



Waterway Protection Program 2016-2020

Standards for Rabbit Management

Rabbits pose a major threat to native vegetation, in particular to the recruitment of young plants and should be managed. Employing a combination of complementary control techniques will achieve the best outcomes, as different methods will pick up different sections of the rabbit population at different times of the year.

The most appropriate control technique for your site will depend on the vegetation type, soil, steepness of the land, rabbit numbers and existing programs within your area. Rabbit control should aim to effectively control rabbits, while protecting the native vegetation within the site.

Burrow fumigation and hand collapse:

- Collapse burrows by hand following fumigation.
- Mechanical ripping of burrows is generally not permitted within riparian zones to eliminate the potential for impact to items of cultural heritage (refer to fact sheet number 7).
- Mechanical ripping of burrows is generally not permitted in areas of native vegetation under management agreements.
- This is to minimise damage to native understorey and prevent further soil disturbance.
- As far as possible, avoid disturbance to native vegetation when hand collapsing burrows.

For further information visit: <https://bit.ly/2W66nF0>

Shooting:

- Shooting is appropriate, as part of an integrated approach to control, where rabbit numbers are low.
- Shooting can be carried out year-round.

Rabbit-proof fencing:

- In native vegetation, that is highly sensitive to grazing by rabbits, and where there is a high risk of rabbit invasion from areas adjoining the site, you may choose to build a rabbit-proof fence. See the fencing fact sheet for more information

Removal of harbor:

- Remove harbor provided by rubbish on site and weeds (e.g. Blackberries, Gorse etc.), where access is available.
- Ensure any harbor to be removed is not providing habitat for native animals (e.g. ground-dwelling mammals or reptiles and small birds). If necessary, consider options for providing supplementary habitat using revegetation with indigenous species.
- Removal of native vegetation to reduce rabbit harbor is generally not permitted.

Baiting:

- If chemicals are being used, you are required to comply with the current legislation (*Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994*).
- Free-feed first to determine whether the rabbits are feeding in the paddock or native vegetation.
- Use only hand-trail baiting, with due care taken to minimise impacts on non-target species.
- Take appropriate precautions to minimise risk to the user and others (including notification to neighbours, warning signage, minimum distances to dwellings and waterways, etc.).
- Where predatory birds are using the area, monitor for and dispose of rabbit carcasses after baiting to reduce the risk of poisoning.

Rabbit Control Costing

Type of control	Maximum rate per hectare of infestation *
Site establishment moderate to heavy infestation.	\$1,000
Site establishment light infestation.	\$650
Rabbit control- ongoing maintenance	Land manager responsibility.

***Note:** The 'per hectare' rate is based on area equivalent to one hectare of significant infestation.

*Following the site assessment, the CMA Catchment Officer will be able to advise the 'per hectare' area to be applied.

Health and safety

You are responsible for ensuring all works required in implementing the management actions are conducted in a safe manner and comply with the lawful requirements of any Authority, and with all Acts, regulations and other laws which may be applicable to the Waterway Management Agreement.

Further Information

For further information on the waterway protection program, please call the **Corangamite CMA** on **1800 002 262**.

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