



Customer Newsletter

Murray Valley Operations Centre

November 2007

From the Water Services Committee Chairperson

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New Manager for Murray Valley

Geoff Enever is G-MW's new Manager of Murray Valley Operations. Geoff started in September, following Kevin Preece's appointment as Manager of the Central Goulburn Operational centre. Please refer to back page for more information on Geoff.



A difficult season is unfolding in front of us. Record low allocations, minimal spring rains, warm weather and now an early November rain. What can we expect next?

The Water Service Committee is working closely with G-MW to encourage as much allocation to be given as is possible. This season has seen G-MW propose a regime of allocating water up to 20% and then extending the season until the 15th April. Inflows past this will be split equally to increasing the allocation and extending the season towards the 15th May. While this may not suit all customers, it is a consistent approach that will allow all stakeholders to plan with some certainty. By following this process the season has been extended to the 15 May with an allocation of 23%.

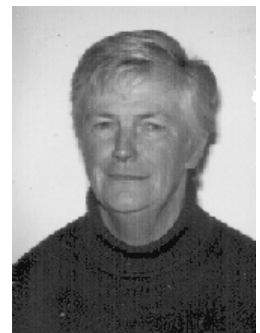
I am pleased to see the recent Government announcement of drought relief measures that include rebates for fixed water charges. This will allow customers to use available funds for much needed feed stocks, whilst ensuring that G-MW can continue necessary maintenance and replacement works.

I urge all customers to ensure they are aware of the many Government funded schemes that are available to allow you to access funds for on farm works. You should contact your local Centrelink office for information.

Carryover of Water entitlement has been raised by government and has gained support for a continuation as a **"drought relief measure"**. Details are to be finalised, but it appears carryover will again be an option for many irrigators. The Minister for Water is expected to announce the final arrangements within the next month so please monitor the media for updates.

Your WSC has also been very busy developing our submission to the Foodbowl Modernisation Steering Committee Draft Report. We are working hard to ensure that the Murray Valley Area will see improvements to our system that benefit all customers, from any funding available.

This is our toughest season on record and I urge you to look out for your family and friends, by providing help to each other. I am sure we can all come through this season with a renewed outlook and a positive future in front of us.



Heather du Vallon

Chair, Murray Valley Water Services Committee

Water Resources Position

Releases were temporarily reduced and Dartmouth Reservoir and Hume Reservoir volumes improved slightly after rainfall during late October and early November. Dartmouth Reservoir recorded 44.8 mm during October and had received 46.4 mm to 14 November. The total October rainfall at Hume Reservoir was 29.4 mm, with 51.2 mm had been reported to 14 November. Despite the rain, the inflows to the two storages remain well below average.

Storage	This Year (14/11/2007)		Last Year	
	Volume GL	Capacity	Volume GL	Capacity
Dartmouth	716.2	18.3 %	1,662.9	42.6%
Hume	805.9	26.5 %	295.00	9.7%

Residential Water Use

Seasonal Allocation and Outlook

Customers (including syndicates) with metered use can choose to water lawns and gardens. If the use is not metered, Goulburn-Murray Water deems an annual use. Under the current drought conditions, Goulburn-Murray Water has decided to restrict deemed use to garden watering only.

If customers with deemed use wish to water lawns, enough allocation must be bought to cover the additional water use. Syndicates without metered use should also restrict watering, or buy allocation to cover lawn watering in the deemed use.

Use in excess of the permitted volume will incur an overuse fee of \$2,000 per ML.

The 15 November 2007 seasonal allocation in the Murray system is 23% of high-reliability water shares. Goulburn-Murray Water has also extended the season in the Murray gravity irrigation systems to 15 May 2008. The improvement in seasonal allocation and season length was provided by better than forecast inflows since the last announcement and the assignment of Goulburn-Murray Water efficiency savings to allocation.

With allocations above 20%, the qualification of rights in the Murray system has expired. All water use by customers, regardless of purpose, must now be in accordance with the allocated volume.

Using September to October inflows as a guide to future summer flows, the most optimistic seasonal allocation in the Murray system on 15 February 2007 is 31% of high-reliability water shares.



**Are you moving or have your mailing details changed?
Please let us know**

To keep you up to date on important issues that affect you, we need to know your current contact details. This ensures you receive important information on time and helps us keep return mail costs down.

Please detach & return to:

Fax 58335501 or Goulburn-Murray Water, Customer Records & Billing, PO Box 165, TATURA VIC 3616

Name(s).....

Postal Address.....

Postcode.....(BH) Phone.....Mobile.....

()Email.....()Fax.....

If you would you like to receive future newsletters by email or fax please tick preference (one only)

Are you the Owner or Lessee?

Service or Statement Number(s) if known.....

Signed.....Date.....

State Government Delivers Drought Assistance

The State Government's very welcome drought relief package includes rebates for fixed water charges and funds to cover the cost of pumping Waranga Basin. The account you receive this month will already include the Government's rebate, with the amount indicated by a negative sign on your bill. A leaflet detailing where you can access further information about other State and Federal assistance has also been included with customer accounts, and we encourage all customers to explore their options for assistance during such a difficult year.

