



# Community events

## What is an event?

We define any gathering of people, whether public or private, ticketed or not, that deviates from the usual activities of the reservoir reserve (even if held regularly) as an event. Events encompass cultural, social, lifestyle, and sporting experiences and can span one or multiple days.

We require event organisers to [apply for a permit](#) for any events at reservoir reserves.

Not all activities within reservoir reserves' public spaces need a permit and may be considered general use. Unsure if you need a permit? Contact the Land, Catchment, and Recreation team at [reservoirs@sawater.com.au](mailto:reservoirs@sawater.com.au) for assistance. For activities requiring access beyond standard conditions but not fitting event categories, consider applying for a **General Access Permit**. This type of permit is common for scientific research, filming, or photography, requiring access to other reservoir areas or outside regular opening times.

Examples of events may include where one or more of the following apply:

- an organised activity involving 20 or more individuals
- any form of competition such as fishing, running, mountain biking, or kayaking,
- a show, entertainment, festival, fete or public meeting, or gathering
- demonstrations, training class, or similar events

- weddings or other ceremonies
- events where organisers charge a fee for participation
- activities involving marking a course, use of marquees, tents or stages, audio visual equipment, fencing, or temporary infrastructure (e.g. portable toilets)
- any fundraising or profit-making activities.

## Simple events

If your event has an expected participation of up to 200 people, with all access in line with standard conditions of access, it will be considered a simple event.

## Complex events

Complex events are those expecting over 200 participants, needing access to restricted reservoir areas, involving our people to be involved in event management (other than access to facilitate event bump in and out), or otherwise operate outside the standard conditions of reservoir reserve access. Approval for complex events may necessitate extensive liaison with us so you should plan to submit your event proposal at least 16 weeks prior to your desired event date.



## Recreation at South Australia's reservoir reserves

We are committed to providing quality recreational opportunities at reservoir reserves, benefiting both metropolitan and regional communities across South Australia. These reserves serve as ideal venues for various community events, provided they are managed to protect the ongoing provision of safe drinking water supplies sourced from these important public assets.

As many reservoirs supply drinking water across the state, they play a pivotal role in sustaining and advancing the well-being of more than 1.8 million people. Consequently, Conditions of Access have been carefully designed to ensure water quality, safety, and site security, applying to all reservoir reserve access, including for events. In addition to these conditions, you will also need a permit to hold a public event or for special access requirements.

### How to apply

#### Conditions of access

Use of the reservoir reserves for events is subject to the [Conditions of Access](#). It is important as an **Event Organiser** to understand the conditions required for your event. If you feel your event may not comply with any of these conditions, please contact the Land, Catchment and Recreation team to discuss your proposal. We may be able to provide approval for some parts of your event, and help find alternative options for parts that do not comply with conditions of access.

#### When to apply for a permit

- All requests for **simple event** permits should be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the requested date of event.
- All requests for a **complex event** should be submitted a minimum of 16 weeks in advance of your desired event date.

You should not advertise your event until the **event permit** has been issued.

## Application process

Before you begin your application, you will need to have the following information ready:

- the preferred dates and operating times of your event (including bump in and bump out) and preferred reservoir reserve
- layout/site map of intended **event footprint**, including any facilities or trails you intend to use
- estimated attendance and parking arrangements
- alternative transport options – encourage public transport where possible
- use of public and private infrastructure/equipment
- catering/entertainment details and necessary permits
- copy of your public liability insurance cover or relevant documents
- **Safety management plan** covering communications, medical emergencies and evacuations (all events)
- **Environmental management plan** (all events)
- communications and media plan (for events promoted through mainstream media channels to the public)
- community engagement plan (for events likely to impact the local community, other reservoir reserve users, and businesses)
- emergency response arrangements and contingency plans, for cancellations or rescheduling.

#### Fees

Fees may be required where a ranger presence is required, for example to open gates outside of regular opening times, additional gates, or event supervision. Fees will be determined based on the level of staff involvement required, and the size and complexity of the event.



## Key considerations for an event

### Reservoir reserve overview

Reservoir reserve facilities available for use include picnic tables, toilets, barbecues, kayak launch areas, and more. Maps and full descriptions of facilities at each reservoir reserve can be found on [our website](#).

