

Your voice matters as we look to the future



Steve McKenzie,
Managing Director

“Earlier in the year a good number of customers, key stakeholders and members of the wider community participated in the first round of a major engagement program - taking a closer look at the services we deliver and what matters most to you.

“This was a vital step that will inform what we focus on next with our engagement and ultimately the future direction of our business to meet your needs and priorities.

“More than 240 people completed our questionnaire at community markets we attended, or online, with others taking part in one of several focus group sessions or a one-on-one interview.

“Strong findings from this round include:

- Your concerns about the impact of future droughts, bushfires and more people living in the region - highlighting the importance of making sure there is enough water to meet future community needs;
- Ensuring the affordability of East Gippsland Water services;

- Many of you would like to see more activity from East Gippsland Water in relation to environmental sustainability;
- That there is a need for us to invest in increasing the community’s understanding of water issues in our region.

“We are in the process of setting up a special forum where these findings, and others, will be considered in more detail by a diverse group comprising customers, stakeholders and members of the wider community. They will have the task of coming to a consensus, a resolution or recommendation, on how we should act on these issues going forward in our 2023 Price Submission (our business operations).

“If you would like to take part in the forum, we are now inviting expressions of interest for participants. Simply submit your details using the QR Code below.

Or, go to the Price Submission page on our website egwater.vic.gov.au and click on the link for the Deliberative Forum to leave your details. Also, more on the key findings is on our website.”



Bushfires and the water supply

While we will make every effort to maintain a reliable reticulated water service in the event of a bushfire, supply cannot be guaranteed and CFA advice is that leaving is the best option to protect you and your family.

The reticulated water supply is only designed to cope with everyday needs. Excessively high levels of demand from customers and emergency services place this supply under extreme load, which may lead to a drop in water pressure, or loss of supply altogether. It may also affect water quality.

In addition, supply availability may be impacted by damage to the reticulated infrastructure itself, or even by sprinklers left on at properties evacuated – leaving firefighters with insufficient water to extract from hydrants, particularly at the end of a system or at a high point.

Plan for your water supply in a bushfire



Should you decide to stay, you can consult CFA’s website cfa.vic.gov.au for free information and advice to help prepare a bushfire plan. For details of fires visit the website emergency.vic.gov.au. In addition, there is the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.

Finally, where a bushfire poses an imminent threat to property, please note that any water saving rules or water restrictions are automatically waived.

Informing you fast with SMS!

We have been expanding our use of SMS to get important messages to customers quickly, such as service interruptions.

We want to make our SMS messaging service even better, which means having more customers register their mobile contact details with us. This will make it easier for us to get in touch with you when we need to. Simply call our Customer Business Team on 1800 671 841, or go to the home page of our website and click on 'Change billing details'.

Stop it. Don't block it!

Please only flush pee, poo and toilet paper down the toilet and **not** kitchen paper, tissues or wipes as these can lead to sewer blockages and overflows and should be placed in the bin instead.

Other items for the bin include sanitary pads, tampons, incontinence pads, rags and disposable nappies.

Wipes, including those marked as 'flushable', simply do not break down in the sewer system, blocking pipes and jamming up equipment such as heavy-duty sewer pumps. This is very costly for us to address.

If you have a problem call us on 1300 134 202.

One of our pumps found blocked with wipes and rags



Struggling to pay your bill?

We appreciate there may be many customers experiencing financial hardship at the moment.

We have a range of financial assistance available to residential and small business customers - including assistance programs and payment options, such as flexible payments. These can be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

There is also independent financial counselling available at no cost to the customer.

For more information and advice call our Customer Business Team in confidence on 1800 671 841.

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.

Water update

As this newsletter goes to print there are no staged water restrictions in force in East Gippsland.

Common-sense Permanent Water Saving Rules do apply. This means not using a sprinkler system to water the garden, unless it's between 6pm and 10am. It also means not washing down hard surfaces such as driveways, paths or decking, unless absolutely necessary. For more, please refer to the back of your bill.

As best practice we should all ensure we use water efficiently. *Target Your Water Use* is a voluntary program to assist regional Victorians to use water wisely, both in the garden and around the home. Visit our website egwater.vic.gov.au for more information and links to Smart Water Advice for tips on how to save water.

We welcome your feedback on this newsletter. Please contact:

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1300 134 202

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