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### Safe Water and Sewer Services Essential

As an essential service provider, South Gippsland Water is well prepared to respond to coronavirus (COVID-19). South Gippsland Water has taken steps to ensure the safety of our workforce and the public by closing our offices and where possible, moving our entire workforce to working remotely. This is to ensure that essential water and sewerage services are continued to be supplied by our dedicated team.

Managing Director, South Gippsland Water, Philippe du Plessis said, “Some within the community have been concerned about the safety and continuity of their water services. South Gippsland Water would like to reassure customers that their water supplies remain safe and that there is no evidence that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is transmitted by drinking water”.

The current evidence is that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is most likely transmitted from person-to-person by sneezing and coughing. Drinking water in Australia is high quality and is well treated. There is no evidence that drinking water will be affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

“As a state owned water utility, South Gippsland Water has stringent hygiene measures in place at water treatment plants. In addition, there is almost no human contact in the process of treating water for drinking. Existing water treatment and disinfection processes, including use of chlorine, are effective in removing viruses from water supplies”.

Mr du Plessis went on to say that, “Water is an essential service and South Gippsland Water is well prepared to manage our response to coronavirus (COVID-19). The Corporation has activated existing emergency response plans and are continuing to update them in response to the most current available information”.

The Corporation’s water treatment plants are secure and require few staff to operate them, with some water treatment plants being operated remotely. Multiple staff are able to operate water treatment plants and water supply systems so that if one person is on leave for any reason, drinking water can still be safely and reliably supplied.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus can be transmitted via wastewater systems, with or without wastewater treatment. Current disinfection methods are expected to be sufficient to manage the COVID-19 virus. Wastewater continues to be managed and treated properly and carefully to protect public health and the environment.

WSAA, the Water Services Association Australia has provided a fact sheet relating to water and sewerage services and coronavirus (COVID-19),

<https://www.wsaa.asn.au/sites/default/files/publication/download/COVID-19%20Fact%20Sheet%2010032020.pdf>

Whilst the Corporation's offices are closed, staff are still working, including our Customer Service Team who are still available on 1300 851 636 to assist customers with any queries or concerns.

Photo: A regular water quality sample is taken from the water supply to be independently tested.



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