

Confirm your order

Please ensure you have a confirmed water order before taking water from regulated systems. Taking water without a confirmed order is an offence under the Water Act.

If you would like assistance to place an order online through WaterLINE contact your local G-MW team. Placing orders with the required notice and the confirmation process are vital to ensuring the system operates efficiently and the services meet customers' needs.

Don't take water illegally, use authorised extraction points

Before taking water from G-MW channels via a mobile tanker you must make application to do so at the local G-MW Irrigation Area office. You will be directed to take water from an approved site (there are a number of approved sites in each area) to ensure your safety and that the water is accounted for. You will also be provided with signage to display in the vehicle windscreen which clearly shows that the vehicle is authorised to take water from the channel system.

Customers are urged to report unauthorised taking of water to their local Area office.

contacts

To place an order go to Waterline online via G-MW's website or phone Waterline on 03 5871 0111

Internet

www.g-mwater.com.au

Hint Add the login page to your favourites

G-MW can be contacted during normal business hours at any of its offices.

Murray Valley Office:
03 5871 0100

Emergencies

Customers may contact G-MW to report emergencies and urgent matters such as reporting of pollution incidents and illegal activities by using the 24 hours emergency line.

24 hours emergency line:
1800 064 184

WSC MEMBERS

Heather du Vallon (Chair)	03 5864 1161 0407 641 163
Dudley Bryant (Deputy Chair)	03 5864 1124 0428 641 124
Max Baker	03 5864 1011 0429 099 559
Danny Bergamin	03 5864 1175 0447 641 174
Alan Hendy	03 5865 8250
Ben McCracken	03 5864 6591
Jim McKeown	03 5873 2276 0427 845 805
Kevin Whatman	03 5865 1399 0427 772 818



TMB 7772

Murray Valley

IRRIGATION AREA

Chair Message

Heather du Vallon - Chair

As we draw to the end of yet another tough season we look to the sky in the hope of good autumn/winter rains. Looking around the area, it is not the endless green pastures of days past, but the dry harsh looking paddocks that strike me. We know the Murray Valley area can grow feed and crops better than anywhere else, all we need is the water to make it happen.

Your Water Services Committee, along with the Modernisation Committee, has been busy over this season with the Foodbowl Modernisation Project. We are

working with G-MW and other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for irrigators from the massive investment.

The process is gathering momentum, and while there are only 80 automated regulators going in to Murray Valley this winter, next winter will see major changes. If you haven't been thinking about your farm layout to date, take the time to have a look at your setup and think about ways it could be improved. We will struggle to afford the channel network we currently have in the future,



so now is the time to get rid of unnecessary bits of channel. Someone will visit you prior to any changes being made, so have an idea of what you want ready to discuss with them.

Carryover review

A review of carryover arrangements is being conducted through the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy.

After widespread consultation with water users across northern Victoria through the draft Strategy, the Minister for Water announced a first stage change for the coming season. This change allows irrigators to carry over more unused water - up to 50% of their entitlement volume - into 2009/10.

A proposed model for the second and final stage of the carryover review, to be completed prior to 2010, has also been developed. This proposal would ensure that water users only lose their carryover when storages physically spill.

In summary:

- Individuals would be able to carry over all their unused water at the end of the year.
- Instead of losing water as allocations approach 100% (as they do under the current rules), individuals could receive full allocations and retain their carryover if there is available capacity in the storages.
- Water that individuals hold above their entitlement volume (seasonal allocations plus carryover) would be quarantined early in the season if there is a risk of the dams spilling. This would ensure that existing entitlements are protected if the dams do spill.
- Once the risk of spill had passed, all 'spillable' water (water above entitlement volume) would be made available in individuals' allocation bank accounts for use or trade.

This proposal seeks to enhance the existing carryover arrangements for all water users, by reducing the risk of losing water. A full paper on this proposal is available at <http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/programs/sws/northern/carryover>. Community feedback on this proposal can be given to rural water corporations and catchment management authority customer committees. The Department of Sustainability & Environment will be meeting with these committees during March 2009.

New Operations Manager Murray Valley

Jeff Parry grew up on an orchard near Shepparton, and commenced with the SR&WSC in 1975. Jeff has concentrated on water delivery for the majority of his career, primarily in the Shepparton Irrigation Area. He also spent two years as Assistant Manager in Central Goulburn followed by 6 years as Manager of the Rochester-Campaspe Irrigation Area. He now looks forward to applying skills learnt over this career to the new challenges presented by Murray Valley.

Since taking up my position here in Murray Valley I have been impressed with the way customers have faced the challenges of coping with very low water allocations. In the same way the staff members at Murray Valley have also responded extremely well to these challenges, and the cooperation between customers and staff has allowed water delivery to meet customer needs whilst keeping losses to an absolute minimum. Improving water use efficiency is vital as every drop saved can be put towards increased allocation, a benefit to us all.

The Murray Valley Water Services Committee (WSC) are vital in providing a link between customers and G-MW. Approximately one third of the committee comes up for election each year. These elections are held in late May and June. I urge everyone to think about who they would like to have representing them.



