



# Newsletter

G-MW Newsletter December 2012

## Water Plan 3 update

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) are in the process of assessing and consulting with the community on our future Water Plan which includes our proposed services and pricing for 2013/14 through to 2015/16. The ESC will assess our Water Plan before making a draft decision in March 2013, and will then seek further public comment before making a final decision to approve the plan in May-June 2013. For more information on our proposed water prices and to register your interest in the public consultation, please visit [www.esc.vic.gov.au](http://www.esc.vic.gov.au)

## Changes to carryover

The Minister for Water has announced changes to carryover for next season. These changes follow a review of the carryover rules in the Murray, Goulburn and Campaspe systems by the Carryover Review Committee set up by the Minister with representatives of irrigators, the environment, water corporations and DSE. The committee looked at aspects of the rules affecting spillable water accounts, carryover limits and system reserve policies and a report and recommendations were presented to the Minister. The changes that will take effect for next season are:

- Limiting carryover to your water share volume
- New spill rule for the Murray
- The option to elect to not carry over your unused allocation
- Charges to always apply for storing more than your entitlement
- New controls on allocation trade
- An early reserve to suit the modernised Goulburn system
- An early reserve for the Murray system

Detailed information on these changes to the carryover rules is available at [www.g-mwater.com.au/carryover](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/carryover) and the Victorian Water Register at [www.waterregister.vic.gov.au/Public/Carryoverreview.aspx](http://www.waterregister.vic.gov.au/Public/Carryoverreview.aspx)

## Managing Director's Message

I have been with G-MW now for just over 12 months.

Since last Christmas, NVIRP has integrated into G-MW to form the G-MW Connections Project, we have undertaken a full review of our proposed prices into the future and are currently transforming our business to ensure we are as efficient as we can be.

Since integrating into G-MW, our Connections Project has continued to progress – most recently with establishing five Strategic Connection Plan Areas. We are currently in the process of dealing with those of you who are affected.

Our Tariff Review is underway. After taking into consideration your feedback on our

draft strategy, we have and will continue to work with the Chairs of our Water Services Committees (WSCs) to produce the next draft. We will be fine tuning the strategy with all WSCs prior to releasing the draft early next year.

Part of my commitment is to go through an internal transformation process to make our business more efficient and customer focused. We are now well into this process and have started to implement changes to move our business into the future.

On a final note, please remember to be safe over the holiday period.

Gavin Hanlon

## Message from General Manager, Retail & Operations

Since starting with G-MW over 4 months ago, I have had the pleasure of getting out and about across G-MW's region, meeting both customers and our staff who look after them and it's been pleasing to see just how involved our staff are within the community.

Having grown up in regional Victoria I feel very lucky to be working as part of G-MW, and while my position is General Manager, Retail & Operations, I believe my role is 'improving the customer experience' and this is something I am striving to achieve.

I have been working closely with my team to help improve our services to you, streamline current processes and reduce costs. This

is an ongoing process and one we hope to see significant future changes. As we move through this process, please feel free to contact any of your local Customer Service Centres if you have any queries or concerns.

Gavin has also mentioned some of the major projects we are working through internally here at G-MW and I am excited about what this will mean for you and look forward to working with you in the future to help improve your farm business.

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Charlotte



## Christmas Opening Hours

All G-MW offices will remain open over the Christmas period except for public holidays.

You will still be able to order water through WaterLINE 24 hours a day, 7 days a week online at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au) or by phone on 1300 469 469.

For any emergencies please call the G-MW 24hr Emergency number on 1800 064 184.



## Key payment dates for your G-MW Fixed Charges Account

There are many ways you are able to pay your G-MW account. Payment options are listed on the back of your account.

**Due dates may vary depending on the payment option you have chosen.**

## 2012

### 16 December

Payment in full due date for all customers excluding Loddon Valley Irrigation Area, Loddon Water Districts and Nyah Pumped District.

### 29 December

2nd instalment for the Nyah Pumped District.

## 2013

### 16 January

Payment in full for Loddon Valley Irrigation Area and Loddon Valley Water Districts.  
3rd instalment for all areas excluding Nyah Pumped District.

### 16 February

4th and final instalment for all areas excluding Nyah Pumped District.

### 29 March

3rd instalment for the Nyah Pumped District.

### 29 June

4th and final instalment for the Nyah Pumped District.

## Have you been affected by the collapse of Banksia?

We recognise that some customers may have been affected by the Banksia Financial Group collapse in November. If you are facing financial hardship as a result of the collapse, please contact the Supervisor Debt Management at G-MW on (03) 5826 3531.

## Tariff Review update

Following customer feedback sessions in September relating to the DRAFT Tariff Strategy, G-MW recently presented a range of data and modelling to the Tariff Strategy Advisory Group (TSAG) whose membership consists of WSC chairs.

The principles of the tariff strategy are to;

- Encourage agricultural production
- Tariffs are simple, clear and transparent to understand and manage
- Tariffs are equitable
- Send clear signals on the real costs of services
- Provide predictability
- Generate sufficient revenue
- Encourage efficient water markets

The approach adopted by G-MW has been to focus on particular areas of the Gravity Irrigation tariff with parallel work commencing on tariffs associated with Diversions (Surface and Groundwater), Drainage, Water Works and Pumped District Tariffs.

The modelling and data presented to TSAG members was focussed on the following Gravity Irrigation tariff aspects;

- **Bulk Water** – No change to current tariff is now proposed
- **Service Point Fees** – A recommendation has been provided to the board and

G-MW will engage with customers before and decisions are made. Any increase in Service Point Fees will be accompanied by an appropriate implementation plan.

- **Delivery Charges (Infrastructure Access and Infrastructure Use Fees)** – Modelling indicates that simplifying our tariff across the board does not negatively impact a particular irrigation area and provides increased opportunity to achieve G-MW's productivity targets. It is further proposed to retain a mix of Fixed and Variable tariff components.
- **Delivery Shares and Annual Delivery Allowance** – The advisory group reviewed data in relation to the point at which Casual Infrastructure Use Fees become applicable. Data showing an Annual Delivery Allowance of 150 times Delivery Share and 270 times Delivery Share was presented.

The advisory group discussed the importance of appropriate implementation plans if there was to be changes to the tariff into the future. G-MW, in conjunction with local WSC's, is in the process of developing implementation plans to support final recommendations. It is intended that early next year, G-MW will release the Final DRAFT Tariff strategy for customers to review before the strategy is adopted.

## Shepparton Irrigation Region Drainage Initiatives

While wetter conditions is great for the irrigation industry; the Murray Valley, Shepparton, Central Goulburn and Rochester areas, rising watertable levels flag the need to re-focus on drainage.

Implementation of drainage programs in these areas slowed significantly during the drought and G-MW is working in partnership with the Goulbourn Broken Catchment Management Authority to revitalise drainage activities. The good news is that modernisation and redevelopment of irrigation in the region will reduce risks associated with irrigation, however appropriate drainage will be required to ensure irrigation is sustainable.

It is recognised that future drainage management will need to be adaptive and cost effective to mitigate irrigation risks and key initiatives are:

- Rationalisation of surface and groundwater monitoring resulting in reduced cost whilst focusing on key indicators.

- Adaptive management of G-MW's groundwater control pumps by implementing a 4 stage "state of readiness" approach based on watertable levels.
- Review of management arrangements for shallow groundwater pumping for irrigation aimed at reducing complexity and cost.
- Incorporation of drainage as a key aspect of G-MW's Connections Program planning.
- Review of drainage charges as part of G-MW's tariff review with the aim of ensuring promotion of productive agriculture.