Reservoir Reserve	Barossa	Bundaleer	Happy Valley	Hope Valley	Little Para	Mount Bold	Myponga	South Para	Tod River	Warren
<b>Opening times</b>										
Standard time	8:30am - 5:00pm	Sunrise to sunset	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	7:30am - 5:00pm	Sunrise to sunset
Daylight savings time	8:30am - 6:00pm		7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	7:30am - 8:00pm	
<b>Facilities</b>										
Parking	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Toilets	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Lookout	●			●	●	●	●		●	●
Dam wall access	●	●	●	●		●				
Picnic area	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
BBQ	●		●						●	
Playground	●			●						
<b>Land-based activities</b>										
Wildlife & bird-watching	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Walking/running/hiking		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cycling/mountain biking		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
<b>Water-based activities</b>										
Kayaking/canoeing		●	●				●	●		●
Fishing		●	●				●	●		●
<b>Volunteering program</b>										
Available at	●		●	●		●	●	●		●



## Location

Events should only occur within areas designated as open to the public. Within non-public areas, there are no specific mitigation measures in place to manage impacts on water quality, environment, safety and the operation of the reservoir reserve.

## Capacity

Assessment of events will take into consideration the likely capacity of the requested event space. This includes any facilities you intend to use during your event (such as kayak launches) and supporting infrastructure (car parking and toilets). Your event permit will not grant exclusive use of the site, so capacity assessment will also take into consideration impacts on likely public use at that time.

## Toilets

Facilitating public access to drinking water reservoirs involves managing water quality risks, as humans can introduce harmful bacteria, viruses, and pathogens. To safeguard drinking water safety, robust controls must be in place and consistently enforced. Among the crucial measures for mitigating water quality risks is providing and properly managing public toilet facilities. Toilet facilities at all reservoir reserves are open to the public, but these may not be necessarily located in close proximity to your event.

As a general guideline, if your event expects over 100 participants at your event, takes place where permanent toilet facilities are not available, or lasts more than four hours, you'll likely need extra temporary toilets. We recommend one portable toilet for every 50 anticipated participants, though portable toilet suppliers can offer tailored advice. It's essential to securely anchor temporary toilets to prevent tipping, and protocols for their installation, removal, and cleaning must be approved by SA Water as part of the event permit application process.

## Accessible and inclusive

All events should strive to be as accessible and inclusive as possible. Event applications should outline steps that have been taken to ensure the event is accessible to as many people as possible.

## Timetable

Your event permit will contain an authorised schedule, specifying the responsibilities and timing for each stakeholder, such as yourself as the event organiser and SA Water as the landholder. It's important to prepare a timetable or run sheet to be included in your event permit application. This will aid both you and us in assessing how we can effectively assist your event.

## Opening hours

Events held outside designated reservoir reserve opening hours are unlikely to receive approval. If permitted, they may require additional fees to cover the presence of extra people resources.

## Our people resources

Kindly decide if you would like or need our people to participate in your event. This could involve members of the LCR team or Reservoir Rangers. In certain instances, such as opening usually closed vehicle gates, our people resources will be necessary.

## Layout and site footprint

Please specify the areas of the reservoir reserve you'll use for your event, including access points and infrastructure placement. Submit a layout or annotate an existing map. Maps are available on our [website](#).



