-by-project basis and defined as early as possible after project initiation	Stakeholder Engagement Project Manager
Opportunities for all vegetation offsets should be identified as early as possible, to maximise successful implementation.	Environmental Officer Project Manager Ecologist

2.3 Construction

MITIGATION MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS
Boundaries of approved vegetation clearance or disturbance areas must be clearly marked onsite and described within approved management plans and on approved design drawings.	Contractor
Protected trees (including dead trees) and/or areas of protected vegetation must be clearly identified by markers, construction tape or other barriers prior to mobilisation to site or commencement of land or vegetation disturbance.	Contractor
Where construction zones occur near protected trees, ensure the Tree Protection Zone is marked and the construction method adopts best practice approaches for minimising risk of tree damage.	Contractor
All vehicles to remain on designated tracks, with all storages, stockpiles and laydown areas to be clearly defined and marked.	Contractor

MITIGATION MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS
Retain habitat features such as dead tree trunks, bush rock or logs in-situ unless disturbance or moving is unavoidable. Where moving is required, seek guidance from SA Water. If native fauna is encountered, refer to TG 0875.22.	Contractor
A pre-clearance survey by a licenced fauna spotter is required to relocate or move fauna prior to clearing or trimming vegetation, refer to TG 0875.22.	Contractor
If weeds are present onsite, refer to TS 0875.23.	Contractor
If the project has been deemed to occur within a medium or high Phytophthora risk area, refer to TG 0875.24.	Contractor
All vegetation impacts and clearance must be monitored and recorded, with all data records provided to SA Water according to an agreed schedule in a format approved by SA Water.	Contractor
Any avoided impacts (where vegetation or trees were not impacted, although had approval to be impacted) must be monitored and recorded as savings, with all data records provided to SA Water according to an agreed schedule in a format approved by SA Water.	Contractor
Any revegetation or landscape planting activities occurring post-construction must be approved by SA Water as part of a revegetation or landscape management plan.	Contractor
Ensure management plans include requirements on managing bushfire risk including on declared total fire ban days.	Contractor
Ensure management plans include defined protocols for incident management and reporting, including stop work procedures in the event of unauthorised vegetation damage or clearance.	Contractor
Ensure management plans include appropriate detail on the type and location of all control measures to be implemented to manage risk to vegetation.	Contractor

2.4 Monitoring requirements

DESCRIPTION	METRIC	FREQUENCY	ACCOUNTABILITY
Vegetation clearance records	Hectares Number of trees	As per agreed schedule	Contractor
Vegetation avoided impacts records	Hectares Number of trees	As per agreed schedule	Contractor