For more information please contact James Burkitt, Manager Salinity at G-MW on (03) 5826 3553.

# G-MW Connections Project Update

The G-MW Connections Project will invest \$2 billion to connect customers' irrigation businesses in the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District (GMID) to the backbone channel so they benefit from improved services and a more efficient and automated channel network. The Connections Project will also remove channels that are no longer required which means many customers can adopt simpler farm layouts and G-MW can minimise the costs of operating and maintaining the channel network.

From 1 July 2012 NVIRP merged into G-MW and is now known as the G-MW Connections Project. We reviewed the roll out of the project and improved project planning and customer engagement processes. Many of the changes reflect what we have learned over the past five years as NVIRP delivered channel works and more than 500 individual connection agreements.

## Backbone modernisation almost complete

Over the past 6 months the G-MW Connections Project has continued modernising the channel backbone and installing automated backbone meters. During the 2013 winter program, the Project installed 70 regulating flume gates at 60 sites, and remediated a further 20km of backbone channel. Since August, another 200 meters have been installed along the backbone.

Next winter, a further 45 regulators will be installed at 30 sites and 20 kilometres of channel will be remediated. A very small amount of channel automation will continue though to 2018 as District and Strategic Connection Area Plans are finalised – this may include automation of backbone extensions and the installation of meters to support landowners' connections to the backbone.

## Strategic Connections Area Plans underway

In November we began developing Strategic Connections Area Plans for the first five of 180 Strategic Connection Plan areas (SCPAs). The 180 areas include more than 6,000 properties that are not currently connected to the backbone channel network. We aim to have commenced this process for all 180 areas by March 2014.

Each Strategic Connections Area Plan will detail future water delivery arrangements for each property in the area.

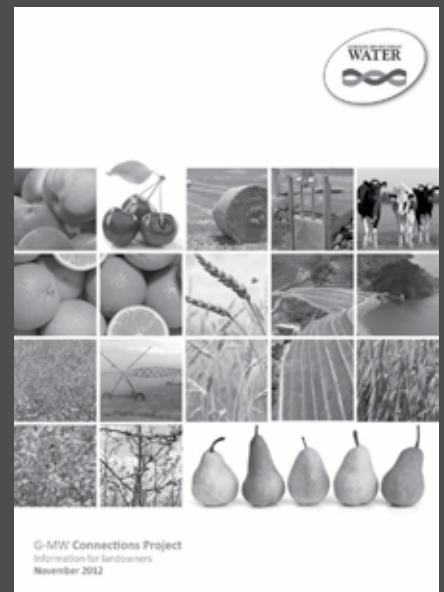
## New Landowner Booklet explains Connections processes

GMID landowners will share in the majority of the G-MW Connections Project's funding through grants to landowners or groups of landowners to adjust farm layouts, relocate their enterprise, reduce or exit irrigation or work with their neighbours to develop shared supply infrastructure. The grants will fund reasonable, actual costs of works.

We will develop future water supply arrangements in accordance with Part 7A of the *Victorian Water Act 1989* which describes the process for developing Reconfiguration Plans. Our goal is to achieve reconfiguration through voluntary connection agreements, however the Act also allows for non-voluntary reconfiguration. We anticipate we may need to use these non-voluntary powers in a small number of cases to achieve a solution that meets the needs of the majority of landowners and if reasonable consultation and engagement fails to achieve a voluntary agreement.

To assist customers understand this process and grants that may be available to them we have revised the landowner information booklet. Copies of the booklet are provided to landowners as the Connections process begins for their SCPA.

For more information on the G-MW Connections Project please call 1300 163 006 or visit [www.g-mwater.com.au/connections](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/connections)



## Environmental Flows

Orders placed with G-MW for environmental flows to be released from our storages can affect river heights which may impact on some diversion pump installations. If your pump is located below the minor flood level you may need to relocate your pump to continue irrigating during these periods.

If you would like information detailing water releases that are not for irrigation delivery purposes taking place from our storages, please visit [www.g-mwater.com.au/managing-water-storages](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/managing-water-storages). The information is updated daily when releases are occurring above normal operating requirements.

For more information on environmental flows please contact your local Catchment Management Authority (CMA):

**Goulburn Broken CMA** (Goulburn River)  
03 5820 1100  
**North Central CMA** (Campaspe & Loddon Rivers)  
03 5448 7124

## Domestic & Stock Dams

Please remember that you must apply to register all new dams and/or prior to undertaking alterations to existing dams on properties less than 8ha and/or are in a rural residential zone. You may also

be required to make an application for a works license if the storage is located on a waterway.

## Are you intending to do maintenance works on your property?

If you are intending on doing maintenance works on your property please take care around G-MW assets. Any cost associated with a damaged asset that could have been avoided will incur a cost to the customer.

## Leak Repairs

A significant number of leak repairs have been undertaken to date this season. We would like to thank customers who have contacted G-MW to report bank and outlet leaks. We currently have excavators working full-time repairing leaks and utilise external contractors to assist with peak workloads. Several customers have raised concerns over response times for leak repairs this season and as a result we have recently made alterations to mandatory Occupational Health and Safety processes which will assist in improving response times for leak repairs.

If you discover a leak please:

- Mark it with a stick or post if possible so it can be easily found for repairs.
- Report the issue to your System Operator

via WaterLINE or at your local G-MW Customer Service Centre.

- If possible, provide a clear description of the position of the leak to your System Operator to make the repair as quick and easy as possible (if you have any advice on how to access the location of the leak or damage please provide a description as well).
- If you are aware of any underground services nearby, please advise your System Operator or your local G-MW Customer Service Centre, as a Dial Before You Dig must be completed before any repair work can commence.

If you have any concerns or for more information please contact your local G-MW Customer Service Centre.

## Managing Use within Entitlement

G-MW reminds all customers that all use must be managed within license entitlement or allocation. If temporary transfer of entitlement is available in your area, you must ensure a transfer is approved by G-MW before any use additional to your license entitlement volume occurs.

It is important for groundwater customers not

to assume use in excess of your licensed entitlement can be included as a Domestic and Stock allowance. Customers should contact their local Diversion Inspector who will provide advice as to the calculation of a reasonable domestic and stock allowance. Customers who use in excess of their entitlement face the risk of prosecution for breaching licence conditions or possible cancellation of their licence.

## Rostered Restrictions

G-MW monitors stream flows to assess water availability for all users including the environment. Water use restrictions are implemented when stream flows fall below levels that cannot support user demand and a healthy environment. Restrictions are put in place in accordance with catchment-based Local Management Rules.

G-MW will give customers as much notice as possible that restrictions will apply or change.

Individuals stream flows can change rapidly so it is not always possible to provide a lot of advanced notice. All customers (except Domestic and Stock customers) will receive written notice and a copy of the roster by mail. You are advised that allocated times must be adhered to.

For more information please contact your local Customer Service Centre.

## New framework for managing groundwater

The Victorian Government in conjunction with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, rural water corporations, groundwater users, local government and catchment management authorities have developed a new framework for managing the State's groundwater resources.

The new Groundwater Management Framework enables the planning, management and reporting of this valuable resource to be consistent for all users and will cover all aquifers across the state.

Groundwater users now have access to an online tool that shows them the extent of the resource they might tap into. This will help when making decisions on whether to drill for groundwater or not. The tool also allows users to zoom to any point in Victoria and get a report on depth and salinity of water bearing layers. It also identifies management and contact details should a landowner want to pursue drilling a water bore.