Waterline Ordering on the WEB

Customers can now order water via the internet with Waterline online. Most of the phone features are available online and you can print your own Water Usage Statement. WaterLine Online is available at www.g-mwater.com.au and then follow the links to your area.

For more information contact your planner via Waterline on 5871 0111.

Reporting Water Theft

In the last few weeks there has been a worrying increase in reports of water theft. This season G-MW will continue to take a tough line on water theft to protect our water resources for the benefit of all customers. Water theft ultimately leads to increased prices and disrupted water delivery, and means there is less water available for allocation to customers. Water theft is also viewed very seriously by the courts and tough penalties apply. Customers and members of the public are encouraged to report any suspicious activity by calling the G-MW emergency number (1800 064 184) at any time. The vast majority of customers do the right thing, but there is a small number who choose to do the wrong thing by their fellow water users. These Water theft is not taking water from G-MW but from other customers, and the laws are in place to make sure everyone gets a fair go.

Staff Safety is Our Priority

G-MW cannot make it rain, but it is endeavoring to share the available water as fairly and equitably as possible. GMW recognizes that the continuing drought conditions are putting customers under extreme stress and hardship, but as a responsible employer we must protect our staff. We cannot tolerate aggressive behavior against staff trying to do their jobs and any such actions will be reported to the police. GMW thanks all of its customers for their continuing understanding and co-operation during this very difficult period.

Processing of water trades improving

Our regions move to a more flexible and responsive water trading environment has coincided with the worst drought on record, and as a result exceptional high water prices. These factors have significantly increased the number and urgency for many customers in confirming their water trades.

G-MW is currently processing most applications to temporarily transfer water within 4 days, with trades within the G-MW region confirmed within 10 days. Obviously there are individual applications that are more complex and have required longer processing times, especially application involving trades and transfers outside the G-MW region. Since July, G-MW has received more than 5,000 applications for water share and allocation trade, at least four times the number we receive in a normal year. We are also working with DSE and other Water Authorities to smooth out the remaining 'teething' issues.

Tips for applying and tracking your water trades

1. Record your application number. This makes it easier to track your application from when its received by G-MW through to its approval.
2. Check you water balance on WaterLINE to ensure you have enough water for the transaction.
3. Complete every field on the application form including your Allocation Bank Account number (ABA)
4. If you are trading as a company, make sure you provide a current company extract with your application.
5. Signatures - either the authorised agent or every owner of the water share must sign the original form before it is submitted. (Forms to nominate an authorised agent are available at www.g-mwater.com.au)

If the meter on your outlet fails, your usage will be charged on the estimate of your orders?

Recently incidents where the meter has failed, customers have been charged usage as per their orders. Some customers have advised that they don't take what they order. This is a risk to you if your meter fails and also causes G-MW to have higher outfalls and loss. Correct ordering along with starting and finishing at the advised times is critical to the system running efficiently and ensuring all customers receive their required order.

Low supply may impact on your Domestic and Stock Supplies

Many of our channels have been lowered due to low or no demand for irrigation. If this impacts on your ability to access stock or house water please contact your planner or the Cobram office and we will arrange for the channel to be raised or for alternative supply arrangements.

Efficient Ordering Saves Water

Customer orders are planned for delivery as requested, however more than 4 days notice on orders along with customer flexibility will allow the planner to make better use of all available resource.

Your cooperation in ordering actual requirements will also help to reduce losses, potentially increasing the resources available for allocation.

G-MW would also like to hear from you if you don't intend to water from particular outlets. This will help us to better plan which channels we need to maintain at supply level and which can be lowered to reduce loss.

Please contact your planner with any information that can assist us reduce loss.

Maintenance of assets, particularly leak repairs are of high priority to reduce losses and maintain the integrity of our assets. If you see a problem, "REPORT IT". Let us know via your planner or the Cobram Office. The sooner we know the sooner we can fix the problem! If customers detect a leak outside normal business hours, they can be reported to G-MW on its 24 hour phone line 1800 064 184.

New faces for Murray Valley Water Services Committee

Graham Lawless has resigned from the WSC due to increased work commitments after 3 years as a WSC member.

Tom Phelan also resigned recently after serving 12 months on the committee as he and his family are leaving the area.

Ben McCracken has been elected unopposed to replace Graham and the WSC will discuss a replacement for Tom over the coming months.

We would like to thank Graham and Tom for their efforts and wish them well in their future endeavours. We welcome Ben to the committee and look forward to a long and fruitful association.

More on Geoff Enever

Geoff has been employed with G-MW and its predecessor organizations for over 33 years. He is a qualified mechanic who has experience in dam construction, road works, construction and maintenance in irrigation areas, water distribution, and supervisory roles and comes to Murray Valley after

4 years as the assistant Manager in the Central Goulburn Operations centre. Geoff has undertaken roles in Dartmouth, Gippsland, Tatura (twice), Rochester, Shepparton and Pyramid-Boort centres. He has acted as Manager in four of the six operational areas prior to coming to Murray Valley.

MURRAY VALLEY WSC MEMBERS 2007/08

Heather du Vallon (Chair)	5864 1161	Dudley Bryant (Deputy Chair)	5864 1124
Max Baker	5864 1011	Danny Bergamin	5864 1175
Alan Hendy	5865 8250	Ben McCracken	5864 6591
Jim McKeown	5873 2276		