

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.

Stay safe this summer, don't enter or play in irrigation channels.



Upcoming key payment dates for G-MW Fixed Charges Account

The table below lists all upcoming payment due dates depending on the payment option you have chosen from the back of your G-MW account.

Payment Date	Customer Group & Payment Option
2011	
16 December	Payment in full due date for all customers.
2012	
16 January	3rd instalment for all areas.
16 February	4th and final instalment for all areas.

If you are experiencing financial hardship please contact G-MW on 1300 553 200 to discuss options that may be available to assist you.

Suspicious behaviour

There have been recent reports of suspicious behaviour at and around G-MW assets. If you notice any suspicious behaviour or vandalism please report it to your local G-MW office or the 24 hour emergency number on 1800 064 184.

Works update

Over the past year, G-MW work crews have been busy assisting NVIRP with the modernisation program within the Murray Valley area, however in addition they have also installed meter outlets, occupational crossings and road crossings.

Green snails detected

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has advised that the Green snail, which was previously restricted to Western Australia, has been detected in a lucerne crop near Cobram, Victoria.

DPI's 2km 'Pest Quarantine Area' as well as a 25km 'Restricted Area' around the initial detection area are still in place.

Please monitor your crops for any changes that may occur.

For more information please visit the DPI website at www.dpi.vic.gov.au

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

Rural Support Line 1300 655 969

Lifeline 131 114

Beyondblue 1300 224 636

G-MW contacts

Cobram office

03 5871 0100

MurrayNorthEastWSC@g-mwater.com.au

Don't forget you can order water online or over the phone, 24 hours a day at www.g-mwater.com.au or on 1300 469 469.

For all emergencies please call 1800 064 184 (24hr).

For all general enquiries please call 1800 013 357.

G-MW e-services



Online Payments:
To pay your G-MW account please visit our website at 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

December 2011

Chair's Message

What a year it has been, with floods in the west, the recent announcement of NVIRP Stage 2, the release of the draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan and the recent outbreak of Green Snails in the Cobram area.

It has also been pleasant to see the increase in water being delivered during the spring in comparison to previous years.

A substantial amount of water was carried over into this season, equivalent to approximately 100% High Reliability Water Shares, which remained in both Hume & Dartmouth. As at 15 November the Murray Valley Irrigation Area customers have used approximately 16% of available allocation leaving a considerable volume still to be used.

The recent announcement of NVIRP Stage 2 was well received and the challenge to modernise our irrigation system continues. Please make sure that you are prepared, as NVIRP staff contact irrigators about your connection/s to the 'backbone' channel. Remember they can't see all of us at once, so for some the wait continues.

The release of the draft Murray-Darling Basin plan has certainly gained a lot of attention and I would urge all irrigators to attend at least one public meeting to become better informed of the impacts this plan will have on you as water users and your community as a whole.

As the weather warms up please remember that while G-MW channels appear inviting as a place to swim they are in reality very hazardous. People should not swim in irrigation channels as some of the dangers cannot be seen from the surface.

Your WSC have been busy advising G-MW of the many issues that are raised by irrigators throughout the year. Pricing is one such issue, and we have

been assisting senior staff to develop 'Water Plan 3' which will form a guide for future pricing.

There have been many changes in the water industry recently and clearly this will continue going forward as well. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all irrigators for their determination and tolerance in managing through these circumstances as they emerge.

Thanks must also go to the G-MW staff for their ongoing commitment to customer service, and to my fellow Water Service Committee members for their dedication and capacity to confront all these reforms in a constructive manner.

Remember that if you are unsure or need clarification about anything related to irrigation issues then please contact the Cobram office on 5871 0100.

On behalf of the Murray Valley WSC I would like to wish all irrigators a Merry Christmas, a safe New Year and look forward to a dry summer.



Jim McKeown
Chair, Murray Valley WSC

Ordering water reminders

- Order your water through WaterLINE online at www.g-mwater.com.au or by phone on 1300 469 469, you will need to have your User Number and PIN ready. If you have forgotten your User Number or PIN, please contact your local G-MW office.
- Planners are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via WaterLINE online or by phone 1300 469 469 for all areas except the Torrumbarry Irrigation Area where planners are available between 7am-11pm daily.