For information on the Groundwater Management Framework visit [www.water.vic.gov.au/environment/groundwater](http://www.water.vic.gov.au/environment/groundwater)

## Groundwater Update

Groundwater levels across G-MW have recovered strongly over the past two years. This recovery has allowed higher seasonal allocations to be announced across some management areas and has allowed G-MW to focus on preparing or reviewing management plans in areas where groundwater is intensively developed or where there is potential for resource development. Groundwater level hydrographs from across G-MW can be found at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)

## Local Management Rules

Coming into the summer season with flows in unregulated surface water catchments decreasing, G-MW are implementing Local Management Rules (LMRs). LMRs contain specific objectives for managing flows in a defined unregulated surface water catchment and particular rules that are applied by G-MW to achieve these objectives. LMRs describe arrangements such as restriction triggers, passing environmental flow arrangements and trading zones. G-MW actively manages 93 separate unregulated surface water catchments across our region. To find out more about LMRs which apply to your catchment visit our website at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)

## Groundwater & Diversion Licence renewals for 2013

During January 2013 G-MW will be contacting groundwater and surface water diversions customers with licences due to expire on 30 June 2013. Customers are required to apply to renew their licences before the expiry date, so the renewal process will commence in early 2013.

If your licence is due to expire in 2013, you will receive a licence renewal kit during January which must be returned by March 2013 along with the application fee of \$795.00. If you would like more information please visit [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au) or contact the Licensing Administration team on (03) 5826 3247.

## Torrumbarry WSC Chair message

The Torrumbarry Water Services Committee (WSC) has continued to develop in 2012 welcoming Grant Davies from Fish Point to the group. Grant has a high profile in the dairy industry as well as a firm grasp on local issues and will be an excellent asset.

The recent changes to the carryover rules have caused plenty of debate amongst irrigators and I would encourage you all to take the time to get a better understanding of the impact that these changes may have on your business.

Locally we have seen large irrigation flows throughout the spring period with peak demand at times. Now, with 100% allocation on the Murray system there are some great opportunities to take advantage of this water for productive use. Many customers currently have water in their Spillable Water Account and depending on when a declaration is made this will add to water available for use over the remainder of the season.

The G-MW connections team have been busy rolling out the second Stage of modernisation, connecting irrigators to the Backbone. I would suggest that you should be talking to your neighbours regularly about the future so that you are well prepared for when the connections team visit. Some very 'hard-hitting' decisions are going to be made in the future so please be organised.

There are currently three major water savings projects being investigated in the Torrumbarry Irrigation Area. They are the Gunbower Lagoons Project, Kerang Lakes Bypass Project and the Swan Hill Modernisation Project. Community members need to be aware that these projects exist and take the opportunity to become involved in discussions with G-MW staff as they progress.

For the Pumped Districts, in October G-MW released a report conducted by Halcrow Pty Ltd which reviewed current expenditure levels in Woorinen to determine if they were prudent and efficient. The WSC has reviewed this document and recognises the current expenditure levels are consistent with the service provided, however I also acknowledge that customer concerns date back to the construction of the Woorinen pipeline.

G-MW has also recently announced the availability of a new SMS service for Pumped District customers. This service will allow customers to register their details with G-MW to receive a text message if there is an interruption to supply due to a pipeline break or something similar. This is an 'opt in' service so please register if you would like to be notified.

In October G-MW released Water Plan 3 which outlines the services and revenue requirement for the 2013/14 – 2015/16 period. The increased revenue requirement for next season is CPI+1.75% for Gravity Irrigation Area customers and CPI + 1.5% for Pumped District customers. G-MW have committed to a \$6m productivity saving over the Water Plan 3 period.

In August G-MW released a DRAFT tariff strategy document. As chair of the WSC I have been involved recently in an update from G-MW who have been incorporating customer feedback and undertaking a range of modelling, focussing on Gravity Irrigation areas initially with Pumped Districts to follow later in the review process. I have been advised that G-MW will be in a position to further engage with customers early in the new year regarding tariff.

There have been many changes within the water industry in the past, as there will be in the future. This said, I would like to congratulate all customers for their persistence and patience in managing through these ever changing times. Thanks must also go to G-MW staff for their ongoing commitment to customer service, and to my fellow Water Service Committee members for their enthusiasm and capacity to confront all these changes in a productive manner. Remember that if you are unsure or need clarification about anything related to irrigation issues then please contact the Kerang Customer Service Centre on (03) 5450 5300.

On behalf of the Torrumbarry WSC I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Charlie Gillingham

## Torrumbarry WSC contact details:

Charlie Gillingham (Chair)  
0457 719 874

Andrew Leahy (Deputy Chair)  
0408 500 875

Margot Henty  
0427 506 604

Ross Gordon  
0427 562 169

Brian Boulton  
0428 302 244

Guy Duncan  
0437 092 144

Craig Feuerherdt  
0438 050 074

Paul Bethune  
0439 508 757

Grant Davies  
0427 372 718

## Victorian Mid-Murray Storages

As part of our operations within Torrumbarry we also regulate the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages (VMMS) on advice from the Northern Victorian Resource Manager. The VMMS includes Kow Swamp, Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Lake Boga. Currently the four storages are at or near Full Supply Level with the intent to draw these down towards the end of the irrigation season. Diversion from Lake Boga is likely to occur in the early stages of the New Year (approx February) subject to the completion of the Temporary pump station. This will be the first year water is extracted from Lake Boga to fulfil its role in the VMMS. The intent is that water will then be replenished into the VMMS in the Winter/Spring as surplus flows in the river system become available. For more information on the VMMS please visit [www.vmms.com.au](http://www.vmms.com.au)

## Natural Carriers Rebate

Following the commencement of the Natural Carriers Rebate Review earlier this year, all Torrumbarry customers were provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the current rationale for a rebate.

To further inform the review and provide feedback to the WSC, a Natural Carriers Rebate Review Working Group was established as a sub-committee to the Torrumbarry WSC and was supported by G-MW staff and facilitated by an independent consultant. The working group met on three occasions, and provided the WSC with feedback on a range of options specific to the future management of the Natural Carriers Rebate.

The key advice provided by the Working Group to the WSC included;

- Supporting evidence to indicate that there is a difference in the maintenance

costs associated with Natural Carriers as opposed to channels.

- Feedback on a range of options as to how this cost differential could be better reflected through tariff mechanisms into the future as opposed to being a rebate.
- General agreement that the current method of providing the 'rebate' is not preferred, however the status quo should remain until outcomes from G-MW's tariff review are known.

The WSC endorsed a proposal from the Working Group and recommended to the G-MW Board that as part of the current tariff review process, consideration should be given to adopting a differential Service Point Fee for pumped customers. The intent is to recognise the difference in costs associated with the supply point infrastructure through tariff. If this proposal is accepted as part of the tariff review it would eliminate the need for the individual agreements that currently exist.

## G-MW Connections Project

### Kerang Lakes and Gunbower Lagoons

The Torrumbarry Irrigation Area's water delivery network includes more than 300 kilometres of natural carriers. The Connections Project is investigating options that may improve the health of some of these natural lagoons, lakes and waterways and also deliver better services to local irrigation customers, including Gunbower Lagoons and selected lakes in the Kerang Lakes system.

These projects require approval by the Victorian and Federal Governments before they can proceed, and the approvals require G-MW to provide substantial information about the social, environmental and economic impacts of any changes. Over recent months G-MW has begun processes to capture this information through a range of studies and community and customer engagement.

