

Monday, June 23, 2014

Water Quality Update: Lance Creek Water Supply System - Water is Safe to Drink

Warm Autumn Leads to Algae Growth

South Gippsland Water is currently dealing with an algal bloom at its Lance Creek Reservoir which supplies Inverloch, Cape Paterson and Wonthaggi. This algae bloom has led to customers experiencing water that may taste or smell earthy, musty and muddy.

Customers please be assured that the water is safe to drink. The type of algae is not harmful to human health and water has been treated and disinfected.

Water is supplied in accordance with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines

However, despite this treatment, the taste and smell given off by algae is very difficult to remove through the treatment process. Human senses are very sensitive to the taste and smell that algae creates and this particular algae can be smelt and tasted at extremely low concentrations of around 5 parts per trillion. To put that into perspective, 5 parts per trillion is roughly equal to 1 teaspoon of water in 200 Olympic sized swimming pools.

South Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Philippe du Plessis stated that, "South Gippsland Water appreciates that the smell and taste within the water is unpleasant, however, the Corporation is dealing with these natural elements in the best way possible. Algae is a plant based organism, with blooms generally occurring when there are high levels of nutrients in the water running into a reservoir. This combined with warm, sunny conditions, as was experienced during the mild autumn, has led to the algae growth". Mr du Plessis went on to say that, "All of South Gippsland Water's catchment areas are open catchments with the creeks and rivers feeding the reservoirs, surrounded by farms, roads, housing and industry. As a result, the drinking water quality is affected by the surrounding environment and factors beyond the Corporation's control".

South Gippsland Water is taking a number of steps to improve the water quality and has;

- Activated additional treatment processes to help minimise the impact of the taste and odour.
- Where possible the water supply system is being flushed to push the affected water through the system.
- South Gippsland Water continues to work with our neighbouring landowner's within the catchment, to help ensure nutrient run-off into the reservoir is minimised.

Customers who have concerns or questions regarding their water quality are encouraged to call **1300 851 636** and speak with our friendly Customer Service Team.