

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2012

During June G-MW completes its annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. The 2012 survey will include 750 telephone interviews with customers across the G-MW area. This year we have also added an online survey to ensure all customers have the opportunity to provide feedback on our services. The online survey will be available at www.g-mwater.com.au

The survey is a key tool in measuring customers' views on our water management and delivery as well as customer service, communications and consultation processes. The survey results help us to identify areas for improvement as well as areas where we are doing well.

The final results will be shared with the Water Services Committees over the coming months as we identify ways to further improve the services we deliver.

Changing River Levels

The winter/spring period has traditionally seen regulated river reaches operated at low levels due to low demand from river diverters and the shutdown of irrigation areas.

The Commonwealth and Victorian Environmental Water Holders hold water entitlements which are used to provide environmental flows in regulated river reaches. As a result flow regimes in regulated rivers will be different in the future to those observed historically, mainly higher and more variable. It is G-MW's understanding that the Environmental Water will be released during winter and spring, but use in summer and autumn may also occur and is at the discretion of the Environmental Water Holders.

While regulated flows will remain well below minor flood levels, diversion customers with low lying irrigation infrastructure may be affected by these higher flows and should note the increased likelihood of such events occurring. If your pumping infrastructure is or will be affected you should take the necessary steps to ensure you have relocated your works to accommodate the new levels maintaining your access as required. Prior to undertaking any relocation of works you are advised to contact your local Diversions Inspector for advice.

Regulated environmental flows will occur primarily in the Goulburn River, in particular the lower Goulburn River below Goulburn Weir, but also in the Campaspe and Loddon rivers. As has always been the case, flows in regulated river reaches will continue to fluctuate in response to rainfall events and unregulated tributary inflow.

More information on expected river flows and planned environmental releases can be found on the G-MW website under Managing Water Storages: <http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/managing-water-storages>.

Private Dams Operating Licences

G-MW have in recent months been undertaking the renewal of operating licences for those registered farm dams that are categorised as large potentially hazardous dams.

G-MW would like to thank those that have completed and submitted their renewal application and acknowledge their cooperation. If you are yet to complete your obligations you are encouraged to do so as soon as possible to ensure you are compliant.

Your WSC Contact details

GOULBURN BROKEN REGIONAL WSC

Morris Brown (Chair)	0428 673 227
Wayne Spinks (Deputy Chair)	0418 557 679
Mark Foletta	0438 682 382
David Scott	0437 212 494
Craig Madden	0407 576 804
Sandy MacKenzie	0477 552 426
Geoff Everist	0407 314 319

You can also contact your Regional Water Services Committee through the committees' relevant webpage at www.g-mwater.com.au/wsc

LODDON CAMPASPE REGIONAL WSC

Please contact the Rochester Customer Service Centre on (03) 5484 7400 or the Pyramid Hill Customer Service Centre on (03) 5451 6800.

OVENS, KING & MID MURRAY AND UPPER MURRAY, MITTA & KIEWA REGIONAL WSC'S

Please contact the Cobram Customer Service Centre on (03) 5873 3800 or the Wangaratta Customer Service Centre on (03) 5723 3200.

Rural Support Line 1300 655 969

Lifeline 131 114

Beyondblue 1300 224 636

Emergencies

To report emergencies and urgent matters such as pollution incidents and illegal activities call our 24 hour emergency line.

24 hour emergency line:

1800 064 184

contacts

Central Murray Operations
Kerang (03) 5450 5300

Loddon-Campaspe Operations
Rochester (03) 5484 7400
Pyramid Hill (03) 5451 6800

Goulburn-Broken Operations
Shepparton (03) 5822 7900
Tatura (03) 5826 3705

Murray North-East Operations
Cobram (03) 5873 3800
Wangaratta (03) 5723 3200

G-MW e-services



Online Payments:
To pay your G-MW account please visit our website at www.g-mwater.com.au



eDams:
Water storage levels emailed to you daily, weekly or monthly.



Online offers additional features such as the ability to view spare channel capacity and adjust flow rates and duration - all with 24 hour, 7 days a week convenience.



Groundwater & Surface Water Diverters

Chair's Messages

GOULBURN BROKEN RWSC

Another irrigation year nearly over and what a change to be able to have a full allocation of water to use. Unfortunately some got more than they wanted due to the floods and we wish them well in their recovery. Prices have increased a little again this coming season, your Water Services Committee will be working hard to keep price rises to a minimum.

