

## Winter Works Update

Winter works are currently underway in the Murray Valley Irrigation Area to help improve service delivery for the coming season. G-MW will replace a bridge on the MV No3/5 channel and also make repairs to a syphon on the MV No6/5 channel this winter. Customers and members of the public are reminded to be mindful while moving around the works areas due to the increase in traffic.



Contractors preparing the MV No 1 channel for plastic lining near Cobram.

## Customer Satisfaction Survey 2011

During June, G-MW completed its annual customer satisfaction survey. The survey involved 500 telephone interviews with customers from all services including groundwater and surface water diversions, Irrigation Areas, water districts and pumped irrigation districts. The survey is a key tool in measuring customers' views on our water management and delivery as well as customer service, communications and consultation processes. The survey results help us to identify areas for improvement as well as areas where we are doing well. Over coming months the final results will be shared with the Water Service Committees as we identify ways to further improve the services we deliver.

**Thank you to all customers who participated in the survey.**

Rural Support Line 1300 655 969  
Lifeline 131 114  
Beyondblue 1300 224 636

## contacts

**Cobram office**  
03 5871 0100  
MurrayNorthEastWSC@g-mwater.com.au

### Emergencies

To report emergencies and urgent matters such as pollution incidents and illegal activities call our 24 hour emergency line.

**24 hour emergency line:**  
1800 064 184

## G-MW e-services



**Online Payments:**  
To pay your G-MW account please visit our website at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



**SMS Allocations:**  
Allocation announcements sent direct to your mobile phone.



**SMS Start/Stop:**  
Reminders of when your water order will start and stop.



**Irrigation eNews:**  
Allocation and irrigation updates emailed to you twice a month.



**eDams:**  
Water storage levels emailed to you daily, weekly or monthly.



Online offers additional features such as the ability to view spare channel capacity and adjust flow rates and duration - all with 24 hour, 7 days a week convenience.



Murray Valley  
IRRIGATION AREA

# irrigation news

June 2011

## Chair's Message

I have decided not to nominate for re-election to the Water Services Committee so this is the last time I report to you as Chair of the Murray Valley Water Services Committee (WSC).

The past 8 years I have served on the WSC have included some of the most extraordinary weather events in living memory, from record low allocations following dry winters to more recently high summer rainfall with corresponding low water usage.

The spring and summer rains this season have interrupted many irrigators' plans and caused us to use a record low amount of water. This has created a large amount of Carryover in our dams. For many of you as allocations increase next season this will be the first time that you have carried over enough water to activate your Spillable Water Account (SWA). It did not take long to go from one extreme to another!

Recent customer meetings across the Murray Valley Irrigation Area were well attended and topics such as Carryover and SWAs were discussed. These meetings are an excellent way for customers to become better informed on a suite of operational and policy changes that continue to take place.

Your WSC recently discussed pricing issues and is pleased that, following ESC approval, increases for next year in the gravity system will be minimal with only a small increase in storage fees. We continue to question G-MW to justify price increases, and will continue to advocate for customers to ensure that the impact is

minimal. It has been one of my high priorities to keep prices affordable for all irrigators.

WSC nominations have been advertised and closed.

Nominations have not exceeded vacancies which means there is no need for a ballot and the nominations will now be forwarded to the Board for consideration of appointments. I would like to wish the new members every success in their endeavours with the WSC.

NVIRP continue to modernise our irrigation system with major works taking place along the 'backbone'. These major works will happen during the winter shut down period. Please be aware of this when travelling on the roads in the area as there will be increased traffic on some normally very quiet back roads.

In closing I would like to thank the staff in the Murray Valley Irrigation Area, in particular Kimberley Heath for her work in supporting the WSC. Manager Jeff Parry has a good team around him and I am confident they will strive to serve Murray Valley irrigators well.



**Heather du Vallon**  
Chair, Murray Valley WSC

## Manager's Message

Despite increased deliveries during the latter part of the 2011/12 season a significant volume of Carryover will be recorded by Murray Valley irrigators. This coupled with a positive outlook for 2011/12 allocations provides plenty of optimism for all irrigators moving into the new season.

The modernisation program continues across the Murray Valley Irrigation Area with additional flume gate regulators, customer outlets and sections of plastic channel lining being installed this winter.

I would like to congratulate Heather du Vallon and Kevin Whatman on their service to the Murray Valley Irrigation Area as valued WSC members and wish them well in future endeavours. Heather chaired the WSC for the past 5 years and irrigators should be proud of the way she advocated on their behalf.

The planning of irrigation deliveries will be done from Tatura from the commencement of the coming season. The only change customers should notice will be that a planner is available by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Keep in mind that a planner can

only talk to one person at a time, so he or she may not always be able to answer your call. If this is the case, leave a message stating what you will do, and the planner then only needs to contact you if they cannot accommodate your request.



**Jeff Parry**  
Manager, Murray  
North-East Operations

## Water services prices 2011/12

G-MW is required to produce a schedule of fees and charges that will apply for all of its services for the coming year. The schedule is submitted to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) for review. Once the ESC makes its determination the Board of G-MW is required to give its approval before the prices can take effect.

### How are prices calculated?

To remain viable, each service must recover the costs of its annual operations and maintenance as well as a proportion of the long term capital costs. This includes recovering shortfalls from previous seasons that may result from low deliveries.

