

# Goulburn Valley Water NEWS

Keeping you informed

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## Back to Back Win for Waterwise Garden Award

At the National Water Week Award Ceremony, held in October James and Julie Daniells from Kilmore were awarded Goulburn Valley Water's 2007 *Waterwise Garden Award*. This is the second year the couple have won this award.

James and Julies' garden survives on rainwater and greywater. They have 15 different varieties of Grevillia, six different Callistemon, Acacia's, Westringia and other types of plants including Photinia and Hebes.

James and Julies' front garden is now well established and provides a lot of privacy. This year James further developed their back garden and created a play area for the children, a very small lawn area (16m<sup>2</sup>) which does not receive any water, an orchard, a vegie garden and a native back drop with a chicken run. Through innovation James has been able to reduce the amount of water needed for the orchard and vegie garden by half. James has hooked up a dripper system to a cherry barrel and now the plants are getting the water where they need it down near the roots. Prior to this James would use a watering can or bucket to water the plants.

James said that he is really proud that he has developed a self sustaining garden that requires very little watering and produces food for the family.

We would also like to congratulate this year's second and third prize winners who are both from Mooroopna. Lois and Duncan Ryan came second and Linda Cusworth came third.

Nine months ago Lois and Duncan removed all their lawn and created their waterwise garden. They created a very interesting garden with succulents,



Main Photo: James Daniells in his front yard, Inset Pictures (Top to Bottom): Duncan & Lois Ryan, Linda Cusworth, The Daniells backyard, L-R Linda Cusworth, Lois and Duncan Ryan, James Daniells and GVW's General Manager Technical Services Allen Gale

cacti, natives, decorative grasses and groundcovers. Their motto is 'if they can't survive frosts and little water then find something that will.'

Lois and Duncan describe their garden as one of discovery not only for themselves with the different plants but for children who visit. They have a number of little garden ornaments that children love to discover.

Prior to living in Mooroopna Linda Cusworth and her family lived on a farm. This meant that when the family moved to a suburban block, Linda brought her waterwise techniques with her. Linda has developed different gardens throughout her property, there is the formal garden with roses and camellias that creates the entry to the home, a fernery which loves

the shower water, a native garden and what she describes as a bit of Bali garden.

Linda said that with easy care plants that require little fuss, there is minimal weeding and mowing which means more time for relaxing and entertaining in the garden.

See page 2 for a list of some of the various plants in these three gardens. ❖



MD's Column

Welcome to this edition of GVW News. Summer is well and truly upon us and although the Goulburn System and other smaller water supply systems are in a better resource position than last year, towns on the Murray System are experiencing modified Stage 4 water restrictions. The modified Stage 4 water restrictions allows for limited garden watering.

Our customers supplied from the Sunday Creek System are still on Stage 4 water restrictions and have been on some level of water restrictions for a number of years. In November we commenced carting water to Broadford to supplement the water supply. We are also supplementing Kilmore's water requirements from the Melbourne system.

To provide additional water into the Sunday Creek system and to improve the overall level of water security, the Corporation has taken the decision to bring forward the construction of the pipeline from Tallarook to Broadford, connecting into the Goulburn River supply. Subject to State Government approval of the pipeline project it is planned to be completed by December 2008.

While we are talking about security of supply we have commenced the construction of a new 350 million litre water storage for Mansfield and design is nearing completion for a regional water supply pipeline from Alexandra to Eildon and Thornton.

The Corporation's 2006/2007 Annual Report was tabled in the Victorian Parliament on 31 October. The year was one of significant business achievement. The Corporation achieved an operating profit of \$1.5 million and invested a further \$19.7 million in new water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the region.

Overall water consumption continued its downward trend of recent years. Whilst

some of the reduction must be attributed to water restrictions, it demonstrates the commitment of communities and industry to sustainable water use.

The Corporation's full annual report for 2006/2007 can be found on our website at [www.gvwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.gvwater.vic.gov.au).

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of GVW News. If you have any feedback or would like additional information on any of the articles please contact Mary Connelly-Gale on (03) 5832 0471 or e-mail [maryc@gvwater.vic.gov.au](mailto:maryc@gvwater.vic.gov.au) ❖

Laurie J Gleeson  
Managing Director

## Water Allocation – how it works

We have a water allocation for all our urban towns on the Goulburn and Murray regulated river systems. We depend on the storages managed by Goulburn-Murray Water for these systems (eg Eildon, Hume & Dartmouth). We also have a water allocation for unregulated streams such as Seven Creeks at Euroa, Sunday Creek at Broadford and the Delatite River at Mansfield. For some unregulated supplies we have our own storages.