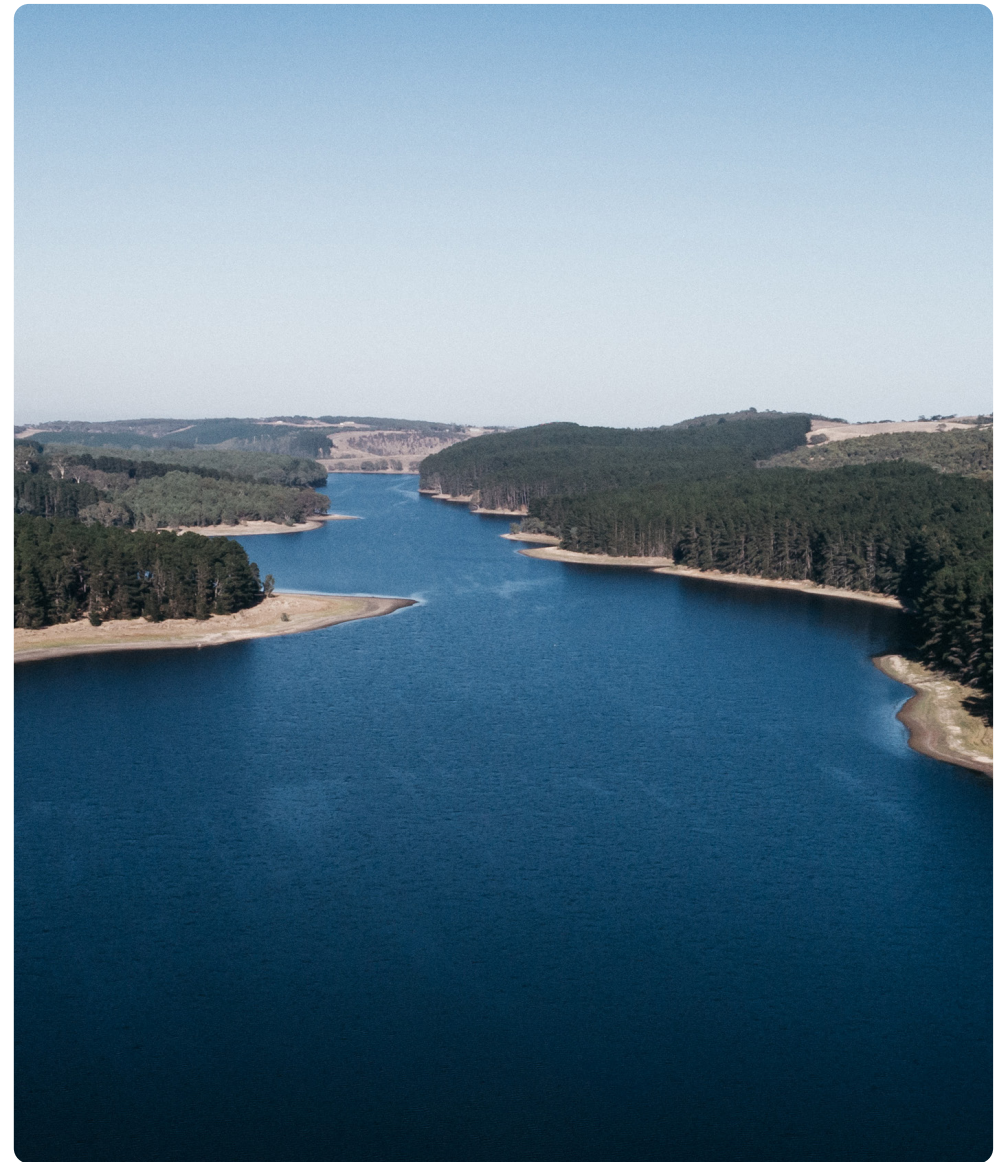
## Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledging Country is a way to recognise and pay respect to the Traditional Carers and Custodians of the lands and waters on which your event is occurring. It can be read from the text below.

**“We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians and carers of the land and waters on which we meet today. We acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to land and water and its importance to cultural vitality, life and identity. We also pay respect to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people visiting from other areas of South Australia or Australia.”**

## Marketing and promotion

Public events must not be promoted before obtaining an event permit approval. A Communications and Media Plan detailing the promotion strategy must be submitted to [reservoirs@sawater.com.au](mailto:reservoirs@sawater.com.au). After approval has been granted promotional materials should incorporate Reservoirs SA, SA Water, and Government of South Australia branding. We must approve all promotional material before publication.



## Safety Management Plan

A Safety Management Plan outlines safety concerns related to your activity and strategies for managing them. As an event organiser in a reservoir reserve, you're responsible for participant safety. The plan should be tailored to your event's activities and must include provisions for first aid.

Your Safety Management Plan needs to describe processes and systems in place such as inductions, risk assessments, Safe Work Method statements, training, supervision, inspections, maintenance, and/or reporting practices.

To begin, we advise addressing the following safety questions. If applicable, detail your approach for each, as shown in the example below. These questions serve as guidance, so thoroughly consider all aspects relevant to your proposal.

- Does weather present a risk to the activities included in your proposal?
- Are there any restrictions on your event? Such as age limitations or experience.
- Will any inductions or briefings be provided to your participants?
- Will your participants be required to sign any waiver form? Why?
- Will your activity include people being on the water?
- How will you reduce the risk of people falling into the water?
- Will your event (and/or the number of expected participants) create significant impacts to local traffic flow, and how will you manage this?
- What are your procedures in case people fail to return on time? How will they be contactable?
- What are your procedures in case of emergency? For example, evacuation, administering first-aid etc.

Some of our reservoir reserves have additional safety requirements related to their operational nature. Please ensure that the Conditions of Access and any communications relevant to your reservoir of interest are followed.

