

# Start of Season Newsletter 2019/20



First day of the new irrigation season

## Welcome to our Start of Season customer newsletter

### Charmaine Quick

Managing Director



Green paddocks are an encouraging sight across the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District as we near the start of the 2019/20 irrigation season.

These productive winter crops reflect near-average rainfall over the last three months. At Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) we are acutely aware these recent, welcome conditions have followed a hot, dry summer we are yet to fully recover from.

Our catchments have taken longer to respond to rainfall and deliver the volume of storage inflows we would like. However they are primed for producing good inflows and we hope conditions are conducive to further replenishing our storages in coming weeks.

GMW has had its own productive winter of customer engagement on our 2020-2024 Pricing Submission and the transformation of our business to best meet the climate, water availability and industry challenges we share with customers. These initiatives aim to deliver the right services to customers and ensure fair, affordable prices into the future.

This newsletter updates customers on conditions, services and resources. We are moving from post to digital distribution to save costs and reduce our carbon footprint. The digital format allows access to links for further information and assistance tailored to the dry conditions we are experiencing.

If you have picked up a paper copy from a GMW office, you will find website addresses to access this information. Of course, we urge all customers to call, visit or email us for any and all enquiries as we together enter the irrigation season.

## Seasonal Determination

The Resource Manager for Northern Victoria updated the 2019/20 seasonal determinations on Thursday, 15 August.

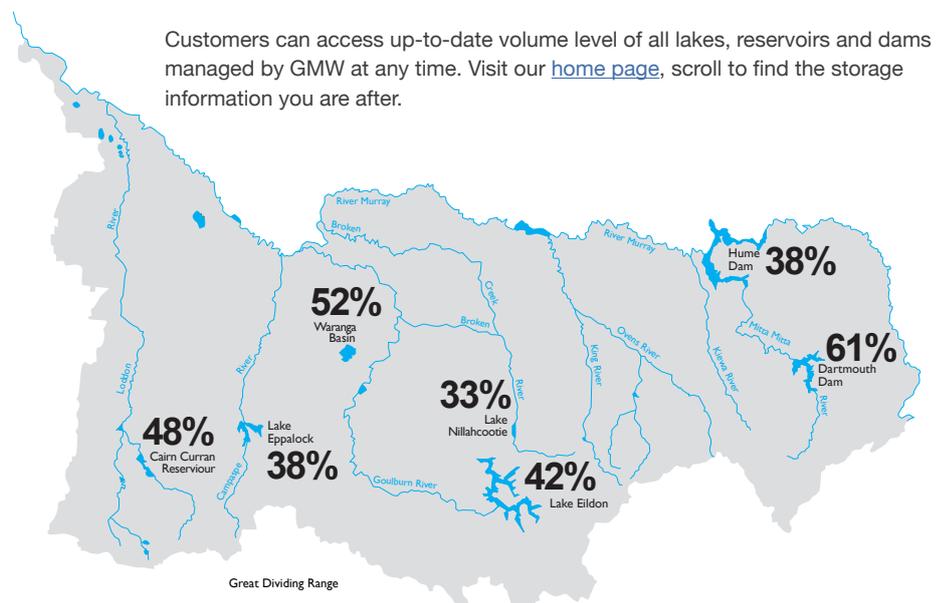
The Murray system moves from 16 per cent of high-reliability water shares (HRWS) to 26 per cent HRWS. The Goulburn and Loddon systems increase from 25 per cent HRWS to 32 per cent HRWS. The Campaspe system moves from 37 per cent HRWS to 48 per cent HRWS. Seasonal determinations in the Broken system remain on 0 per cent HRWS. The Bullarook system remains on 100 per cent HRWS and 100 per cent low-reliability water shares (LRWS).

Resource Manager Andrew Shields said recent rainfall in the catchment areas had increased the flows into major storages and improved the volume of water available. "The latest Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook indicates below-average rainfall across all of northern Victoria is more likely during the August to October period."

For full details of the latest seasonal determination, visit the Northern Victoria Resource Manager [website](#). The next 2019/20 seasonal determination announcement will be released on Monday, 2 September, 2019.

## Storage levels and inflows

Here's a snapshot of some of our major storages as 14 August 2019.



Customers can access up-to-date volume level of all lakes, reservoirs and dams managed by GMW at any time. Visit our [home page](#), scroll to find the storage information you are after.