Speaking of Water Services Committees the Goulburn Broken Regional WSC is currently a couple of members short especially on the Goulburn Catchment. If you want to help make a difference in the way G-MW can progress then put your hand up. Contact the local Shepparton office of G-MW for further information.

As you are aware we have a new Board and Managing Director at G-MW that have nearly completed 12 months in charge, we need to give them time to understand the business, but present indications from interactions with them is that the organisation is in good hands and heading in the right direction.

G-MW put a submission to the Murray Darling Basin Authority pointing out shortcomings and also good points in their plan. The Goulburn Broken Regional WSC had input into the submission and hopefully Canberra will listen to some of the suggested changes.

Morris Brown

LODDON CAMPASPE RWSC

Extreme rainfall variability continues throughout Victorian catchments and the Loddon/Campaspe basin is no different. After many years of low or nil allocation, I in 100 year floods severely impacted our basins in Jan 2011. Serious and widespread infrastructure damage resulted and it is clear many irrigators have not fully recovered. For example, only 6,500 ML has been used from a Loddon licence volume of 21,000 ML. With a high probability of full allocation next season and carryover, diverters should be well placed if seasonal conditions deteriorate.

The purchase of Victorian water entitlements by the Federal Government continues, with the tenders from the latest round adding to the significant holdings of about 400GL as at the end of April. These holdings together with other environmental holdings make the Environment the largest holder of Victorian water entitlements. How the Murray-Darling Basin Plan evolves is politically and environmentally unknown, but the use of water and management of flows is entering a new era.

The new board and management of G-MW are to have a comprehensive tariff review and our WSC has proposed to re-establish finance sub-committees to review charges in our regulated, unregulated and groundwater systems. These charges have risen massively in the last several years. There has been a failure between G-MW, Water Service Committees and customers to fully explain and justify these costs. Although 2012/13 charges are indicated to rise by the Consumer Price Index + 2%, charges are starting from such a high base that these indicative charges are still too high. A complete review is needed.

In April G-MW held customer meetings throughout northern Victoria. Locally these meetings were very poorly attended. Our WSC and G-MW will review the future of these meetings and discuss the most appropriate model for G-MW and customer interaction.

I wish all irrigators the best for the coming season and advise that all WSC members are available to help customers.

Alan Rothacker

OVEN, KING & MID MURRAY RWSC

It has been challenging times coming out of a long severe period of drought into the last two seasons. Very wet periods caused flooding and subsequently stifled the demand for irrigation water.

I have been advocating keeping water prices as low as possible. The cost of irrigation water in the Ovens and King, particularly for irrigators who have not been irrigating, is becoming a liability. This is even more so for those ex tobacco growers who haven't found alternative crops to grow. However things could change very quickly and these tobacco farms have got the infrastructure in place for water to be used for intensive irrigation farming.

During the last year I had the privilege to attend the Irrigation Australia conference in Tasmania which was very informative. There is a vast expansion of irrigation in Tasmania, with more dams being built and a huge increase in pivot irrigation on a wide variety of crops. This proves the old adage that where you have security of water you will be able to create valuable agricultural growth. I've been on the Victorian Murray Darling Basin advisory committee, one point I strongly advocated for is that we must use irrigation water close to its source, and we must encourage this more in the future.

Recently I attended a meeting with Llew Vale, Chairman of G-MW, at Tafco Myrtleford discussing the fate of unused irrigation water, and other irrigator's grievances.

I am very impressed with the new G-MW Board. They are seeking our input and they seem to be really listening to our views and we are receiving positive vibes back on a number of issues. It seems we are all heading in the same direction.

I have put forward that an evening meeting be organised for irrigators and G-MW late in August, so that irrigators can air their views. Irrigators will be notified once details are finalised.

Malcolm Carson

UPPER MURRAY, MITTA & KIEWA RWSC

After two wet summers, irrigation in the upper catchments is currently a low priority. Very few people have used much, if any of their entitlements. With the price of water having steadily increased over the years, customers are questioning whether a water licence is an asset or a liability. To ignore the bill is not an option as it will incur interest and not go away. Please contact G-MW immediately if you have any issues with your account. To surrender the licence at this point may mean that it is lost for productive use for good.

At our annual Water Service Committee workshop in July we will be exploring options to assist customers in reducing their liabilities whilst retaining the water in the catchment for future development opportunities. Other key issues that will be on the table for discussion at this year's workshop include: Trading of water entitlements for unregulated diverters, a number of issues that stem from the 2007 unbundling in the regulated systems and the potential unbundling of entitlement in unregulated systems.

