

# IN THE FLOW!

Keeping you in the know about your water and wastewater services.

## East Gippsland Water



**“An important date in the water industry calendar is World Water Day, with the theme this year ‘Groundwater’ - hiding invisibly under our feet and yet the world’s most abundant freshwater resource.**

“The United Nations states, ‘When we protect groundwater we save lives and ecosystems, improve health, reduce hunger and tackle climate change all at once’.

“The importance of this precious resource is underlined by the fact that there are currently some two billion people living without access to safe water around the world. Fortunately that is not a problem in East Gippsland, where our treated water is guaranteed safe to drink.

“Of the nine separate water supply systems operated by East Gippsland Water, six utilise surface water only – namely from rivers and creeks – which leaves three that use groundwater to a varying degree.

“Dinner Plain is one hundred per cent reliant on groundwater, while Mallacoota is supplied by groundwater when the flow or quality of supply from the Betka River is insufficient. Then there is the Mitchell River system where we have the capability to draw a restricted volume of water from the river, store it underground in an aquifer – making it essentially groundwater – and then extract it as required to treat and supply to customers (known as Aquifer Storage and Recovery).

“In all three cases, as with all our water harvesting, we are very tightly regulated on how much water we can extract, to ensure there is no negative impact on the environment and other water users. Indeed, protecting the environment is one of our top priorities.

“To put our groundwater-use into context, of the 5,373 million litres of water we extracted in total for all our supply systems between July 2020 and June last year (the latest annual figures available), 134 million litres was groundwater with the rest from rivers and creeks.

“If you’d like to find out more please go to the home page of our website, click on ‘Customer Info’ on the top tool bar and visit the ‘Water’ section.”



**Steve McKenzie,  
Managing Director,  
East Gippsland Water**



**Dinner Plain, showing the storage tank for harvested groundwater**

### Final call to help shape the future of our services

Customers have until midnight tonight (23 March) to register their interest to participate in a special forum that will help us make some big decisions about key areas of our business.

This is an opportunity to collaborate with us, as we look to spend \$200 million in the next ten years. Your recommendations will be put forward to our Board, which will influence how we proceed with prices and services.

Two questions to be considered at the forum are:

1. East Gippsland Water has to spend more replacing ageing infrastructure in the next 10 years than the previous 10 years. What is the fairest way of sharing the cost of these projects between current and future customers?

2. Over the last few years, East Gippsland customers have been impacted by drought, bushfires and the pandemic. East Gippsland Water currently distributes \$150,000 per year to customers who have fallen on hard times. In the next five years, how much money should be distributed to customers and how should this be used?

We are keen for customers from all walks of life to register their interest to participate. Those then selected to take part will receive payment to recognise their time and commitment to the forum.

No forum experience is necessary, or prior knowledge about water or wastewater. All we ask is enthusiasm to represent a diverse community. The forum will take place over one evening and two weekend days in late April and early May, and will be conducted over Zoom video conference. A practice session will be held beforehand for those unfamiliar with the technology.

Those registering their interest will also go into a free prize draw to win \$100 credit to their East Gippsland Water account. The five winners will be drawn on 30 March and notified shortly afterwards.

To register use the QR Code to the right, or go to our website [egwater.vic.gov.au](http://egwater.vic.gov.au) and click on ‘Your voice matters’ on the home page.

If you have any questions or need assistance registering, please contact the Customer, Community & Communications Team on 1800 671 841.

Finally, thank you to all those who have already registered their interest.



