
Korumburra: Cleaning Pipes to Improve Water Quality

Following recent discoloured water occurrences for Korumburra, South Gippsland Water will bring forward planned network pipe cleaning.

Managing director Philippe du Plessis announced today that, “This cleaning program is in response to recent water quality”. Mr du Plessis went on to say that “South Gippsland Water recognises that some customers have been experiencing poor quality and the Corporation is working to rectify this as soon as possible. A system flush carried out in January assisted in reducing instances of discoloured water, however it is anticipated a thorough clean will significantly improve matters”.

The recent discoloured water has been due to the presence of a naturally occurring mineral, manganese. Manganese is an element that occurs naturally in rocks, soils and commonly found in the rivers and streams supplying water to South Gippsland’s small local water supply systems. When dissolved in water manganese is clear and not noticeable, however when it oxidises (combines with air) it transforms to a solid state and appears as fine brown and black particles. Whilst aesthetically unpleasant, water is safe to drink and bathe in. Water supplied meets the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and the Safe Drinking Water Regulations. Customers can find more information and fact sheets on the South Gippsland Water website (www.sgwater.com.au/discolouredwater).

A program of air scouring will commence on pipes across the Korumburra water supply system from the 12th February and will move systematically through the system and take approximately 6-8 weeks.

Mr du Plessis went on to say that, “It is preferred to do large scale system flushing and air scouring when water levels at the reservoir are higher, however, the number of occurrences of discoloured water in Korumburra has triggered bringing forward planned winter cleaning programs”

A key aim of this program is to remove the manganese mineral deposits from within the low lying sections of pipe lines. The cleaning process being used for Korumburra is called ‘Air Scouring’ where air and water are brought together under pressure and pushed through the pipes in waves to remove mineral deposits. Air scouring is the most water efficient method of cleaning the pipe network.

Properties subject to water supply interruption will be given a notification card with a minimum of 5 days notice to businesses and 3 days’ notice to residential customers, road side signage will also be in place.

Some customers water supply will be effected a number of times throughout the project due to the layout of the system and the need to prepare the pipes and valves. South Gippsland Water aim to reduce inconvenience to customers as much as possible and have scheduled some works to be carried out over night or at weekends.

For customers notified of a service interruption, on these days, customers are advised to store water for their daily needs. Customers should **avoid using water**, including all water appliances, such as washing machines, dishwashers and toilet cisterns.

After 3.30pm turn a tap on at the front or rear of your property until the water runs clear. You may wish to close the stop tap on days that water is being affected in your area. The stop tap is usually located next to the water meter. Air scouring is likely to stir up sediments and may create some pockets of discoloured water as mineral deposits are removed from the walls of pipes.

For other systems that have at times also experienced discoloured water, the Corporation is currently working to schedule air scouring of Poowong, Loch, Nyora and Foster water supply networks over the coming winter season.

For customers wishing to follow the progress, regular updates will be posted on our website (www.sgwater.com.au/Alerts), Facebook and Twitter pages. Customers can also call the Customer Service Team on 1300 851 636 to discuss any concerns regarding their water quality or the mains cleaning program in more detail.