- If you call the WaterLINE phone number and a planner is unable to take your call, please leave a message and they will call you back as soon as possible.
- A minimum notice of four days is required for placing orders on all non-automated systems.
- Please remember to confirm your water orders after 4pm the day prior to commencing. This allows G-MW staff to turn the water on in full confidence that the water delivery is expected.
- To receive reminders of when your water order is to start and stop, subscribe to SMS Start/Stop today through WaterLINE online.

irrigation news

The NVIRP Stage 2 agreement

On Tuesday, 18 October the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments signed an agreement for \$1.216 billion to fund the second stage of modernisation of irrigation systems in northern Victoria's food bowl to deliver 214,000 ML of water savings.

Under this agreement the Commonwealth will invest:

- \$953 million towards Stage 2 of the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP2) to deliver 102,000 ML; plus
- \$219 million for the strategic water purchase from Victoria of 102,000 ML from NVIRP2 water savings previously intended to be shared among GMID irrigators; and
- \$43.7 million for an on-farm irrigation efficiency program to deliver 10,000 ML.

This investment builds on the \$1 billion first stage of NVIRP.

The funding arrangements will avoid irrigators having to contribute \$100 million to Stage 1 and \$106 million to Stage 2 of NVIRP, which would have forced water prices up by 25 to 45 per cent.

Other outcomes from the agreement were:

1. Integration with NVIRP1

The timelines for the completion of NVIRP1 have been extended from June 2013 to June 2018. This means water savings that would have been issued to irrigators from June 2013 will now not be issued until June 2018. This is to ensure Victoria has the flexibility to deliver both stages of NVIRP and to provide the best outcome for the community.

2. Further exemptions to 4% trading limit

The Victorian Government has agreed to allow extra trade to the Commonwealth by some irrigators whose trades were not approved because the 4% limit had been reached. A special exemption to the 4% limit will allow the approval of about 88,000 ML of Commonwealth water purchases that were refused in the July 2011 ballot, or were accepted by the Commonwealth in its 2010-11 tenders to buy back water for the environment.

3. On-farm efficiency program

The on-farm irrigation efficiency program (OFIEP) will generate 20,000 ML of water savings by investing in on-farm irrigation infrastructure upgrades. 10,000 ML of the water savings will be consolidated and transferred to the Commonwealth. This program includes a \$4.8 million in-kind contribution from participating farmers. The remaining 10,000 ML will be retained by irrigators participating in the OFIEP.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority will deliver the project on behalf of Victoria and will be providing details about how to apply for funding in the coming weeks.

4. Draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan

The water savings recovered through the Food Bowl Modernisation Project will contribute to water recovery from the GMID to meet the Plan's proposed sustainable diversion limit volumes.

New Trade Exemptions – what it means for you!

Under the agreement, the Victorian Government has agreed to approve about 88,000 ML of Commonwealth water purchases including:

- water share trades to the Commonwealth submitted for the July 2011 ballot but not approved because of the 4% limit, and
- water share trades resulting from Commonwealth water purchase tenders in 2010-11 which would not have been approved because of the 4% limit.

The Commonwealth is required to submit these applications for approval to G-MW by 28 February 2012. If you have an application in either of these categories you can contact your nominated agent or Commonwealth appointed solicitor for more information.

For more information please visit www.g-mwater.com.au/customer-services/water-trading or call 1800 013 057.

Preparing to carry over allocation into 2012/13

- Ensure the water you want to carryover is in the correct Allocation Bank Account (ABA) linked to your water share/s – if not you will need to submit an application to transfer the allocation (Form 39) prior to the middle of June 2012.
- Check to see whether your water share/s are linked to the ABA you intend to carryover water in.
- If you are considering purchasing additional high or low reliability water shares to increase your carryover potential, please ensure the water shares can be linked to your ABA. In some cases water trading rules may prevent a water share you purchase from being linked to your existing ABA.
- Seek professional advice on your water plans from an experienced broker or adviser.

