

Supplementary Water Supplies for Tarra River System

South Gippsland Water has activated supplementary water supplies to secure water for the townships of Yarram, Devon North, Alberton and Port Albert over the remainder of summer and into autumn.

Yarram and the surrounding districts water supplies come from Devon North where the Corporation draws water from the Tarra River. Over recent weeks, the river flows on the Tarra have dropped off considerably, which impacts on how much water South Gippsland Water can harvest. South Gippsland Water will ensure that it does not draw too much water from the river and must allow a minimum of 3 mega litres of river (environmental) flows to be achieved each day. Environmental flows are essential to the health and habitat of the river flora and fauna.

As a result of recent low river flows, South Gippsland Water has activated pumping water from its Devon North Bore to the water storage basin at the Water Treatment Plant.

South Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Philippe du Plessis said that, "In recent years South Gippsland Water has installed permanent bore infrastructure at Devon North and acquired a Bulk Water Entitlement. This investment has secured the water supplies for customers supplied by the Tarra River System both now and into the future".

Mr du Plessis went on to say that "Environmental flows are an important part of environmental management and are essential to the health and ecology of our local environment. Customers may notice a changed taste in the water supply from the introduction of bore water. However, whilst water characteristics may vary slightly, water is still treated at the Devon North Water Treatment Plant and meets all regulations including the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and the Safe Drinking Water Act".

Water pumped from the Bore at Devon North will be transferred to the holding basin at the Devon North Water Treatment Plant. Here it will be blended with river water, when river flows permit and then treated via the Water Treatment Plant. Water treatment staff are doing their utmost to ensure water quality remains as high as possible. However, the characteristics of the bore water mean that it may have a changed taste and it is expected that higher levels of dissolved manganese will also be present which, whilst safe to drink, can cause water to appear

discoloured. Mr du Plessis emphasised that "The Corporation aims to supply water to a standard whereby customers will see little noticeable difference in taste or quality regardless of the water source".

Any customers who have queries regarding the use of supplementary water supplies are encouraged to contact South Gippsland Water's Customer Service Team on 1300 851 636.

[Image: Holding basin at Devon North Water Treatment Plant.]