For more information on the G-MW Connections Project please call 1300 163 006 or visit [www.g-mwater.com.au/connections](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/connections)

## Woorinen Update

### Independent Report

Earlier this year G-MW engaged Halcrow Pty Ltd to conduct an assessment of the expenditure in Woorinen to determine if current and proposed levels were prudent and efficient.

In summary the report indicated that;

- G-MW historical and proposed capital and operational expenditure is deemed generally to be prudent and efficient.
- That G-MW has under recovered its revenue requirement in relation to Water Plan 2
- G-MW's Water Plan 3 revenue requirement for Woorinen is consistent with the original determination and G-MW absorbing the impact of the new entrants that did not join.

For a copy of the full report please contact the

Kerang Customer Service Centre on (03) 5450 5300.

## Connections

Following feedback from the 2011 customer meetings, the opportunity to connect neighbouring properties to the Woorinen pipeline as part of the G-MW connections program is being further investigated. This involves discussions with customers who are currently serviced by the channel system on the fringe of the Woorinen District to determine their interest in connecting to the pipeline. The benefits of attracting existing irrigators onto the Woorinen pipeline is improved service levels for the customers moving to Woorinen and greater utilisation of the pipeline scheme. Discussions are continuing and early signs are positive however the exact number of irrigators and Domestic and Stock customers that may transfer is yet to be finalised.

The following Capital works projects have recently been completed in the Central Murray Operations Area;

- **Rock Armouring** – No 1 Channel at Leitchville completed end of October
- **Rock Armouring** – No 5 Channel at Myall, completed November
- **Rock Armouring** – No 7 Channel at Tresco, completed end of September
- **Rock Armouring** – 15/1 Channel u/s of Coopers Rd, Cohuna
- **Bank Re-Model** – No 4 Channel at Koondrook, completed end of September
- **Bank Re-Model** – 15/1 Channel d/s of Fosters Rd Cohuna, completed late October
- **Bank Re-Model** – No 3 Channel u/s of Nelson's Rd, Gannawarra, completed early August
- **Bank Re-Model** – Gunbower Creek, both at Cohuna & Gunbower, completed August
- **Bank Re-Model** – 13/9 Channel d/s of Prince Rd, Swan Hill, commenced late November

## Pumped District update - Free SMS Service

Occasionally G-MW is required to interrupt supply to complete urgent maintenance repair work on the pipelines and as a result of feedback from customers, G-MW has expanded our suite of SMS services to include notification to pipeline customers when supply is unexpectedly interrupted.

To access this free service, customers need to 'opt in' via G-MW's WaterLINE online system at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au). Simply select the 'User Options' tab and then select 'Communication Register', enter your mobile number in the space provided and select Pumped District – Supply Interrupt.

The information contained in the SMS alerts sent to customers will include location of the issue, area required to be isolated, estimated time before pipeline is operational.

For queries regarding this free service please contact the Kerang Customer Service Centre on (03) 5450 5300.

## ROCHESTER-CAMPASPE IRRIGATION AREA

### Rochester-Campaspe WSC Chair message

The Rochester-Campaspe WSC this year farewelled long servicing ground water representative Ken Parker. I would like to thank Ken for his contribution to groundwater management. I'm sure his knowledge will not be lost to the area. We welcomed new member Patrick Rochford to the committee and I look forward to a long association with Patrick.

What's been happening: As chair along with other WSC chairs I've been involved in Tariff Review process. The chairs together with G-MW Managing Director, Gavin Hanlon, have met on regular basis to design a tariff structure that is a fit for the modernised irrigation system and will promote productive agriculture. In late August we had a Rochester District Customer meeting which was very well attended to present our thoughts in more detail. Your feedback was captured and we hope to be back out to you with a more detailed position early in the New Year.

I have also been involved in the Carryover Review Committee. Recommendations were provided to the Minister for Water and he has now announced changes to the carryover rules as a result. For any assistance regarding carryover rules I urge you contact the Rochester Customer Service Centre on (03) 5484 7400.

The Connections program will shortly ramp

up. The Rochester area has 22 Strategic Connections projects which vary in size from 7 landowners to 57. A modernisation Coordinator will be in touch shortly to advise affected customers.

Season 2012/13 has seen the commencement of a number of irrigation syndicates in the decommissioned Campaspe Irrigation District. It has been an eventful two years in assisting these groups to get back into Irrigation as Rochester Customers. We wish them well.

Water Plan 3 has been released to the ESC for their consideration. Water Plans determines Pricing and Revenue requirements for the 2013/14 -2015/16 period. The plan recommends an increased revenue requirement of CPI + 1.75% for Rochester Customers. To achieve this G-MW have also committed to achieving a \$6 million efficiency saving over that period.

On a final note your WSC will continue to monitor developments in the MDBA plan and make recommendations for the best outcomes in the Rochester Irrigation District.

On behalf of the Rochester-Campaspe WSC I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Richard Anderson

### Rochester-Campaspe WSC contact details:

Richard Anderson (Chair)  
0428 832 210

Bruce Macague (Deputy Chair)  
0429 833 801

Ron Brooks  
03 5482 1548

Peter Gibson  
0438 354 319

John Hewlett  
0428 691 337

Mark Hill  
0408 577 848

Bill McMinn  
0429 832 225

Eril Rathjen  
0488 329 266

Patrick Rochford  
03 5488 2294

### Rochester-Campaspe Capital Works

The Rochester Capital Improvement Plan will see \$1.6 million worth of works undertaken in Rochester Area over the 12/13 Irrigation season. These works include a bridge replacement over the Waranga Western Channel and number of culvert and subway replacements.

### Delivery Update

Deliveries as at 1 December for Rochester are 15.4% higher than same time last year and 68,002 ML of water has been delivered to the area.



### LODDON VALLEY IRRIGATION AREA

## Loddon Valley WSC Chair message

Over the year, we have been working with G-MW on a number of issues and projects.

Our Committee has been represented on the Carryover Review Committee. This group has met on several occasions to discuss a range of issues in regard to the current effectiveness of Carryover and provided a number of recommendations to the Minister for Water for consideration.

As you will be aware G-MW is in the process of completing a Strategic Tariff Review. G-MW has reviewed the feedback received from the public meeting held in Pyramid Hill in September. It was pleasing to see a large number of local irrigators turning out to help shape our future tariff. G-MW has provided an update on the current tariff review in this Newsletter.

Our WSC has also been working closely with G-MW in the development of service standards and Capital Programs which are included in Water Plan 3. This document sets out future revenue requirements and

is currently with the Essential Services Commission for review. The proposed increase for Gravity Irrigators of CPI+1.75% is marginally higher than the suggested CPI+1.5% however a commitment from G-MW to deliver a \$6million cost saving in the next three years will ensure that prices remain as low as possible.

G-MW has presented the future Strategic Connections process to the WSC. Customers will have now received notification of when their particular area will commence the connections process and I encourage you to get involved when your opportunity comes.

There has also been some confusion about the date that your G-MW Fixed Charges Account is due to be paid. For Loddon Valley customers, due date is 16 January 2013.