### Goulburn System

On the Goulburn system our water allocation has a high level of security which is determined by Goulburn-Murray Water based on the inflows into Lake Eildon over the preceding 24 months.

We were able to ease water restrictions on the Goulburn system in spring for two main reasons:

Firstly, inflows into Lake Eildon during early winter were significantly higher than for the same period last year. This meant our water allocation was better than anticipated in April this year, when severe water restrictions were phased in across the region.

Secondly, we decided last season to conserve and carryover around 4,500 megalitres of water for use by our customers this year.



Right: Goulburn River at Seymour Left: Seven Creeks

### Murray System

Our water allocation on the Murray system is different to the Goulburn system. Our water allocation is calculated exactly the same as an irrigator's water right. At the beginning of the irrigation season the allocation for the Murray system was and by 15 November it increased to 23%; last season the allocation was 95%. We carried over approximately 700 megalitres of water for use this year which allowed us to grant a general exemption to Stage 4 water restrictions. We do not anticipate that we will be able to ease water restrictions on the Murray System unless there is a rainfall event which results in a significant increase in inflows into Lakes Hume and Dartmouth.

### Unregulated Systems

We have eight unregulated systems and each system has its own water allocation. An unregulated stream is a stream where the flow is not influenced by the Eildon, Hume & Dartmouth dams (Murray and Goulburn systems). Diversion rates are limited to ensure minimum flows in streams are maintained and we are restricted to a maximum amount of water that can be taken from streams each year. All towns supplied from an unregulated stream are treated on a case by case basis and water restrictions reflect the stream flows and/or our storage levels in each system.

## New Chair



Don Cummins, Bruce Nicholls

In October the Minister for Water, the Hon. Tim Holding, announced the appointment of Don Cummins as the Chair of Goulburn Valley Water from 1 November 2007. He also announced the appointment of a new Director Bruce Nicholls.

Most people know Don Cummins for his previous role as Chairman of Goulburn-Murray Water and he has been on our Board since February 2007. Don is also on the Board of the Goulburn Broken CMA, a member of the Murray Darling

Basin Commission Community Advisory Committee and has previously served on Delatite and Mansfield Shire Councils.

Don believes that one of the biggest concerns for the Board is the potential impact of climate change on rainfall patterns and inflows into catchments.

Bruce Nicholls is a resident of Mitchell Shire and has been appointed to our Board for a three year term. Bruce is currently Managing Director of Capital Holdings & Development Ltd and farms locally in

the Kilmore area. He has served on the Kilmore Hospital Board, as President of Southern Mitchell Rotary and as an active member of Landcare, the CFA and other community organisations.

Bruce sees water security as a major challenge of our times and he is honoured to be given this opportunity to contribute in this important area.

When there is a change of Board Directors you inevitably have to say goodbye to someone and this is no exception. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jenny Houghton from Longwood who has been on our Board since November 1997 and who for the past two years held the position of Chair. The Directors of the Board, senior management and staff wish Jenny all the best for in her future endeavours.

## New Look for Meter Readers



Our Meter Readers have a new uniform. The uniform is Navy and High Visibility Yellow, with METER READER embossed on the back. We hope this will make it easier for our customers to see who is entering their property.

Along with the new uniforms our Meter Readers also have a new hand-held device to read the meters. They still need to key in the meter read details, but it alerts them of unusual readings, such as a higher or lower than normal read. This may help in identifying a leak at the property.

The device also enables our office staff to communicate with the Meter Reader. We can add information to the device that relates to a property such as the location of the meter, which makes it easier for Meter Readers to find the meter. This is also very useful for other staff members who may need to undertake a special meter read.

We also rely on customers to keep their meter accessible at all times. If you think your meter could be hard to find give us a call on 1300 360 007 and we can load a location onto the device for the Meter Reader, eg. meter is in the backyard.

From page 1

### Grevilleas

- Bronze Rambler – 30 cm x 4m ground cover with red flowers
- Royal Mantle, 20cm x 8m ground cover with red flowers
- Juniperina Molonglo 1m x 1m shrub with yellow flowers
- Sericia, 1.5m x 1 shrub with pale pink to rich pink-purple flowers.
- Canberra Gem, 2m x 1m shrub with pink flowers
- Rosmarinifolia, 2m x 1m shrub with red and yellow flowers.
- Robyn Gordon, 2m x 2m shrub with red flowers
- Forest Rambler, 2m x 3m shrub with pale pink flowers
- Hookerina, 2m x 3m shrub with deep red flowers
- Red Hooks, 3m x 4m shrub with red flowers
- Misty Pink 5m x 4m Shrub with pink flowers

