

Monday 4th February 2019

Supplementary Supply Sustaining Towns

South Gippsland Water is currently using the Devon North bore which was commissioned following the most recent restrictions for Yarram and surrounds back in 2009. With this season's dry conditions and drought covering much of eastern Gippsland, South Gippsland Water has come to rely on water sourced from its bore in Devon North to sustain water supplies for Yarram, Devon North, Alberton and Port Albert.

Despite rumours circulating in the town, the bore water is treated to Australian standards and is safe to drink.

Tarra River flows dropped over the Australia Day long weekend and as a result, South Gippsland Water is now only using bore water for these towns. Managing Director Philippe du Plessis said that, "Water is being treated at South Gippsland Water's treatment plant at Devon North and analysis confirms that quality is high and the water meets all parameters of the national standard, the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

Mr du Plessis outlined that, "In advance to the switch to bore water, South Gippsland Water staff have made adjustments to treatment processes to account for the varying quality of bore water".

Mr du Plessis was "thankful for the long term preparation and planning that has gone into securing the region's water supply. In 2010 the Devon North bore was commissioned and additional water entitlements acquired to ensure that the system is secure. South Gippsland Water and our customers are seeing the benefits of this preparation now, during these dry conditions".

As of last Wednesday, South Gippsland Water stopped extraction from the Tarra River. Under South Gippsland Water's Bulk Entitlement and extraction licence requirements, when river flows are below 3ML per day, the Corporation cannot take any water and instead these flows must continue downstream for the benefit of the environment.

As a result of this, there are a number of customers who are supplied off the pipeline between the Tarra River and Devon North Water Treatment Plant who are affected. South Gippsland Water has been working directly with these customers, to notify them of the river conditions and that water extraction would cease last week.

Mr du Plessis said that, "The Corporation will continue to monitor river flow conditions and extraction of river water will commence once river flows increase and are sustained above the 3ML per day environmental flow requirements". Mr du Plessis went on to say that, "the valve and pipeline infrastructure are at their most vulnerable when drastically changing conditions such as turning on/off and charging or dis-charging a water main. So the Corporation undertakes these process gradually and cannot resume extraction until higher river flows are sustained".

Any customers who have questions or concerns regarding their water supply can contact South Gippsland Water's friendly Customer Service Team on 1300 851 636.

Photo: The Devon North Water Treatment Plant, where water is treated for the townships of Devon North, Yarram, Alberton and Port Albert.