On behalf of the Loddon Valley WSC I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

John Nelson

John Nelson (Chair)  
0427 543 447

Laurie Maxted (Deputy Chair)  
0428 551 332

Chris Harrison  
03 5455 1251

Allan Mann  
03 5455 7048

Robert Moon  
0428 551 292

Brian Ralphs  
03 5436 6323

Murray Haw  
03 5455 1236

Ken Pattison  
0427 534 158

William Diss  
0427 882 393

## Loddon Valley Capital Works

Over \$2.2 million will be spent on Capital Works in the Loddon Valley over the 2012/13 Irrigation season. These works include the replacement of a number of Culverts and Subways as well as an extensive channel remodelling program.

## Delivery Update

Deliveries as at 1 December for Loddon Valley are 19.3% higher than same time last year and 68,453 ML of water has been delivered to the area.

### LODDON WATER DISTRICT

## Loddon Water District WSC Deputy Chair message

I would like to start by acknowledging the contribution made by Chris Watson as Chair of the Loddon Water Districts WSC. Chris resigned his position in June this year. Chris made a significant contribution to the area and more recently his support and commitment to the East Loddon Pipeline which will be 'handed' over to the local area for operations management shortly. We wish Chris all the best with his future endeavours.

As you will be aware, G-MW is in the process of completing a strategic Tariff Review. Although the review is primarily focusing on gravity irrigation at this stage, tariffs for the Water Districts will be looked at in the new year. I encourage you to provide your thoughts and feedback on the tariff structure

for the Loddon Water Districts by contacting your local WSC members or G-MW.

Work is currently being done on the proposed Mitiamo pipeline and we will keep you updated on any developments as the project progresses.

Finally, a vacancy exists on the WSC. If you are interested, please contact Peter Clydesdale at the Pyramid Hill Customer Service Centre on (03) 5451 6800.

Have a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Grant Malone

## Loddon Water District WSC contact details:

Grant Malone (Deputy Chair)  
0437 635 415

Garry Addlem  
0429 378 410

Margaret Brady  
03 5457 4220

Jim Chalmers  
03 5494 7373

Roger Nolan  
0419 521 000

Deidre Schlitz  
0409 022 768

Geoff Thomas  
0429 182 959

Carl Chamberlain  
0427 577 220

## Loddon Water Districts Update

The East Loddon Pipeline Project is up and running, servicing approx 107 customers with 217 tapping points. Feedback from customers has been that the pipeline is well received as it more than adequately provides them with their watering requirements.

Currently usage is around 1ML per week however that is expected to extend to 3ML per week as the weather warms up. For more information on the East Loddon Pipeline Project please call the Pyramid Hill Customer Service Centre on (03) 5451 6800.



### GROUNDWATER & SURFACE WATER

## Loddon-Campaspe Regional WSC Chair message

Dear Fellow Customer,

The current seasonal allocations of 100% and mostly full farm dams in the upper catchments are reassuring as late spring has failed to deliver reasonable rainfall. From a Loddon Diverters perspective the inability to have low-reliability allocation with full storages is frustrating and is to be addressed with DSE on completion of the carryover review.

Recently G-MW held customer meetings to discuss Water plan 3 and the Tariff Review. These meetings gave customers the opportunity to meet and question G-MW senior staff regarding issues of relevance to their particular interests. As a customer representative, the overall theme from regulated and unregulated diverters, stock &

domestic and groundwater users is that the cost of licences has become too expensive. Many of the recent price increases are partially due to G-MW meeting government regulations, particularly in areas of groundwater and unregulated diversions, this combined with recent electricity price increases and associated costs has led to a significant contraction of irrigated agriculture. We have asked G-MW Board and management to address these policy decisions with government.

On behalf of the Loddon-Campaspe Regional WSC I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Alan Rothacker

Alan Rothacker (Chair)  
0428 373 091

John McKinstry (Deputy Chair)  
0429 434 743

Garry Addlem  
0429 378 410

Andrew Maher  
0427 378 217

Russell McKay  
0447 457 239 (Business hours only)

Norm Suckling  
0413 325 324

Richard Anderson  
0428 832 210

William Connelly  
03 5424 1395

Ian Whatley  
0417 500 266

### Lower Campaspe Valley WSPA Groundwater Management Plan

The Minister for Water recently approved the Lower Campaspe Valley Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) groundwater management plan. The new plan is effective now and frees up groundwater trade, introduces carryover and puts in place rules to manage pumping intensity. It also has a

simple and straightforward method to apply restrictions which protect the environment, seeks to prevent the groundwater resource from increases in salinity and aims to provide groundwater licence holders equitable access to the resource.

### Loddon-Campaspe Catchment Update

With good allocations on the Loddon, Campaspe and Bullarook systems, the Loddon Campaspe Diversions Team have been actively completing meter maintenance and replacement programs across all systems to ensure accurate accounting of water use.

Unregulated stream flows have declined as a result of dryer conditions and restrictions have been implemented on some streams in accordance with local management rules to ensure the equitable sharing of resource.

### Central Victorian Mineral Springs Local Management Plan

G-MW is in the process of developing a local management plan in the proposed Central Victorian Mineral Springs groundwater management area. This LMP will describe how access to groundwater will be managed in the area, taking into account the unique mineral springs in the region. The LMP will aim to introduce flexible groundwater trading rules and measures which describe how existing licence holders will be protected and environmental values maintained. Community consultation has already been undertaken.

### Loddon Highlands WSPA Groundwater Management Plan

The Minister for Water recently approved the Loddon Highlands Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) Groundwater Management Plan. The submission of the draft plan to the Minister followed extensive community consultation, including a public

submission process and a final review by the consultative committee. The new plan is effective now and introduces permanent transfer of licence entitlement and carryover. A copy of the new plan will be sent to all groundwater licence holders shortly.



Loddon Falls - Central Victorian Mineral Springs

# Goulburn–Broken *Operations*

## SHEPPATON IRRIGATION AREA

### Shepparton WSC Chair message

The modernised irrigation system is showing its benefits as improved water availability has increased demands on the system this season. With many channels up to capacity it has enabled G-MW to test its capability at near capacity and it has performed well. Irrigators I have spoken to have been pleased with the extra flexibility, shorter ordering times, and higher flow rates the modernised system is providing and planning for the modernisation of Shepparton East is well underway.

As the chairman of the WSC, I was invited to participate on the Carryover Review Committee. The group met on several occasions to discuss a range of issues in regards to the current effectiveness of carryover and we provided a number of recommendations to the Minister for consideration.

As you will be aware G-MW is in the process of completing a strategic tariff review. G-MW have reviewed the feedback received from

the public meeting held in Congupna in August. It was pleasing to see 80 local irrigators turning out to help shape our future tariff. A clear message was sent to G-MW management that irrigators are finding the costs currently burdensome and do not want to see the prices increase. I continue to represent Shepparton irrigators and welcome any feedback.

Your WSC has been working closely with G-MW to develop service standards and Capital programs which are included in Water Plan 3. This document sets out future revenue requirements and is currently with the Essential Services Commission for review. A commitment from G-MW to deliver a \$6m cost saving in the next three years will ensure that prices remain as low as possible.

On behalf of the Shepparton WSC, I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Craig Reynolds

## Shepparton WSC contact details:

Craig Reynolds (Chair)  
0427 288 211

Ross Heywood (Deputy Chair)  
0419 897 269

John Horder  
03 5829 9454

Jamie Craig  
0429 801 802

Donnie Zurcas  
0459 299 077

Ian Klein  
0438 288 350

Rien Silverstein  
0407 857 757

Alan Strang  
0423 854 336

Kevin Minogue  
0427 283 278

## Shepparton Delivery Update

Demand at times has been high with some channel systems reaching capacity flows. Customers are reminded to plan their deliveries and by providing more notice may increase the likelihood of having the order delivered as requested. Deliveries as at 1 December for Shepparton are 9.0% higher than same time last year and 49,455 ML of water has been delivered to the area.

