

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Sewer inspection moves to Metung**

East Gippsland Water is carrying out a comprehensive condition check on the sewer system in Metung, as part of an ongoing region-wide inspection program to help ensure customers receive reliable and efficient sewerage services.

State-of-the-art CCTV and sonar equipment is being lowered down manholes into the sewer system, enabling lengthy sections of pipeline to be inspected in just a matter of seconds. This will detect deteriorating pipework, tree root infiltration and partial blockages that could affect the present or future reliability of the sewer system.

The inspection work in Metung is being conducted in stages and will encompass around 20km of sewer, taking approximately three months to complete. Importantly it will enable any potential issues to be addressed proactively, reducing the likelihood of future blockages, overflows and unplanned interruptions to sewerage services.

In instances where entry is required to customers' properties to access manholes, every effort will be made to notify those affected in advance and to keep any inconvenience to a minimum, with access only required for a matter of minutes. Affected customers can assist by ensuring their manhole is easy to get to and not obstructed, such as by wood piles, bricks, plants or garden waste.

East Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Bruce Hammond, said, "We would like to thank Metung householders and businesses for their cooperation. Proactively carrying out condition checks like this in towns across East Gippsland has been key to reducing unplanned interruptions in our extensive sewerage network and has positioned us as an industry leader in this field. Importantly, it has cut the costs involved in carrying out repairs and the associated disruption to customers."

The corporation has responsibility for nearly 700km of sewer mains around the region, with around \$10 million to be invested this financial year in the maintenance and operation of sewerage, as well as water, infrastructure.

A particular challenge faced by the water industry at the moment is sewer blockages caused by wet wipes flushed down the toilet. These wipes - including baby wipes, makeup wipes and similar products - do not break down in the sewerage system, despite manufacturers' packaging that in some cases says they are "flushable".

East Gippsland Water has seen a 25 percent increase in wipe-related blockages over the past two years alone, with about 95 percent of all its sewer blockages directly related to wipes. Customers can do their bit to improve this situation by ensuring they do not flush any wet wipes down the toilet, no matter what the packaging says.

Customers encountering a sewer problem should contact the corporation's 24 hour emergency and faults service on 1300 134 202.

Ends