### Water snapshot

Stream flows on 18 March (2022) and the five-year average for the current month

Town/water supply system	Stream flow (million litres/day)	5 year average stream flow (million litres/day)	Stream flow as a percentage of 5 year average
Bemm River (Bemm River)	1,652.3	89	1,857%
Mallacoota (Betka River)	81	0.9	8,996%
Orbost, Newmerella, Marlo (Brodrribb River)	545.5	54.7	997%
Buchan (Buchan River)	540.8	55.2	980%
Omeo (Butchers Creek)	10.7	1.3	821%
Cann River (Cann River)	1,044.8	15.5	6,740%
Mitchell River Supply System* (Mitchell River)	2,046.1	207.4	987%
Swifts Creek (Tambo River)	344.5	44.7	771%

\* Mitchell supply system = Bairnsdale, Walpa, Lindenow South, Lindenow, Eagle Point, Newlands Arm, Paynesville, Raymond Island, Sarsfield, Bruthen, Nicholson, Johnsonville, Swan Reach, Metung, Kalimna, Lakes Entrance, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, Lake Tyers Beach, Nowa Nowa and surrounding areas

There are currently around 1,390 million litres of drinking water held in our storages across the region and approximately four months of water held in storage in the Mitchell River Supply System.

While there are no formal, staged water restrictions in the region, common-sense Permanent Water Saving Rules do apply at all times. 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.

Target Your Water Use is a voluntary program to assist regional Victorians to use water efficiently, both in the garden and around the home. Visit our website for more information on Permanent Water Saving Rules and for links to Smart Water Advice, providing tips on how to save water.

### Environmental grants – Applications invited

Environmental and not-for-profit community groups in East Gippsland are invited to apply for one of our Native Vegetation and Habitat Creation Grants.

East Gippsland Water is committed to sustainability and through this program we aim to help improve long-term liveability across our region.

Grants are available for new and existing projects that focus on native vegetation planting or habitat creation. For more information, including eligibility criteria and an application pack, go to the webpage [www.egwater.vic.gov.au/grants](http://www.egwater.vic.gov.au/grants) or contact our Customer, Community & Communications Team on 1800 671 841.

Applications need to be submitted by 4pm on Friday 15 April, 2022.



### Community rebates

The Victorian Government’s Community Rebate Program provides eligible East Gippsland Water customers with a free water audit from a licensed plumber – to assist with reducing your water use and water bill.

The plumber will check your property for water leaks or excessive water use – such as from old appliances.

Eligible customers may then receive assistance of up to \$750 from the program for agreed products or services to improve water efficiency.

To be eligible for the program you must:

- Be an East Gippsland Water customer
- Be responsible for paying the water account
- Have had recent higher water usage
- Be on a concession, a vulnerable customer or in financial hardship.

To find out more, contact our Customer, Community & Communications Team on 1800 671 841

### Works in brief

• Work is underway to renew around 200m of ageing water main in Nicholson Street, Orbost - between Scott Street and Reed Street, and Stanley Street and Gladstone Street.

• Construction of a new 430,000 litre raw water storage tank at our Buchan Water Treatment Plant has commenced. The project is being funded as part of the Victorian Government’s \$2.7 billion Building Works stimulus package.

• Upgrades are being carried out to our Paynesville wastewater treatment plant to improve the irrigation infrastructure.

• Work is underway to install generators at our Jetty Road and Seaview Parade sewerage pumping stations in Kalimna.

### Tenders and quotations

• **Contract 1447/A South Bairnsdale Industrial Estate Water Main Augmentation** - Closes 4pm Friday 1 April, 2022

Documents are available at [tenderlink.com/egwater](http://tenderlink.com/egwater)

### 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 holders are also able to pay by instalment using Centrelink’s Centrepay service.

### Assistance for customers in financial hardship

We recognise that there may be many residential and business customers experiencing financial hardship at the moment.

We have a range of financial assistance available 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 via East Gippsland Water at no cost to the customer.

For more information and advice, call our Customer, Community & Communications Team in confidence on 1800 671 841.

### Opt for email

It is fast, efficient and convenient, so why not opt to receive your East Gippsland Water bill by email? Simply go to the home page of our website and click on the ‘Change billing details – including to receive bills by email’ section. Then complete the ‘Change of Customer Details’ form. Alternatively, call the Customer, Community & Communications Team on 1800 671 841.

For more information call 1800 671 841 or visit our website at [egwater.vic.gov.au](http://egwater.vic.gov.au)



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