If you are interested, be ready to nominate for a vacancy, and, if elected, come and have your say on issues facing the water industry. If you don't wish to stand, make sure you contact your nearest WSC representative and keep him/her informed on issues facing you related to water.

2009 Season Update

Providing Certainty in an Uncertain World

G-MW's seasonal allocation outlooks indicate possible allocations during the season for dry, average and wet inflow conditions. The actual allocations will vary with the weather, water use and catchment conditions. With the outlook information and other weather and market forecasts, customers can decide how best to manage their business into the future. The first outlook for the 2009/10 season was produced on 15 February and this information will be updated on 15 May, 1 July and at each subsequent allocation announcement during the irrigation season. The outlooks will be released via various media sources, included in drought newsletters and can be found on G-MW's website.

Customer feedback from survey

G-MW strives for a culture of continuous improvement and each year it conducts a survey of customers to determine and monitor the level of satisfaction customers have for the services they receive from G-MW as well as providing an opportunity for suggestions on ways these services can be improved. The 2008 survey has been analysed and overall the results are very positive and encouraging given the extreme conditions we are in. Some suggestions include:

- Improved access to and availability of planners
- Communication of Customer Committees activities
- Inconsistent and fluctuating water supply levels in channels
- Response to complaints and requests
- Keeping customers informed on issues affecting them

G-MW has developed improvement action plans to respond to those issues highlighted through the survey where suggestion have been provided. Examples include the introduction of Night Shift and extended services via the Internet as described in the following articles.

Night Shift

Shepparton and Central Goulburn Irrigation Area customers can access planners from 7am through to 11:30pm 7 days a week as part of a trial program. The new rostering arrangements will also enable closer monitoring of the system for improved system efficiency, monitoring new automated sites and flows during the tuning and settling in period and quicker response times to emergencies and issues.

The trial comes in response to customer feedback through our recent customer survey and complements the introduction of automation across these Irrigation Areas. Following the positive response from customers we anticipate the extended operating hours will become permanent from next season and rolled out in other Irrigation Areas in line with modernisation and automation.

WaterLine online ordering

G-MW customers are increasingly placing their water orders using Water Online. In 2007/08 online ordering has nearly tripled with 22% of all orders placed via the Web and this has increased again this season. WaterLINE online offers the same features as the phone service, is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and you can print your own Water Statements. In the near future you will be able to enter your meter readings via the Web providing up to date usage information to help with planning your water entitlements.

End of season orders

The season for all gravity Irrigation Areas ends on the 15 May. To enable the efficient planning of supplies, the last water order day for Irrigation Areas is 8 May, with the exception of the Pyramid-Boort Area, where the last order day is 1 May because it is the furthest from the water storages.

Private use of G-MW vehicles

Some G-MW Operations staff have access to the use of vehicles under a "limited private" use arrangement. This arrangement allows the use of vehicles, for private purposes, under stringent conditions and those who take up this offer contribute financially to the operational costs of the vehicle.

Vehicles being utilized for private use are designated by a window sticker advising that the "Driver contributes to the cost of operating the vehicle".

This arrangement allows more flexibility for staff and assists with improved response times to issues, as staff can respond to calls from their current location rather than returning to a designated point to access a vehicle prior to responding to an issue.

Winter D&S Requirements

Customers are warned not to rely on water left in channels at the end of the season to meet their winter domestic and stock needs. If you do not have enough water storage on-farm for the winter period you should consider increasing your storage capacity or explore other water supply options including groundwater, public stand pipe facilities or the carting of water from other sources. Without a substantial autumn break there may be delays to the start of next season and customers need to factor this into their planning.

Pricing

In February the G-MW Board approved a schedule of prices for inclusion in the 2009/10 Water Services Plan. Following consultation with Water Services Committees a range of feedback has been provided to the Board and the Essential Services Commission and a final pricing recommendation has been presented to the April Board meeting. G-MW will prepare a further submission for the ESC, who will decide whether to approve or amend the G-MW's pricing schedule. 2009/10 prices will be published on or before 30 June 2009.

Modernisation update

Northern Victorian Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP)

The 2009 winter works will commence following the closure of the irrigation season on May 15. Last year in the dry winter conditions the Early Works undertaken by FutureFlow on behalf of NVIRP achieved the installation of 1000 regulator gates. This year a further 800 channel regulators will be modernised with the installation of a further 1200 gates. Work will be undertaken in the Central Goulburn, Rochester, Pyramid-Boort, Murray Valley and Torrumbarry Irrigation Areas.

Modernisation Staff from NVIRP along with Farm Irrigation Assessors are talking with landowners in the areas where works are planned to be undertaken.

More than twenty kilometres of channel lining is planned to be installed in channels in the Central Goulburn Irrigation Area.

For further information regarding NVIRP's 2009 winter works please call 1300 163 006 or visit www.nvirp.com.au

Project by region

	Gate Installations	Meter Installations (throughout 2009)
Central Goulburn	260	1350
Rochester-Campaspe	410	450
Pyramid-Boort	350	150
Murray Valley	80	70
Torrumbarry	120	260
2009 total	1220	2280