### Callistemons

- Kings Park, 4 m x 4m Shrub with red flowers
- Harkness, 6m x 6m Shrub with red flowers

### Other Flowering Shrubs

- Westringia Fruticosa, white to pale lavender flowers
  - Westringia Jervis Gem, blue-mauve flowers
  - Westringia Wynyabbie mauve flowers
  - Lomandra Longifolia straw coloured flowers.
  - Correa Dusky Bells –pink coloured flowers
  - Correa Reflexa –flowers crimson red with yellow to green tips
  - Correa Glabra - gold coloured flowers
  - Silverbush, silvery leaves with white flowers
  - Diets Bicolour (Wild Iris/Butterfly Iris) Iris like yellow flowers with brown centres
  - Bearded Iris, numerous colours
  - Showy Hebe, violet flowers
  - Kangaroo Paw various colour flowers.
  - Eremophila Glabra red bell like flowers
  - Eremophila Weldii purple flowers
  - Eremophila Debilis white flowers
  - Eremophila Biserrata green, yellow flowers
- ### Other Ground Covers
- Eremophila Kalbarri Carpet white and yellow flowers
  - Myoporum Parvifolium (Creeping Boobialla)

## Broadford Water Supply Pipeline

In October our Board approved the re-scheduling of the Broadford Water Supply Pipeline Project. The project was initially scheduled to commence in 2012. However, with the continuing drought we have decided to bring the project forward with the objective of completing it by December 2008.

We plan to construct a large pumping station on the Goulburn River near Tallarook and approximately 23.5 kilometres of pipeline connecting to the Broadford water treatment plant. Consultants have been engaged to investigate the various pipeline routes and pump station location. We are currently seeking approval from the Department of Treasury

and Finance for this \$12.7 million project to proceed this financial year.

Once we receive the various approvals then construction will commence. It is anticipated that construction of the pipeline and pumping station on the Goulburn River will start in April 2008 and be completed by December 2008.

The connection of Broadford to the Goulburn River will increase both the quantity and security of water supply for the Broadford/Kilmore water supply system. This means that during a normal summer period water restrictions should not be required. However, in periods of drought water restrictions may still be required. ❖



Rob Jones and Glenn Bewicke at the Sawmill Settlement Storage Tank

## Improved Water Treatment for Small Communities

Over the next five years we will be investing approximately \$5 million to provide improved water treatment facilities at Girgarre, Stanhope, Dookie, Colbinabbin, Katamatite and Katandra West.

The Small Town Water Filtration Program is part of our commitment to continual improvement in service delivery. The first water treatment plant to be upgraded will be at Girgarre. This will be used to prove the effectiveness of the proposed process for the other towns.

The upgrade at Girgarre will involve the construction of a new 400 kilolitre (400,000 litres) per day water filtration plant and a new 90 kilolitre clear water storage. The cost of this upgrade is approximately \$760,000. The upgrade at Girgarre will be completed in 2008/2009 and will be operated for at least 12 months prior to other systems being upgraded. The other towns are currently programmed to commence in 2010/2011, dependent on results from the trial at Girgarre.

Over the next two years we will also be investing approximately \$2 million to provide a new water treatment plant at Sawmill Settlement. The planned upgrade to the Sawmill Settlement water treatment facility will involve the construction of a new 1 megalitre (1,000 kilolitres) per day water filtration plant.

Currently we draw water from the Delatite River, chlorinate the water and transfer it to a high level storage tank prior to delivering it to our customers. The new water treatment plant will include filtration which means that our customers will notice an improvement in the overall quality of the water.

We are proposing to build the new treatment plant on crown land. However, this is subject to DSE granting permission for Goulburn Valley Water to lease the site. Once the necessary planning permits and approvals have been obtained construction can commence and it is anticipated that it will take approximately 30 weeks to complete. ❖



The increasingly serious water shortage in the Murray-Darling Basin has required the continued enforcement of water restrictions for towns serviced from the Murray River. Our Northern team have been conducting regular water patrols outside normal working hours to reinforce the message about the importance of water restriction compliance.

The manner in which our customers have embraced the Corporation's staged water restriction obligations has been pleasing. Water restrictions continue across the District and I encourage customers to continue to use water wisely and thank them for their support.

Following completion of a major upgrade of the irrigation area at the Cobram Wastewater Management Facility, our operators have sown oats, rye and shaftel at the site. We are using recycled water to irrigate the crops and the effective use of this resource will result in the production of about 1,500 rolls of hay and silage.