## TUNGAMAH WATER DISTRICT

### Tungamah Water District WSC Chair message

I would like to take the opportunity to thank customers for continuing to use water from the system in a responsible manner. The pipeline continues to function exceptionally well, without many problems at all.

As you may be aware G-MW is in the process of completing a tariff review. Although at this stage the review is primarily focusing on the GMID, tariffs for the Water Districts will be looked at in the near future. I encourage you

to use this opportunity to think about the future tariff structure in the Tungamah Water District. Your WSC will have input into any future tariff changes and will endeavour to keep customers informed.

I also take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Rod Squires

## Tungamah Water District WSC contact details:

Rod Squires (Chair)  
03 5764 4342

Dorothy Down (Deputy Chair)  
03 5828 5206

Neville Ludeman  
03 5743 1595

Geoff Mills  
03 5748 5594

Laurie Whinray  
0409 408 299

Bill O'Connor  
03 5833 9294

## Tungamah Water Districts update

### Storage Tanks

All pipeline customers are reminded that as part of their agreement they are required to have four days supply stored in a water tank on their property to ensure service standards

are maintained. If you do not have adequate storage or have any questions relating to the agreement please contact your local G-MW office to discuss options that may be available to you.

### CENTRAL GOULBURN IRRIGATION AREA

## Central Goulburn WSC Chair message

My first term as Chair of the Central Goulburn irrigation area has been a steep learning curve along with a fairly busy agenda.

There have been many Carryover Review committee meetings to attend in Melbourne along with other chairs from as far afield as the Sunraysia and senior policy makers from the Department of Sustainability and Environment. After being provided with recommendations from the committee, the Minister has announced changes to the carryover rules and they have caused plenty of debate amongst irrigators. I encourage you to take the time to get a better understanding of the impact that these changes may have on your business.

Water Plan 3 and the tariff review continue to chug away and I have been regularly consulted in regard to my thoughts on the proposals. While I personally disagree with the direction of some of the tariff proposals and have argued so on behalf of Central Goulburn irrigators, I remain respectful of the fact that there are conflicting views across the Tariff Strategy Advisory Group.

The customer information session at the Merrigum Football clubrooms was well attended with late arrivals being forced to stand. It was great to see so many people

getting involved. Some of the passion that came out in the comments really got the message home of what irrigators think of the current situation and possible future scenarios.

There continues to be uncertainty around the MDBA Basin Plan with the Central Goulburn Irrigation Area expecting to lose a third of its water entitlement and 400-500 delivery shares in the second stage of modernisation.

Your WSC is here to provide a pathway of communication between the irrigator/customer and G-MW. I am convinced that the current Minister for Water and G-MW management are committed to consulting with irrigators and I urge everyone to attend any public meetings, stay involved and have your say. Our committee currently has a vacancy. If you believe you have something constructive to give, please consider joining your WSC. You will always have more input when you are involved in the process.

On behalf of the Central Goulburn WSC I would like to wish customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Peter Hacon

### Access around pipeline

As part of your on farm safety and to reduce fire hazards, please clear grass and debris from around your domestic and stock meters. This will assist G-MW staff with maintenance and meter readings and ensure you can also access these sites in a safe manner. Care needs to be taken when burning off as many meters, filters and valves can be damaged by fire.

### Works around pipeline

A reminder to customers who are undertaking works in the vicinity of G-MW assets to ensure that they adequately locate the asset/s to ensure it is not damaged in any way. **Please remember to contact G-MW before you dig when excavating or driving fence posts in the vicinity of the Tungamah pipeline.** Costs associated with repairs to G-MW assets resulting from private works will be recovered from the individual. For more information on asset locations prior to undertaking works please contact the Shepparton Customer Service Centre on (03) 5822 7900.

## Automated Outlets

Customers wishing to understand how to read or understand the operation of their automated outlet are encouraged to contact the Tatura or Shepparton Customer Service Centres to arrange for a Water Services Officer to visit. Customers with Automated Outlets have

the ability to make a number of alterations to their order without contacting System Operators. For more information speak to your System Operator or contact your local G-MW Customer Service Centre.

## Capital Works Update

The Goulburn-Broken Operations Area has nearly finished the Capital Works program for this year. Some of the projects completed were:

- Bank remodelling at Tallygaroopna, Bunbartha, Murchison and Ardmona
- Replaced bridges at Murchison and Tallygaroopna
- Installed a number of new FlumeGates in channels
- Undertaken AMP works at Tatura and Tallygaroopna with more works planned during the season

## Central Goulburn Delivery Update

Deliveries as at 1 December for Central Goulburn are 11.5% higher than same time last year and 132,491 ML of water has been delivered to the area.

## Central Goulburn WSC contact details:

Peter Hacon (Chair)  
0427 596 278

Ross Read (Deputy Chair)  
0428 243 426

Ross Crawford  
0408 523 108

Ray Sellwood  
0428 559 320

Murray McDonald  
0417 370 767

Douglas Costello  
0408 335 780

Peter Costello  
0437 741 929

Jennifer Savage  
0418 381 318

### GROUNDWATER & SURFACE WATER DIVERTERS

## Goulburn-Broken Regional WSC Chair message

Another irrigation year is with us, and for the first time in many years at the start of November we had 100% allocations and full reservoirs. Maybe this will help us leave 10 years of dry conditions behind.

There have been many changes to G-MW's management and Board over the last 12-18 months. The 'take it or leave it' mentality has disappeared and a more consultative and communicative method has appeared. Once again, customers, through WSCs are able to put forward their views for consideration. This action is turning the clock back to what the committees were originally set up to do, communication and consultation. A good example of this was the time taken to reach a consensus on the issues of reliability, trading rules and carryover in the Broken Valley.

At present, the committees are working with

management on the next Water Plan and tariffs – it is not easy, but once again the consultative approach will certainly get us all the best results.

I would like to thank the diversion staff for the assistance that they have given to us during the past year, communication and consultation is at its best.

If you have any suggestions that can help to improve the system, then please let us know, your committee would be only too pleased to approach G-MW with more ideas.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year, and, above all, a safe one.

Morris Brown

Morris Brown (Chair)  
0428 673 227

Wayne Spinks (Deputy Chair)  
0418 557 679

Mark Foletta  
0438 682 382

David Scott  
0437 212 494

Craig Madden  
0407 576 804

Sandy MacKenzie  
0477 552 426

## Strathbogie and Upper Goulburn Local Management Plans update

G-MW is developing Local Management Plans (LMP) for the new Strathbogie and Upper Goulburn groundwater management areas. These LMPs will contain groundwater management arrangements for each area, will seek to give greater clarity to water users and will include groundwater trading rules, appropriate limits on entitlement and describe how environmental values are recognised. The draft LMPs will be available for community consultation early in 2013.

## Broken System Trading and Allocation Review

Through the Goulburn-Broken Regional WSC, G-MW has sought customer feedback on 12 recommendations contained in a discussion paper dealing with trading and allocation rules in the Broken system. The RWSC also sought responses to four questions about the future operation of the Broken system. The discussion paper, which was an action of the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy, examined opening the Broken system to external water trading of allocation and water shares, changing carryover to a maximum of 50% HRWS only and retaining the 100% allocation rule,

foregoing a system reserve policy and making advance allocation available. All water share holders in the Broken system were invited to comment on the recommendations and RWSC questions, and 28 responses were received by the close of the consultation period on 9 November. The majority of responses were positive and supported the recommendations and questions. The results of the consultation will be forwarded to the Department of Sustainability and Environment for consideration and enactment, with the majority of recommendations planned to be implemented by 1 July 2013.