Are you intending to do maintenance works on your property?

If you are intending to do maintenance works on your property please take care around G-MW assets. Any cost associated with repairing a damaged asset may be recovered from the customer.

Casual Use Fee reminder

A number of customers have exceeded their Annual Delivery Allowance.

Every megalitre used in excess of the Annual Delivery Allowance will incur a casual use fee. This fee is higher than the standard "use fee". Customers will be advised by WaterLINE when placing an order, if the current order will take their usage into "casual use".

Your Annual Delivery Allowance is listed on your water usage statement along with details of your current use. For further information contact your planner via WaterLINE.

Water Plan 3 update

G-MW has begun planning for its next Water Plan which will be released next year.

Water Plan 3 will set the direction for G-MW pricing for the three years commencing 2013/14 by working with our customers, Water Services Committees and key stakeholders to develop our pricing structure and the service standards expected by our customers.

Consultation with Water Service Committee members has already commenced and customers will be asked to participate in the new year through a range of feedback opportunities including surveys and forums, available from our website at www.g-mwater.com.au

Channel automation

A large number of remote control gates were installed this year as part of the winter works program to replace the drop bars on the 'backbone' channel and there have been ongoing works to replace Dethridge wheels with new remote operation meters on these same channels.

While the channel may look like it should be in automation mode, it will still be operated in manual mode until a key regulator is constructed on the Yarrawonga Main Channel in Winter 2012. Once the regulator is built, testing will be conducted before switching to full automation mode.

Please remember that all Murray Valley channels are still in manual operation mode and 4 days notice is required for all orders placed.

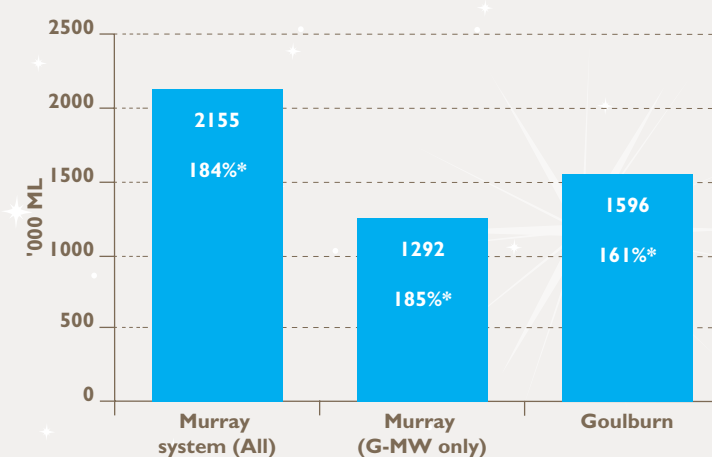
Volume Allocated but not delivered

Approximately 660,000 ML in the Goulburn system and 35,600 ML in the Campaspe system was initially quarantined in Spillable Water Accounts (SWAs) of which approximately 140,100 ML has been deducted from Goulburn SWAs and 23,000 ML from Campaspe SWAs due to spill as at 15 November.

Volumes of water recorded in Allocation Bank Accounts (ABAs) are not separated into categories based on where it was obtained, e.g. carryover, transfers or season allocations, therefore it is not possible to illustrate carryover as a proportion of water in store.

For these reasons G-MW publishes the following tables that indicate the combined volume of carryover, allocation and intersystem trade that is available for use or trade by customers on a system.

Allocation available for use, trade and carryover at 15 November 2011



*Volume expressed as % high-reliability water share

**Volume available in the Goulburn system includes water held in Spillable Water Accounts, which is only available for use or trade once the Resource Manager has made a declaration of "no spill".

Increased deliveries

Water deliveries within the Murray Valley Irrigation Area have increased significantly since the commencement of the irrigation season on 15 August and far exceed the deliveries made by G-MW for the same period of time over the past 10 years.

Deliveries as at 15 November for the Murray Valley Irrigation Area are 74,589 ML which is more than 4.4 times last year's deliveries and equates to 81% of the total deliveries for the entire 2010/11 season.