Emergency response plans are a vital tool for all organisations. A plan outlines how organisations should respond in an emergency situation. After a series of meetings organised by the Shire of Moira, a desk top exercise to test the effectiveness of the Municipal Management Plan was held on the 25 October. This exercise was based on a chlorine leak from the Cobram Water Treatment Plant. These exercises seek to improve the preparedness of emergency

services by examining the potential issues which may arise in an emergency. Problems can be identified and put right, thus diminishing the impact of a real-life emergency of this type. We have conducted site familiarisation tours with local CFA members and we are organising further on site exercises to improve our response capabilities.

Due to the continuing drought conditions, we are experiencing an increasing number of sewer blockages, many of which are due to the intrusion of tree roots. Consequently we have completed a root foaming program on a number of susceptible mains. This work involves cleaning the sewer mains with a hydraulic cutter. Root foam is then applied directly in the sewer to reduce the likelihood of further root growth. To help improve our response capabilities to bursts, leaks and sewer blockages we have recently acquired a 1.8 ton excavator and a trailer mounted sewer jetting unit. Previously we relied on equipment from contractors or our Central District.

Training is a priority to the Corporation and especially to me as District Manager for Northern. It is important that our staff are equipped, trained and qualified to operate and maintain our assets. Our eight operators in the Northern District have now achieved Certificate III in Water Industry Operations and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them. All our staff take a great deal of pride in their work and strive to be customer focused so please don't hesitate to call for any assistance or advice. ❖

By Mark Putman  
Northern District



The Central Water team oversees water treatment and supply for 16 towns. October saw us starting to fill all our storage reservoirs at Tongala, Kyabram and Tatura as well as other smaller towns such as Dookie, Katandra West, Corop, Colbinabbin, Girgarre and Stanhope.

This year we were still able to fill the storages at the normal time. However the quality of water has been a major issue. This is because at this time of year, irrigators usually take plenty of water, but this year they have changed their irrigation practices and are taking water later. This has meant that the channel system has not receiving its annual flush from the extra flows, which has resulted in the incoming water to the water treatment plants having higher turbidity levels. Turbidity is a measure of how much dirt or suspended material is in the water. Usually we see water of around 20 to 40 NTU, but this year we have seen around 100 plus NTU for long periods.

Victorian drinking water standards require that we reduce turbidity to less than 1 NTU. This has required our operators to put in many hours checking and retesting our chemical dose rates to ensure 100% compliance.

As part of our commitment to water quality control at Central Water we have employed the service of Dr Peter Mosse. Peter is a specialist in the field of water treatment and he will review the performance of filters at our water treatment plants. He has worked with our operators on implementing systems to identify problems with the operation of filters.

Peter has also assisted in training operators on how to correctly inspect a filter by entering the filter bed and carrying out an internal inspection of the filter media. From these inspections we have been able to set out a ten year plan for major maintenance of the filters including future replacement of the media sand. These inspections are vital to ensure that the filters continue to operate at their optimum performance to ensure 100% water quality compliance at all times. ❖

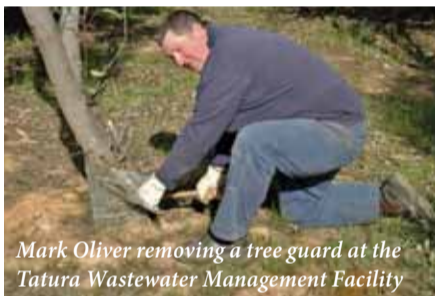
By John Day  
Central Water



A lot of the activities for my team revolve around being environmentally aware and responsible. A recent exercise at Tatura Wastewater Management Facility demonstrates this commitment. Successful tree plantings at the site several years ago were followed up by a day of removing tree guards that had served their purpose. This is a labour intensive and time consuming exercise, but the results were very pleasing both environmentally and aesthetically.

Being environmentally responsible is the major objective of our wastewater management systems. Not only do we need to treat all the wastewater that we receive but we need to do something with the recycled water.

At our wastewater management facilities, where we have excess recycled water our preferred option is for beneficial reuse – irrigation fulfils this role. We have



Mark Oliver removing a tree guard at the Tatura Wastewater Management Facility

first, second and third party irrigators that are defined as follows:

- First party irrigation is where we irrigate the recycled water on Goulburn Valley Water owned land using Corporation personnel. This is the primary form of reuse at our Shepparton Wastewater Management Facility
- Second party irrigation is where recycled water is applied to Goulburn Valley Water land by a lessee. This form of reuse is used for some of our recycled water at the Tatura Wastewater Management Facility.
- Third party irrigation is where recycled water is applied by farmers to their own land. This occurs from the Mooroopna, Tatura and the Tongala wastewater management facilities.

