

Lance Creek Water Connection On Track

Dry times and the implementation of staged water restrictions have highlighted the need for water security for local communities within South Gippsland Water's supply region.

Identified as systems at risk, the Ruby Creek and Little Bass water supply systems, servicing Korumburra, Poowong, Loch and Nyora, will be secure for the next 50 years following the Lance Creek Water Connection.

South Gippsland Water Managing Director Philippe du Plessis said, "The pipeline, from our largest reservoir at Lance Creek, will deliver water security to the area and provide a dependable environment for residents, community development, economic growth and future investment within the region."

When it comes to securing water supply through a large-scale pipeline project, a great deal of planning and consultation needs to be completed up-front before any sod is turned. Elements of design relating to pipeline infrastructure and alignment have been updated following consultation with land owners, additional survey work, and detailed reviews and inspections.

Discussion with land owners regarding the easement acquisition, compensation process and site rehabilitation works associated with the pipeline has also taken place.

The project has a total cost of some \$43 million and last year the Corporation was successful in acquiring State Government funding of \$30 million. The connection to Lance Creek reservoir will also enable the use, as required, of an existing link to the Melbourne Water Supply System, including the Wonthaggi Desalination Plant and Cardinia Reservoir.

Commencement of pump station construction is scheduled to begin in the first half of 2017, with pipeline construction on private property scheduled for the second half of 2017. The level of construction activity will reduce during wetter months in order to minimise disruption to land owners.

Customer Feedback, We're Listening

Every 5 years South Gippsland Water prepares a plan for the water industry's economic regulator, the Essential Services Commission regarding service standards, capital and operating expenditure, and the required prices charged to customers for the delivery of water and wastewater services.

South Gippsland Water has sought feedback from individuals, groups, local businesses and industry regarding matters of significance via a number of activities including; surveys, workshops, presentations, discussion forums, in depth interviews and a number of discussion sheets and short surveys posed on our website.

The Corporation is currently working through the feedback received and using this to shape our plans for the future.

So what are our customers saying?



Planning

Customers have been very clear that planning for the future is key. Customers want South Gippsland Water to plan for the future and be in a position to respond to changing climate and regional pressures.

Customers indicated that they see water restrictions as being inevitable in drought years and favour the corporation using price and restrictions to communicate the value of water as a resource.

When looking at water security, customers favour networking water supplies where it is economical and complementary to existing systems.



Customers

Our customers are also conscious of social equity and support South Gippsland Water contributing to customer hardship programs.



Services

When it comes to our services, customers are telling us that the frequency of faults, not the time taken to fix a fault is most important. As such they support the Corporation investing in reducing faults. However when a fault occurs, customers want direct and effective communication relating to what's going on and an estimated time for service resumption.

Wastewater services have consistently rated highly due to health and amenity concerns. Customers indicate that South Gippsland Water should work towards minimal unplanned interruptions or impact inside the home.



Pricing

Customers want South Gippsland Water to incur only effective and efficient expenditure and avoid unnecessary increases to water bills.

Customers appear divided when it comes to changing the ratio of volumetric versus service charge pricing. Those who are absentee owners and landlords support reducing service charges and increasing volumetric charges (paid by tenants), a move to more of a focus on 'user pays'. But recent discussion sessions and deliberative forums with customers and community groups, have expressed concern for vulnerable customers who are already struggling to pay their bills. They feel it is an unfair and a large imposition to some customer segments (tenants, large and/or low income households, commercial and business customers).

South Gippsland Water is currently using the feedback provided to write its plan for the Essential Services Commission. In the coming months we will "road test" key elements of the draft plan with customers. If you want to stay up to date, you can email us at sgwater@sgwater.com.au to add your name to our interested persons register.



Predictions for Hot Dry Autumn

This summer and autumn has seen some interesting weather patterns emerge. Summer was wetter than average followed by a hotter and drier than average autumn. As a result, (so far) we have seen warm dry conditions leading to increased demand on our water supply systems. These conditions are predicted to continue.

Customers are encouraged to activate their water saving behaviours and to ensure they are following the Permanent Water Saving Rules.

Do you know the permanent water saving rules?

South Gippsland Water would like to encourage all customers to familiarise themselves with the Permanent Water Saving Rules. These are a set of common sense rules that should be followed year round and include;



Watering gardens during the cool: You should only water gardens with a sprinkler system between the hours of 6pm and 10am



Install trigger nozzles on hoses: All garden hoses should have a trigger nozzle and be leak free



Sweep, don't hose: Use a broom to sweep paving and other hard surfaces.

You may use a hose to clean buildings and other hard surfaces during the course of construction or renovations, if there is a health or safety hazard or if staining has developed and then only once a year. Use a high pressure water cleaner if available, if not use a bucket or hose and ensure a trigger nozzle is fitted to your hose.

Do You Have a Concession Card?

Make sure you let us know if you hold a concession card. If you do, we can apply a concession discount to your bill. Water and sewerage concessions are available for eligible card holders (owners and tenants), on their principal place of residence.

Eligible Cards

- Pension Concession Card (PCC) issued by Centrelink or Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- Department of Veteran Affairs Gold Repatriation Health Card
- Health Care Card (excluding "Commonwealth Seniors Health Card")

Eligibility Criteria

- The property must be your principal place of residence.
- You must be responsible for payment of the Service Account.
- The name and address on the Service Account needs to match the name and address on your Concession Card.

If the concession is not shown on the front of your account, or to apply for a concession for the first time, please contact South Gippsland Water's friendly Customer Service Team on 1300 851 636.

Renting? Tell Us When You Move



Do you rent? If so, don't forget to tell us when you move, so that we can arrange for your meter to be read and you don't get stung with the water usage charge from the new tenants. It is the tenant's responsibility to advise South Gippsland Water when vacating a property.

Call 1300 851 636 and talk to our friendly Customer Service Team at least 2 business days ahead of your vacating date.

Swap Sugary Drinks for Water in the H30 Challenge



Have you heard of the H30 Challenge? It's all about improving your health and saving you money by swapping those sugar filled beverages for tap water for 30 days.

An initiative of Vic Health, it's a cause we're glad to get behind along with other health and water organisations across broader Gippsland.

Why should you get on board? Water is good for us, it's low cost, easily accessible and contains no kilojoules. According to the H30 Challenge, nearly two thirds of Victorians are overweight or obese and we're heading for an obesity epidemic. One simple small step to take in the right direction is swapping sugary drinks for water for 30 days. It's an easy, convenient way to start making a big difference to your health.

Take the challenge today, sign up at h30challenge.com.au

ACCOUNTS

There are many ways to receive your account, pay your bill and track your account information – it's all about convenience, security and choice.

There are **two new ways** to do this at South Gippsland Water:

eAccount service - sign up at www.sgwater.formsport.com.au to receive your account by email.



BPAY View – an easy way to view, pay and store your bills and statements electronically.

Find more details enclosed here along with your account.



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24 Hour Emergencies & Faults: 5682 0444

www.sgwater.com.au

Moved? Update Your BPay Account Numbers

Many customers will forget to update their BPay account numbers following moving house and unfortunately pay the wrong water account. So don't forget that once you move you need to update the account number in BPay to the account number on your **new** water bill, otherwise you'll be paying someone else's water usage!