Submissions to the MDBA closed in April. G-MW with the input of your WSC put in a long and comprehensive submission. In this region it was pointed out the Mitta only received its water entitlements as compensation from the detrimental effects of Dartmouth. The Kiewa may have met its in stream environmental flows but was not eligible for buy backs or money for infrastructure up grades. However all the rivers in the North East are still meant to contribute to the 974 GL that is Victoria's share to the MDB plan.

G-MW is regulated by the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) and must submit a water plan to the Essential Services Commission (ESC). Water Plan 3 covering 2013/14 to 2015/16 is currently being developed by G-MW and is available for comment. The final version is due with the ESC in September 2012. We have been given an undertaking that G-MW will be focussed on reducing costs over the period of this plan to ensure prices are kept as low as possible. WSC chairs have been invited to participate in this process.

Peter Serpell

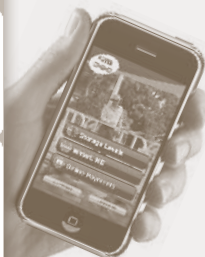
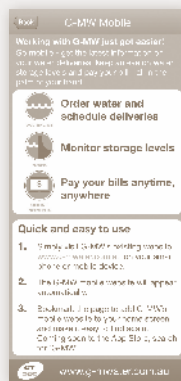
Water Information goes mobile!

G-MW has launched a new mobile platform for some of its most popular online information.

You can now get the latest information on water storages including current levels, weekly changes and average levels right in the palm of your hand.

G-MW customers can also use the mobile site to check on water deliveries and pay bills.

Simply visit G-MW's existing website www.g-mwater.com.au on your smart phone or mobile device and the new mobile website will appear automatically.



newsletter

With your newsletter you'll also find:

The G-MW 2012/13 pricing schedule - This schedule is for your information and allows you to compare prices across all of G-MW's different services. G-MW is required to mail out the full schedule by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) as part of the ACCC transitioning to regulating water prices for water infrastructure operators in the Murray-Darling Basin.

G-MW has extracted pricing data specific to your Area and included it in this newsletter to make it easier for you to identify your costs.

G-MW Water Plan 3 update

G-MW has released the first in a series of discussion papers to help inform the development of its three year Water Plan which commences July 2013.

The final Water Plan is the mechanism for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission / Essential Services Commission to approve water corporations' revenue and prices.

G-MW has produced 4 separate consultation brochures for its customer groups including:

- Irrigation District customers (including pumped)
- Bulk Water customers and Headworks users
- Water District customers and Loch Garry and
- Licensed Diversifiers

These consultation brochures outline proposed levels of service, capital expenditure, cost saving measures and the projected amount of income required.

Key points about the first discussion papers:

- Proposed that revenue be capped at CPI plus 1.5% annually.
- To achieve this, a \$6 million efficiency saving from within G-MW over the three year term of the Water Plan must be achieved.
- A reduction in G-MW operational staff in the coming years by 25%, recognising that the full benefits of modernisation of G-MW's infrastructure cannot be achieved until the project is complete. It is anticipated that this reduction will occur through natural attrition.

The second discussion paper in the series, to be released in July, will be focused on the design of our tariff system. Water Services Committees Chairs will guide the development of a tariff strategy for the longer term and help inform G-MW's Water Plan. The final in the series, scheduled for late September, will be our Water Plan with proposed pricing.

Copies of G-MW's 4 Water Plan consultation brochures are available online at www.g-mwater.com.au/water-plan-3 or from your local G-MW Customer Service Centre.

The opportunity to provide feedback closes on Monday 30 July 2012.

End of Season Meter Reading

If you have used water after the 1st May you are reminded to contact your Diversions Inspector no later than the 20th June to ensure the usage is recorded against your 2011/2012 seasonal entitlement. Any usage not recorded prior to 20 June will be accounted for as usage in the 2012/13 season.

Integration

From 1 July this year, the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVRP) will be integrated into G-MW.

The combined organisation will be called Goulburn-Murray Water and will continue modernising irrigation infrastructure throughout the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District.

For further information please visit www.g-mwater.com.au

Check Your Dam - Your Responsibility

Dams that are not maintained adequately pose a significant risk in times of heavy rainfall events. In the past 12 months we have seen examples of dam failures due to overtopping and poor maintenance. This can be a significant liability for landowners.