Irrigation at all our reuse areas is carefully monitored to ensure that it is carried out in a sustainable manner. This includes testing the irrigation water applied to the land, measuring the volume applied and periodically checking groundwater levels for signs of degradation. Regular soil tests are also undertaken.

Environmental sustainability is very important and controls how we manage our business. Remember, please try to reduce, reuse and recycle. If we all do our part, we all benefit. ❖

**By Darren Sharman**  
Central Wastewater



Welcome to this edition of my column. In October/November water restrictions were eased to Stage 1 for all towns in the South East District. We currently have a secure allocation of water for our town supplies and this enabled us to ease the burden for all our customers. South East customers have responded excellently to the water restrictions last summer and this enabled us to transfer the savings from last year to this year for the first time. Our gardens and sporting facilities are the social fabric of most of our small towns and by having the ability to ease the water restrictions helps to protect and nurture these valuable assets. Please continue to be wise with our water.

Significant investment in the South East region has been programmed to occur over the next five years. Some of the projects include:

- Yea Water Treatment Plant filters which have been completed and are now in the commissioning stage.
- Alexandra Water Treatment Plant is expected to be completed in

early December and be up and running for the New Year.

- Construction of the Marysville's new winter water storage and irrigation works have started.
- Mansfield new 350 megalitre water storage is under construction and will be filled next winter. This new storage will increase the security of future town water supplies for Mansfield.
- Tenders documents are being prepared for a new water treatment plant at Sawmill Settlement. This will improve water quality for Sawmill Settlement and Merrijig residents.
- Investigation work is proceeding for a new water treatment plant at Bonnie Doon. This will improve water quality for Bonnie Doon.

The focus of South East District staff this quarter is on maintaining water and wastewater systems over the coming summer months and maintaining water quality to all our customers.

Drought committees at Murrindindi and Mansfield shires are still very active and anyone experiencing difficulties is encouraged to contact them for assistance and or advice. ❖

**By Ken Turner**  
South East



In this newsletter I would like to concentrate on our Property Services Team. This team handles plumbing and connection issues.

Property Services is using a new data management system to give customers better service while reducing the time it takes staff to process connection applications. The system was developed in-house by Tony Pope. After a few initial problems, the system is now working beautifully.

One of the most frequently asked questions the team receives is about the responsibility for clearing sewer blockages.

Whilst GVW is responsible for clearing any blockages in its sewer mains, the property owner is responsible for employing a licenced plumber for clearing all blockages in the house branch up to the point of connection to the sewer. This includes clearing any blockages due to tree roots.

Another frequent question relates to the repair or renewal of water services between the main and the meter/property

boundary. We maintain the property water service from the water main to the nominated point of supply for a property (with a nominal diameter of 25 millimetres or less). We also maintain the water meter and the property isolation valve. The works covered by this policy includes all existing property water services, excluding galvanized wrought iron services. However, we will assist customers with the replacement of Galvanised water service pipes from the main to the meter. Details on responsibility and obligations in relation to repairs are outlined in our Customer Charter which can be downloaded from our website [www.gvwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.gvwater.vic.gov.au).

In early November letters were sent to customers who have not yet connected their properties to the sewerage systems in Marysville, Rushworth, Stanhope, Avenel, Violet Town and Wandong/Heathcote Junction. These customers have been requested to make an appointment with our property service project officer Anne Ryan to discuss the means of accelerating their connection.

If any further clarification is required on these matters or any other issue please feel free to contact the direct line to Property Services on **1800 064 714** or **5832 0600**. ❖

**By Neville Whittaker**  
Central O&M



New Kilmore Storage Tank

We are pleased to report that the new 16 megalitre Clear Water Storage Tank at Kilmore is reaching completion. We started filling the new tank over the Melbourne Cup week. The tank will be tested for leakage over the next few weeks and once it is completed the older, earthen storages will be removed.

For many years the Kilmore system has operated off two separate, open air storages. One was for the low-level zone and the other serviced the high-level zone. The new storage will now cater for both zones collectively. As part of our continuous improvement program we now offer far more security in delivering quality water to our customers in this region. Although the open air storages were able to deliver quality in the past, it was far more difficult to maintain that standard. Given that much housing

development has occurred below the old storages, they were deemed to be of high risk under the standards set by the Australian National Committee on Large Dams.

The construction phase of the project has taken 9 months to this stage. It is on time and within the \$3.8 Million budget. With the new storage being constructed from concrete, and being an enclosed system, our customers in Kilmore will have a much more secure quality of supply. There will also be little evaporation of our precious resource as there was in the past being open to the atmosphere. Our operators also look forward to operating a much more secure system, which should be in service early in 2008. ❖

**By Neil Healey**  
South West