

Bushfires, your water supply and assisting with water bills



Steve McKenzie,
Managing Director

“In the face of exceptional challenges presented by an extreme bushfire season, East Gippsland Water staff have been pulling out all the stops to maintain and restore normal water and wastewater services for all the communities we serve.

“During peak bushfire activity around New Year we were able to maintain services to 98 percent of customers. Town water supply systems are not designed to deal with bushfire events and unfortunately there were occasions when some customers experienced a drop in water pressure or an interruption to their supply. This was due to unprecedented and uncontrollable water demand because of the fire threat.

Moving forward

“When possible, we’ve taken the opportunity to replenish water supplies across the region, in preparation for further possible extreme weather events.

“We’ve prepared for rainfall potentially impacting on the quality of our waterways in fire-damaged catchments, with measures in place to safeguard supplies of treated water to customers.

Financial relief available

“A range of financial relief measures have been established to help East Gippsland Water customers directly impacted by the recent bushfires.

“We estimate 200 homes and businesses were destroyed in the East Gippsland Water service area, and significant service disruption caused to some communities.

“We are supporting impacted customers by easing some of the financial pressure at this very difficult time. We have delayed our latest billing cycle to all customers by a month to provide some respite, with 35 days allowed for payment instead of the normal 28 days.

“For customers directly affected by fire damage or service disruption, measures include:

- Waiving water and sewerage bills for 12 months for a customer’s home or business destroyed or made uninhabitable by bushfire, effective from this bill.
- Rebates for customers affected by water service interruptions due to the bushfires. This includes Mallacoota, Omeo and Buchan, where customers were temporarily advised to not drink the water.

“Customers experiencing financial hardship, and those with special circumstances, should contact our Customer team on 1800 671 841 to discuss support available, including eligibility for any rebates.

“Members of the team will also be visiting the following communities – providing an opportunity for you to discuss options for support face-to-face:

Date	Time	Location
2 Apr	9-11am	Bruthen - Mechanics Hall
2 Apr	2-4pm	Sarsfield – Community Hall
3 Apr	9-11am	Omeo – Soldiers Memorial Hall
3 Apr	2-4pm	Swifts Creek – Community Ctre
14 Apr	9-11am	Buchan - Neighbourhood Hse
14 Apr	2-4pm	Nowa Nowa – Health Ctre
15 Apr	9am-3pm	Mallacoota – Community Ctre
16 Apr	10am-1pm	Cann River – Community Hse

“There is no need to book. Simply turn up on the day.

Your mobile number is an important contact

“During the bushfires we were able to SMS customers with important information about service disruptions and water quality. This was very effective in getting out targeted messages to local communities very quickly.

“We would like to make this service even better, by getting more customers to register their mobile phone contact details with us. This will make it easier for us to get in touch with you when we need to. Simply contact our Customer team on 1800 671 841, or go to the home page of our website and click on ‘Change billing details’.”

Circumstances changed?



We're here to help

We all have times when things get tough. This may be due to a loss of income, a new addition to the family, illness or family violence.

During periods like this East Gippsland Water can help you with payment of your water bill. We have a financial assistance program and payment options to assist customers, including flexible payments that can be arranged on a case-by-case basis. There is also free independent financial counselling available.

To find out more, call our Customer Business Team, in confidence, on 1800 671 841, or complete our financial assistance form online.

Concessions

Residential customers holding a Centrelink Health Care, Pensioner Concession, or Department of Veteran Affairs Concession Card, may be entitled to receive a discount on their East Gippsland Water bill, for their principal place of residence

Concession card holders are also able to pay by instalment using Centrelink's Centrepay service. For more information contact the Customer Business Team.

Check your details

Please check and make sure that your postal and personal contact details for your East Gippsland Water account are up to date. If not, give us a call.

Check before you water!

Before watering the garden or lawn check what restriction level applies by visiting our website egwater.vic.gov.au or call us on 1800 671 841.

Permanent Water Saving Rules:

(Apply at all times when staged water restrictions are not in force)

Residential and commercial lawns and garden areas can be watered:

- only between 6pm and 10am using a watering system
- at any time using a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, a bucket or watering can.

Only water if you need to!

Water restrictions:

Stage 1 (Alert)

No watering of residential or commercial lawns, or garden areas, except as required and then only by means of:

- a watering system on alternate days*, between 6am and 10am, and between 6pm and 10pm
- a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, a bucket or watering can at any time.

Stage 2 (Save)

No watering of residential or commercial lawns at any time.

No watering of residential or commercial garden areas, except as required and then only by means of:

- a watering system on alternate days*, between 6am and 8am, and between 6pm and 8pm
- a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, a bucket or watering can at any time

** Alternate days means odd-numbered properties can water on odd-numbered days of the month. Even-numbered properties and those with no number can water on even-numbered days of the month. All properties can water on the 31st day of the month.*

We welcome your feedback on this newsletter. Please contact:

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