With most dams full or near full dam owners are advised to check their dams as a failed dam is expensive to repair and can deny customers a vital source of water. Collapsed dams can also cause significant damage to the environment and to neighbouring downstream properties. The potential liability for dam owners can be significant.

It is critical that the compensation pipe is operative for the dam owner to comply with their obligation to ensure all minimum base flow and all summer flows are passed through the dams as required in the operation of the dam.

G-MW recommends that landowners check their dams regularly as part of their weekly routine.

Local Management Plans (Groundwater)

The draft Lower Ovens Local Management Plans (LMP) public consultation will be complete by early June 2012. This will be followed by a review of submissions prior to preparing the final draft for approval.

G-MW have also commenced work on a further three Groundwater LMPs for the Upper Goulburn, Strathbogie and Central Victorian Mineral Springs regions. Public meetings have been held in late May 2012 and early June 2012 to identify a range of issues for each area. G-MW will progress these plans over the next twelve months as part of a program to develop similar plans for the region as outlined in the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy.

Water Supply Protection Area Management Plan Updates

The Upper Ovens water management plan (Surface & Groundwater) has now been approved by the Minister for Water and moved into the implementation stage.

The draft Loddon Highlands groundwater management plan will be released for consultation in mid June. A public meeting is planned for 26 June 2012 at Ascot Public Hall as a part of this process.

The Lower Campaspe Valley groundwater management plan public consultation process has been completed and the committee will now consider submissions before preparing a final draft plan for submission to the Minister.

The Katunga groundwater management plan 5 year review was completed earlier this year. A number of draft recommendations have been prepared after considering feedback from customers. It has been decided to defer the process of seeking amendments to the plan until after the release of the MDB plan.

Local Management Rules (Surface Water)

The developments of Local Management Rules (LMRs) were an action as part of the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy. The LMRs are a basic statement of the rules, and/or special considerations that applies to the taking of water under a licence for commercial/irrigation purposes. They are the formalisation of the existing operating arrangements for unregulated streams in Northern Victoria.

The LMRs document rules for applying restrictions and rosters, passing flow requirements, trading zones and management objectives. These have been completed across each of the majors Basins in Northern Victoria. Overall there are 93 separate LMR documents which are identified into their corresponding basin. These major Basins and their corresponding LMRs can be accessed via the G-MW web site at www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/surface-water/unregulated-local-management-rules.

Water services prices 2012/13

2012/13 prices have now been approved by the Essential Services Commission.

Fees & Charges

	UNIT	Murray System	Goulburn System	Shepparton Irrigation Region WSPA	Katunga, Kinglake, Loddon Highlands, Lower Campaspe, Lower Ovens, Mid Goulburn, Mid Loddon, Upper Ovens	Other Groundwater
All Diversion						
Service	\$ / Licence	180.00	180.00	180.00	180.00	180.00
Overuse	\$ / ML	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Regulated Waterways						
Water Delivery	\$ / ML/day	740.00	561.00	-	-	-
Fish Farming	\$ / ML/day	-	32.40	-	-	-
Unregulated Waterways						
Water Delivery	\$ / ML	22.30	24.20	-	-	-
Fish Farming	\$ / ML/day	32.40	32.40	-	-	-
Groundwater						
Additional Service Point	\$ / Each	-	-	100.00	100.00	100.00
Entitlement	\$ / ML	-	-	3.68	3.68	3.68
Intensive Management	\$ / ML	-	-	1.70	4.60	-

Examples of a medium customer impact

	Murray Regulated	Murray Unregulated	Goulburn Regulated	Goulburn Unregulated	Groundwater Base (base fee only)	Groundwater Intensive (includes base and intensive fees)	Groundwater Shepparton (includes base and intensive fees)
Water Shares (HRWS/LRWS)	300/144	n/a	100/48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Capacity Share (ML/day)	0.8	n/a	1.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Licensed entitlement (ML)	n/a	45	n/a	45	60	150	150
2011/12 Current	1,802.93	1,146.30	1,831.98	1,230.45	392.70	1,378.20	949.20
2012/13 Approved	1,868.96	1,183.50	1,901.80	1,269.00	400.80	1,422.00	987.00
Change \$	66.03	37.20	69.82	38.55	8.10	43.80	37.80
Change %	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%

Pricing Simulators

G-MW has developed pricing simulators that can help you understand the charges that will apply for your services in 2012/13. G-MW's simulators are available at www.g-mwater.com.au