### Example of a Safety Management Plan

Safety risk of my activity	Mitigation strategies
Cyclists become lost on the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cyclists must adhere to defined tracks and trails which will be clearly communicated to all hirers.</li><li>• Cyclists are encouraged to download online maps for tracking their location.</li><li>• Communication protocols including 'failure to return' policies with potential penalties, will be established and communicated to hirers.</li><li>• Procedures for evacuation and retrieval will be outlined and communicated to hirers.</li></ul>
Inexperienced kayakers failing to be able to return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kayak hire will only be permitted in favourable weather conditions, when wind is below X and temperature is below Y.</li><li>• All hirers will receive safety briefings and instructions.</li><li>• Liability waiver is mandatory.</li><li>• Communication processes including 'failure to return' (with potential penalties) will be in place and explained to all hirers.</li><li>• Personal flotation devices must be properly fitted for all users.</li><li>• Evacuation and retrieval procedures will be documented and explained to all hirers.</li></ul>



## Environmental Management Plan

Your Environmental Management Plan must outline potential environmental impacts of your activity and actions to mitigate them, ensuring environmental suitability. Reservoirs in South Australia serve as vital sources of drinking water and support diverse ecosystems. Protecting these reserves is essential for water quality and biodiversity conservation. Developing an Environmental Management Plan helps minimise environmental impact, contributing to the preservation of these significant natural areas.

### What to include in your plan

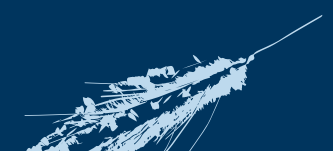
Activities will differ in their environmental impact, therefore requiring specific and customised mitigation strategies in your plan. To begin, we suggest contemplating the following questions regarding environmental or pollution impact. If applicable, detail how you'll address each one, following the example below. These questions serve as guidance, so ensure comprehensive consideration of all relevant aspects of your proposal.

- Does your activity generate waste?
- Does your activity generate any rubbish?
- Does your activity require fuels, oils?
- Does your activity require any power?
- Does your plant or equipment require cleaning?
- Will your activity create dust?
- Is there any risk that your activity will damage or erode soils?
- Does your activity create noise?
- Is it likely that your activity will impact riparian areas, including the reservoir shoreline?
- Could your activity damage plants or disturb native animals?

- Will your activity generate any water runoff from where you are operating?
- Could your activity, either directly or indirectly, impact the water quality of the reservoir?

### Example of an Environmental Management Plan

Environmental impact of my activity	Mitigation strategies
Damage to shoreline from kayak launch/return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The designated launch/return are will be clearly defined and communicated to equipment hirers</li><li>• Erosion control measures, such as laying out astro-turf or similar matting, will confine kayak launching and returning to the specified location, minimising disturbance to shoreline sediments</li><li>• We will regularly monitor the shoreline and promptly report any damages or changes to SA Water immediately</li></ul>
Generation of rubbish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will securely store and responsibly dispose of our rubbish from the operational site</li><li>• Our provided food and beverage containers will be bio-degradable, eliminating the use of single use plastics</li><li>• Regular checks of the immediate surrounding will ensure no food or beverage containers are disposed of on the ground</li></ul>



## Other permits

### Fishing

Fishing may be permitted at your event at Happy Valley, South Para, Myponga, Warren, and Bundaleer Reservoir Reserves, following [Conditions of Access](#). Each fisherperson aged 16 and above must have a valid SA Water fishing permit. Children under the age of 16 will not require a permit if accompanied by an adult with a valid permit otherwise they will require their own permit. Permits can be purchased for 3 or 10 days, or annually from [our website](#).

### Music

Obtaining licenses to broadcast music at your event is a legal obligation. For more information, contact the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) or the Phonographic Performance Company of Australia (PPCA).

### Liquor licencing

If you plan to sell or serve alcohol at your event, you may need to apply for a limited liquor licence. details, online application forms, and factsheets, visit [Consumer and Business Services](#).

### Food safety

If you plan to prepare or sell food at your event, you must adhere to the [Food Act 2001](#) and Food Safety Standards. This may involve:

- providing hand-wash facilities within your stall/van
- sanitising utensils and food contact surfaces
- monitoring food temperature with a digital probe thermometer
- preventing food contamination during transportation, storage and display
- using protective barriers for barbeques or hotplates to restrict public access
- disposing of sullage and wastewater properly, including from hand-wash facilities and cooking utensils, into sullage tanks or at home. Do not dispose of wastewater anywhere within the reservoir reserve.