## Groundwater allocations

GMW manages Groundwater Management Areas and Water Supply Protection Areas across much of northern Victoria. Groundwater allocations for 2019/20 include:

- 100 per cent allocation recently announced for the Katunga Water Supply Protections Area (WSPA)
- 100 per cent allocation within the

Lower Campaspe WSPA, except for the Barnadown Zone with 75 per cent

• Allocations in the Mid Loddon Groundwater Management Area and the Loddon Highlands WSPA will be announced in September 2019

All other groundwater management areas have 100 per cent allocation for 2019/20.

## Delivery Share trade option

Did you know you can now express interest in trading delivery shares? If customers have identified they have delivery shares no longer required, rather than having to terminate their delivery shares at a cost, they can express interest in buying or selling through [Watermatch](#).

## Pricing Submission

Our sincere thanks to the many customers who have taken the time and effort to contribute to our Price Submission for 2020-24.

This submission will detail how we intend to recover the costs for the services we provide to you. To ensure these services are reliable, efficient and fairly priced, we have spent months surveying customers, engaging in drop-in sessions across our operating region and hosting working groups, workshops and forums.

You have told us the importance of transparency in our pricing, the need for equity and for prices to honestly reflect our business costs. We are listening and acting.

Our next step in engagement is to put forward a draft submission open for customer feedback. We expect this will be finalised in the next few weeks.

Our final Pricing Submission will then be put to the independent umpire, the Essential Services Commission (ESC).

You can follow our progress and provide feedback on our draft submission at our [website](#).



## Key Services

**MyGMW** Manage your GMW account online, anytime and anywhere, through our secure online portal MyGMW. Access MyGMW from our [website](#).

 WaterLINE is our 24-hour online and telephone water ordering system where customers can lodge irrigation orders, find out their Allocation Account (ABA) balance and manage their accounts. Access WaterLINE by visiting our [website](#).

 The Start and Stop SMS service enables you to receive reminders of when your water order is to start and stop. Subscribe for this service through your [WaterLINE](#) account.

 eNews is a regular email including customer updates and important information, profiles, news, water safety tips, information on local area operations, key dates, projects, events and more. [Subscribe](#) to eNews.

 Our dams email provides water storage and dam levels information straight to your inbox on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. [Subscribe](#) by visiting our website.

## Water management videos



GMW has added to its instructional videos to help local farmers best manage their most important agricultural asset – water.

The additional videos, dealing with longer-term water availability issues and regional trends, bring the series to eight separate videos all dealing with different aspects of modern water management. Other subjects in the series include trade, carryover, water shares, entitlement allocation and more.

Delivered in plain English and directly relevant to water users, the videos are an initiative of GMW, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Murray Dairy. The [online resource](#) is free for farmers to view and review from their computer, tablet or phone.

## Lower Murray licences

GMW and Lower Murray Water are to refer all works licence applications for extractions from the lower Murray to Minister for Water Lisa Neville for assessment over the next 12 months.

The action is aimed at reducing high summer flows, which are eroding waterways like the Goulburn River, and reducing the risk of delivery shortfalls. For more information, read the minister's [full statement](#).

## Public pump project

The GMW Public Groundwater Pump network is being rationalised to respond to current salinity and watertable threats to irrigated land. The pump network will consist of fewer operational pumps and will be able to adapt to where salinity threats occur in future. This means the network will be less costly to operate and manage, and these cost savings will flow through to GMW customers.

For more information visit our [website](#).

## Water Market Watch

A new mobile phone app – Water Market Watch – provides instant access to the latest water allocation announcements, spill determinations, trade limits and market prices.

For active traders or occasional market followers, the app can be customised to alert the user to just the information they want, when they want it.

The app has been developed by the Victorian Government and is linked to the Victorian Water Register – making it the authoritative and up-to-date source for market information.

Water Market Watch is free to download from the Apple App store and Google Play store.

## Prepare for dry

Northern Victoria's current dry conditions are forecast to continue for some time. The Victorian Government is supporting farmers across the state to prepare and respond.

Agriculture Victoria is coordinating a state-wide approach, and has developed a dedicated online directory of "dry" specific information:

- Preparing your farm for drought
- Managing resources in drought
- Weather and climate
- Animal health in drought
- Financial support
- Health and social welfare
- Business support

More information and resources are available at [Agriculture Victoria](#).

## Financial difficulties

If you're experiencing financial hardship, there are a number of ways we can help you manage your account and relieve some of the pressure you may be facing.

For information about our flexible payment plans, call us on 1800 013 357.