## Goulburn Broken Catchment Update

The Goulburn-Broken Diversions Team has been focussed on ensuring customers are aware of their obligations to order water and obey their licensing conditions. While on site visits, Diversion Inspectors can demonstrate to customers how to order water online, create live usage statements and also access licence conditions and property details.

Significant time has been spent surveying regulated and unregulated streams to determine any unauthorised extraction, illegal works and to ensure licences are reflecting any works installed.

G-MW have also been focused on meeting our obligations under the National Metering Standards which require a specific number of meters to be serviced annually to ensure

accuracy and maintain correct operation. Unregulated stream flows have declined as a result of dryer conditions and restrictions are being implemented on some streams in accordance with local management rules to ensure the equitable sharing of resource. The period for harvesting water under 'winter-fill' licensing conditions ceased on October 31 and all meters have been read to ensure compliance. These conditions stipulate that all inflows must be passed downstream of the storage between November 1 to June 30.

If you require additional information or would like to discuss your individual requirements and licence conditions please contact your local Diversion Inspector or the Shepparton Customer Service Centre on (03) 5822 7900.



# Murray North–East Operations

G–MW Newsletter December 2012

## MURRAY VALLEY IRRIGATION AREA

### Murray Valley WSC Chair message

Once the Melbourne Cup passes, popular thinking seems to focus on the Christmas break and happy times. For irrigators the timing is not perfect for a 'break' but having water helps confidence.

In the June 2012 Chair's message, Jim McKeown mentioned the work your WSC had done in providing comment for the MDBA Plan. Regrettably we have no evidence of our ideas shaping the Plan.

Water Plan 3, the G-MW blueprint for the period July 2013 to 2016 was foreshadowed. Some 80 interested irrigators attended the Cobram meeting to hear about the Plan. Your WSC will be engaged in further talks. Hot topics include the balance of fixed and variable charges, doing away with district charges that reflect actual costs and returning to an approach that averages costs across the GMID.

Your WSC currently argues for costs being determined for each district, i.e. not socialised. We see this as important for signalling those areas where it costs less to deliver irrigators' water. Are we on the right track? Please talk to your WSC representatives so we can build your thoughts into our thinking. There may even be demand for another irrigator meeting.

Modernisation has changed since June and has integrated in to G-MW under the G-MW Connections Project. This has seen the Modernisation Consultative Committee for Murray Valley disbanded and your WSC being handed the additional task of modernisation issues. We are finding our way with this task. So far it has not moved beyond G-MW telling us what is happening. We need to do much more but it is dependent largely on what we hear from irrigators. We need to hear from Strategic Connection Plan groups which put irrigators into sub-districts of 30 or so farms.

The WSC has been strong in voicing concerns regarding the measurement of water coming into the district from Lake Mulwala, please see the District off take measurement article for more information.

Your WSC considers our area is 'the place to be irrigating' within the G-MW vision of competitive and productive farming. Your ideas can help shape the WSC view so please make contact or perhaps invite WSC representatives to your local Strategic Connection Plan meetings.

Christmas greetings to all irrigators.

Barry Croke

### Murray Valley WSC contact details:

Barry Croke (Chair)  
0488 058 231

Jim McKeown (Deputy Chair)  
0427 845 805

Jason Andrew  
0412 690 982

Max Baker  
0429 099 559

Damien Carpenter  
0477 145 332

Alan Hendy  
0428 178 682

Ben McCracken  
0429 100 266

Paul Mundy  
0427 735 335

### Delivery Update

Deliveries as at 1 December for Murray Valley are 9.8% higher than same time last year and 101,542 ML of water has been delivered to the area. Water use has been relatively high for the first time in a number of seasons. Many channels ran at, or very near to, capacity in September and there were isolated spots where supply was delayed but customers needs were met. We thank you for your cooperation during this high demand period. During a rainfall event, customers are reminded that they should contact their System Operator via WaterLINE prior to closing their outlet. Customers may be asked to continue taking water for a short time to allow for the channel system to be made safe.

### District off take measurement

The WSC has been strong in voicing concerns (on your behalf) regarding the measurement of water coming into the district from Lake Mulwala. Volumes entering the district have been measured at a structure known as the Eight Mile Knife Edge (situated on the Yarrawonga Main Channel eight miles downstream of the offtake). This structure must be removed and replaced with automated gates to allow the channel system to operate in full automation and a new ultrasonic measuring device has been installed close to the offtake in Yarrawonga. The initial concerns arising from discrepancies between the two measuring points have now been thoroughly investigated and the WSC are satisfied that the new measuring device is delivering very similar results to the knife

edge. The connections team will now proceed with the construction of a new automated regulator to replace the knife edge structure during winter 2013. Once the new structure is in place, full automation of the Murray Valley channel system can be gradually introduced and should result in a more responsive and reliable service for all customers while reducing water losses.



Eight Mile Knife Edge

# Murray North–East *Operations*

## Flood Recovery

The Shire of Moira is leading the recovery efforts after the floods we experienced in February/March. G-MW are assisting to review what occurred during these floods and what can be improved into the future. G-MW

has updated our internal flood procedure manual to reflect the experiences of the floods, and ensured test and inspection procedures are in place for all structures that are used only in flood times.

## GROUNDWATER & SURFACE WATER DIVERTERS

## Ovens, King & Mid Murray RWSC Chair message

Spring has been cut short with the lack of rain in October. Lake William Hovell and Lake Buffalo where we still have access to spillage water, those who are thinking of irrigating should make use of this spill water. You should place an order for spillage water as this notifies G-MW of your intended water use, they can then arrange for your meter to be read at the end of spillage use, which allows you full access to your high-reliability water.

Our water accounts are becoming more expensive, and through my role on the Tariff Strategy Working Group, I have been working very hard to convince G-MW not to increase water prices.

It has been very encouraging to see that G-MW are listening to our views. They realise that they need us as irrigators, they need to encourage and promote agricultural production and keep costs at a minimum. G-MW are

trying to make processes more transparent and make it easier to transfer high and low-reliability water.

G-MW management have indicated that they will be visiting our region to understand our irrigation system and needs.

I have put forward that we change our name from irrigators to 'Productive food and fibre growers that use water efficiently' to help promote our important role and create a better understanding that farmers don't waste water, they use it as efficiently as they can to grow food to feed the population. Please let me know your thoughts on this proposal.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and health and happiness for 2013.

Regards  
Malcolm Carson

## Kiewa, Mitta Mitta & Upper Murray RWSC Chair message

As most of you should be aware by now, the Chairs of the WSCs are participating with G-MW management in a review of tariff for all areas across G-MW. This review involves every activity that G-MW performs across the Gravity irrigation areas, Regulated/Unregulated diversions, Ground water, Farm dams both licensed, and registered, Stock and Domestic, Commercial, and Non consumptive use, such as Fish farms and Micro Hydro.

Whilst the early stages of the review are concentrating on the gravity areas, we need to consider a number of issues relevant to how our tariff should be costed, who should pay and that a customer should know exactly what they are paying for!

Some of the considerations during this review are; what level of service do I (you) as a customer require, can there be a saving if customers read and enter their own meter readings, would unbundling unregulated water

give me a cost saving in the long run and be beneficial to all customers, should the tariff be different for sleeper and dozer licence holders.

