
Back to business in Korumburra

South Gippsland Water has worked tirelessly over the past month to return Korumburra Wastewater Treatment Plant to normal operations.

An unusual waste discharge received at the plant caused it to seriously malfunction. South Gippsland Water is continuing to investigate where this waste discharge originated.

We would like to thank the farmers, our community, local contractors and our major businesses for their patience and assistance during this difficult time.

Wastewater treatment is largely a natural process, completed by micro bugs. We're pleased the actions we have taken to remove wastewater from the plant, to better aerate it, and to reseed the plant with healthy micro bugs have worked.

You may have noticed increased truck traffic on our roads in the past fortnight. With the plant returning to its normal operations, trucking wastewater to other sites is no longer required, so we have ceased this activity.

Due to the unusual nature of the discharge we received, we were also forced to discharge water outside of normal environmental limits to Foster Creek. We ceased this discharge on 17 February 2020.

Because of this, people downstream of the plant may have noticed Foster Creek's water levels drop, perhaps more than usual for summer. The creek is also ephemeral, meaning it naturally dries up in summer.

We have returned the plant to operations that are consistent with our EPA licence parameters, so from today we are resuming our normal discharge into the creek. Resuming discharge in compliance with our licence will help flush it and improve its health.

We are closely monitoring the creek's water quality. For the next five days at least, while this flushing takes place, we recommend downstream landholders do not take water from the creek for stock or domestic purposes.

After this period, we would expect that the water in the creek would be of a quality that is normal for this time of year. It will be up to the landholder to assess their own risks and whether to give stock access to the creek. We can assist them by providing our monitoring data.

We've started work on an environmental plan for Foster Creek, alongside the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. We're also engaged an expert to assist us with this work.

We welcome the community's assistance and involvement in this plan and will be talking to neighbouring landholders and others who may be interested in the coming weeks.

For further information, visit our website at sgwater.com.au. If you would like to know more about the wastewater treatment process contact our friendly customer service team on 1300 851 636.