### SafeWork SA

As an event organiser, prioritising work, health and safety is crucial. SafeWork SA offers resources to help identify, monitor, and manage risks related to events. For more details, visit [SafeWork SA - Event Safety](#).

### SA Police

SA Police advise all event organisers, regardless of event size, to utilise the Safety Assessment - Crowded Places tool which assesses the likely attractiveness of your location and event for terrorism. Further information for places of mass gathering can be found on the [SAPOL website](#).

### Traffic management plan

SA Police and local Council may require a traffic management plan for various events such as local events in a public places, special events requiring additional police resources or road and major events requiring extensive police coordination. Further information can be found on the [Roads and Transport website](#).





## FAQs

### What about my private family celebration?

You do not need an event permit for small or informal family celebrations of up to 20 participants. Please keep in mind SA Water cannot reserve an area for you.

### Can I take photographs or video at my event for distribution and promotion? Can I use a drone at my event?

If you are considering commercial filming or photography as part of your event you will need to clearly state this in your application for a permit. Use of a drone will only be allowed via conditions prescribed within the Event Permit for filming or scientific purposes, and drone pilots must hold a CASA Remote Pilot Licence ([RePL](#)), with evidence of this authorisation required as part of your application.

### Can I undertake research or experiments at reservoir reserves?

If you wish to undertake any research at the reservoir reserve, please apply for a [General Access permit](#).

### Can I conduct commercial business, such as tours, at my event?

If your event involves commercial undertaking for profit, such as walking or kayak tours, you will need to apply for a commercial licence or seek out a certified company who is already licensed by SA Water to undertake these commercial activities at the reservoir reserves.

### Can reserve closures affect my event?

Yes, reserve closures may affect your event. Reservoir reserves can be closed at short notice on Total Fire Ban days or for operational activities which involve water and land management activities. In some cases you may be provided with notice of reserve closure as late as 4pm the preceding day.

## Accessible facilities for people with impaired mobility

Facilities with wheelchair access	Parking 	Toilets 	Kayak launch 	Dam wall access 
Barossa	●	●		●
Happy Valley	●	●	●	●
Hope Valley	●	●		●
Mount Bold	●	●		
Myponga	●	●	●	
Warren	●	●	●	



## Definitions

Term	Description
Commercial activity	An event or activity undertaken at a reservoir reserve which returns financial profit to the proponent. In most instances, participants will be required to register and pay to attend.
Environmental Management Plan	A document identifying potential risks posed by the event to the environmental values of the reservoir reserve and mitigation actions.
Event	An event is defined as a public or private, ticketed or un-ticketed, planned gathering of people which is outside the normal everyday activity of the reservoir reserve (even if held regularly). An event can offer cultural, social, and sporting experiences. Events can be held in a single day or over multiple days.
(Simple) event	Expected participation of up to 200 people, with all access in line with standard conditions of access.
(Complex) event	Complex events will include events that may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anticipate greater than 200 participants,</li> <li>• access areas of the reservoir reserve not usually accessible to the public,</li> <li>• require SA Water staff to be involved in event management (other than access to facilitate event bump in and out),</li> <li>• operate outside the standard conditions of reservoir reserve access but have been determined as suitable to proceed.</li> </ul>
Event footprint	The defined area in which the event will be held, including any site infrastructure, either fixed or temporary.
Event Permit	A document granted by SA Water to the proponent of an event, providing the permission to hold the event on a reservoir reserve. The Event Permit will include details of all conditions under which the event must be held, and contact details for relevant stakeholders.
Event Plan	A compulsory document that must be provided by the proponent of complex events (as defined above). The Plan details the elements of the event and incorporates all key stakeholders and aspects of the event. This document is created through completion of the application process.
LCR	SA Water's Land, Catchments and Recreation team, within the Environment and Energy group.
Event organiser	The proponent of the event. This may be a member of the public or external organisation, or SA Water.
General Access Permit	A document granted by SA Water to an individual or group requiring access to a reservoir reserve for purposes other than a public event, beyond usual recreational access. The General Access Permit will include details of all conditions under which access is granted, and contact details for relevant stakeholders. General access permits may often be granted for scientific research.
Private event	An event or activity undertaken at a reservoir reserve with a specific list of participants, not open to the wider public (for example, a wedding).
Reservoir Rangers (Rangers)	SA Water staff specifically involved in the operational management of reservoir reserves.
Safety Management Plan	A document developed through the application process identifying potential safety risks posed by the event, and mitigation actions. (Appendix A)