We need to consider whether there is an opportunity to have a water bank and how it will work, who should pay for resource management, the cost to annually review licences and look at the cost and sometimes difficult process to trade water.

This review process will take a further six months, and you will have the very real opportunity as a G-MW customer to have a meaningful say. So next year, be ready to have an input into the process.

I hope this irrigation season delivers a good profit and have a Happy Christmas, and a safe New Year.

Regards  
Peter Serpell

## 30 Tonne Load Limit on Campbell Road Bridge

A 30 tonne load limit has been applied to the bridge over the Number 2 Main Channel on Campbell Road, 800 metres north of Parnell Road, south of Cobram. A recent inspection of the bridge indicated significant rust damage to the sub-frame, and while the bridge is safe for lighter vehicles, the limit will be applied to avoid further damage and is expected to remain in place until after the end of the current irrigation season.

## Ovens, King & Mid Murray RWSC contact details:

Malcolm Carson (Chair)  
0428 591 657

Peter Antonello  
0417 344 619

Rodger Broderick  
0427 503 504

Sid Dalbosco  
0427 575 622

Brian Keenan  
0428 443 811

Alister Laidlaw  
0458 990 589

Malcolm Lumby  
0427 745 262

Tim McNeil  
0427 570 215

Raymond Park  
0419 381 535

## Kiewa, Mitta Mitta & Upper Murray RWSC contact details:

Peter Serpell (Chair)  
0428 289 356

Jason Reid (Deputy)  
0419 424 260

Donald Crosthwaite  
02 6028 9268

Alister Laidlaw  
0458 990 589

Ronald McCormick  
0418 281 743

Gordon Nicholas  
0458 760 512

Steve Rigoni  
0418 436 993

Mac Paton  
0417 063 304

John Paton  
0458 717 255

## Murray, Mitta, Kiewa, Ovens and King Catchment Update

Early this season, the Diversions Team focused on activities including licence renewals, applications and change of land ownerships. With the favourable seasonal conditions up to October and minimal operational requirements, G-MW has had the opportunity to focus on maintenance, meter replacements and meter surveys for future replacement.

Flows in some of the unregulated streams are reducing to the point where restrictions are being implemented as per the restriction triggers within the Local Management Rules. G-MW will formulate stream rosters that allow for equitable sharing of the diminishing resource.

## Placing water delivery orders - contact your System Operators via WaterLINE!

You can order water 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone or online (including public holidays).



Call **1300 469 469**. If our System Operators are assisting another customer, please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible.



Visit WaterLINE online at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



### Minimum notice required to order water

With considerable demand being experienced and expected to continue, give as much notice as possible on your water orders. This will help us ensure your water is delivered when and where you need it.



Customers on a fully automated system



Customers on non automated/manual system

There are three key things you need to remember to ensure you can order water:

- **Ensure you have enough water available in your Allocation Bank Account when you place an order** - If you need to transfer water to use from another Allocation Bank Account, please allow sufficient time for the transaction to be processed (min 5 working days). Water orders cannot be placed, approved, scheduled or delivered if there is not enough water in your Allocation Bank Account linked to the outlet you wish to irrigate from.
- **Check your Annual Delivery Allowance (ADA)** - In Gravity Irrigation areas your ADA is 270 times the delivery share rate and specifies the volume that you can have delivered in the irrigation season without incurring higher usage fees. If you exceed your ADA you can still irrigate,

however the water used above your ADA will be charged at a casual infrastructure use fee. The casual infrastructure use fee is significantly higher than the infrastructure use fee charged for usage within your ADA.

- **Ensure you are not on a Stop Supply** - A *Stop Supply* is put in place if you have an overdue account with G-MW. To remove a *Stop Supply*, please contact G-MW Accounts on 1300 013 357 to pay your account or to discuss a suitable payment arrangement.

You can call WaterLINE on 1300 469 469 or visit [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to confirm everything you need to know (except *Stop Supply*) before placing an order. If you need assistance in accessing WaterLINE online or over the phone, have forgotten your user number and PIN, or would like to order a new WaterLINE order book, please contact your local G-MW Customer Service Centre.

## Upper Ovens Groundwater Management Area Local Management Plan

The Upper Ovens River Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) Water Management Plan has been implemented to ensure that water resources for the Upper Ovens area are managed equitably and to ensure the long-term sustainability of those resources. Diversion Inspectors will be undertaking meter reads within the WSPA through December (as part of Prescription 44 of the Plan) and will also take the opportunity to conduct annual inspections of the meters while on site.

## Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area Local Management Plan

The Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area Local Management Plan (LMP) has been approved and is now being implemented for all groundwater users situated in the Lower Ovens, King and Buffalo River catchments. The LMP recognises the benefits that groundwater provides to regional communities and its importance during times of water shortage, while also taking into account connectivity between surface water and groundwater.

## Compliance Reminder

While G-MW acknowledges that the vast majority of customers do the right thing in terms of managing within their respective entitlements, there remains a minority that operate in breach of the Water Act and/or their licence conditions. To report any suspicious activities relating to breaches of the Water Act or any other compliance related queries, please contact your local G-MW Customer Service Centre, email [compliance@g-mwater.com.au](mailto:compliance@g-mwater.com.au) or call 1800 064 184. G-MW fully investigates every report it receives.



## Irrigator e-News update

Commencing 15 December 2012, Irrigator e-news will be issued on the 15th of each month (or next business day). This new once a month e-news will be bigger and better than before with more updates from around the business on topics that matter to you most. To subscribe to Irrigator e-news please visit our website at [www.g-mwater.com.au/subscribe](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/subscribe)

## G-MW e-services

Our expanding range of web, email and mobile phone services ensures everything you need is the click of a button away.



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



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



**Irrigation e-news:**  
Determination and Irrigation updates emailed to you once a month.



**e-Dams:** Water storage levels emailed to you daily, weekly or monthly.



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



**WaterLINE:** WaterLINE 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.

## Water Safety

With the weather warming up, it is important to remember that irrigation channels are dangerous and are not safe to swim in. Channel levels and regulator gates can change suddenly while pipes, siphons, rocks and debris can be hidden below the surface. Both dams and rivers can have hidden debris

below the surface while the current of a river can change quickly.

**Stay safe this summer, don't enter or play in irrigation channels and swim with care in our storages.**



## G-MW Contact Numbers

### G-MW Tatura

P: (03) 5826 3500  
F: (03) 5826 3501  
E: [reception@g-mwater.com.au](mailto:reception@g-mwater.com.au)  
Office Hours  
8 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. Monday to Friday

### Goulburn-Broken Operations

**Shepparton Office**  
Phone: (03) 5822 7900  
**Tatura Office**  
Phone: (03) 5826 3705

### Your Local Customer Service Centres

#### Murray North-East Operations

**Cobram Office**  
Phone: (03) 5873 3800  
**Wangaratta Office**  
Phone: (03) 5723 3200

#### Loddon-Campaspe Operations

**Rochester Office**  
Phone: (03) 5484 7400  
**Pyramid Hill Office**  
Phone: (03) 5451 6800

#### Central Murray Operations

**Kerang Office**  
Phone: (03) 5450 5300



## Christmas Opening Hours

All G-MW offices will remain open over the Christmas period except for public holidays.

You will still be able to order water through WaterLINE 24 hours a day, 7 days a week online at [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au) or by phone on 1300 469 469.

For any emergencies please call the G-MW 24hr Emergency number on 1800 064 184.