The annual costs are determined in consultation with local Customer Committees who advise G-MW on the trade off between an appropriate level of service and cost of delivering this service standard. The long term costs are determined according to a formula defined by the ESC.

### Water storage services

Water storage service charges recover the costs of operating and maintaining the water storages.

- The Murray System price averages irrigators' share of the costs for the Murray, Ovens and King basins across the irrigators who own water shares in these basins. The costs are charged per megalitre of water share.
- Urban water corporations, environmental entitlement holders and water shares not attached to land pay the individual basin price for the water shares they own in each basin.

The Murray System entitlement storage fee has increased by 28% for high-reliability water shares and 32% for low-reliability water shares. Murray system storage costs have increased to fund G-MW customers' portion of Victoria's contribution to the Murray Darling Basin Authority's

(MDBA) programs. The MDBA's programs include more than \$14 million worth of works at Mildura Weir, Dartmouth Dam, Hume Dam and Lake Victoria. G-MW has also completed upgrade works at Lake William-Hovell in the Ovens Basin.

### Water Delivery Charges

Water delivery charges for customers in the Murray Valley Irrigation Area are unchanged from last year.

Water delivery fees fund the costs of operating and maintaining the channel network and services associated with water delivery in each Irrigation Area.

2011/12 prices do not include irrigators' contribution to the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP). The first NVIRP payment is now forecast to occur in June 2012. Accordingly, the impact of this is not included in this year's pricing.

### Drainage Services

Most customers will see a reduction in their drainage service charges for the 2011/12 season. The service fee and area fees are unchanged, and the water use fee has been reduced by 28%.

Subsurface Drainage prices have increased by \$0.39/ML. Revenue for this service has been less than budgeted over the past three years because of low water deliveries. These shortfalls need to be recovered in the next two years to remain viable in the short term.

Community Surface Drainage prices have increased by CPI only.

Drainage service charges fund the costs of operating and maintaining the drainage network and services associated with mitigating the impact of irrigation on natural environment and rivers.

## Examples of price impact

Murray Valley	Small	Medium	Large
Water Shares (ML) (HRWS/LRWS)	2	200/96	600/288
Delivery share (ML/day)	0.02	2	6
Service points (Irrigation)		2	2
Service points (D&S)	1	1	6
2010/11	\$203.72	\$9,648.64	\$28,225.42
2011/12	\$208.54	\$10,086.00	\$29,543.50
Change \$	\$4.82	\$437.36	\$1,318.08

\*Examples provide an indication only. The examples assume a customer has storage, delivery and drainage services.

## Do you have an NVIRP connections agreement?

### Meter rationalisations

NVIRP advised G-MW on 15 May 2011 of outlets that have been removed or that NVIRP plans to remove by 15 August 2011. The irrigation or domestic and stock service point fee will not be charged on your 2011/12 account. NVIRP will fund the 2011/12 service point fee if the outlet isn't removed.

### Termination or reduction of delivery shares

If your paperwork was correctly completed and submitted to G-MW by 15 May 2011, the Infrastructure Access Fee will be reduced accordingly for 2011/2012.

## What happens if your rationalisation agreement isn't reflected in your 2011/12 account?

NVIRP have advised that you should call them in the first instance on 1300 163 006.

## G-MW pricing simulators

No two customers have the exact same combination of water services. G-MW has developed pricing simulators that can help you understand the charges that may apply for your services in 2011/12. G-MW's simulators are available at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



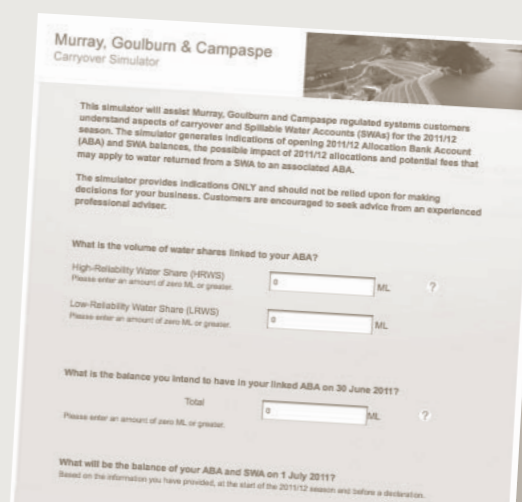
## G-MW online Carryover simulators

At 15 June Northern Victorian irrigators had approximately 2,200,000 ML of water in Allocation Bank Accounts and eligible for Carryover into next season.

This is about 1,400,000 ML more than at the same time last year and reinforces the significant improvement in water resources this season.

At this stage, preliminary analysis suggests approximately 1,900,000 ML of this water will be available for trade and use in customers' Allocation Bank Accounts (ABA) from the start of next season, with a further 300,000 ML quarantined in spillable water accounts until there is a spill or pre-release or the declaration can be made. These volumes will be confirmed by the Victorian Water Register at the end of the current year.

Every customer's circumstances are different, so to assist you in understanding how Carryover might fit into your farm planning visit G-MW's online Carryover simulators at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



## Safety around the G-MW network

G-MW customers interact with our assets in many ways across the season. From opening your outlet to lending a hand with temporary G-MW site equipment. Your safety is vital so please make sure you are properly briefed on what is expected of you and the hazards and risks associated with these activities before hand. Call your local area office or talk with a staff member onsite to find out more.