

# IN THE FLOW!

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

East Gippsland **Water**

## Your bill

"Underlining our commitment to provide you with affordable water and sewerage services, there will be no increase to the average customer bill for this 2022/23 financial year, save for inflation.

"Rest assured that current high levels of service will be maintained.

"As a state government-owned enterprise, and a provider of essential services, we have to make sure that our customers receive reliable and high quality water and sewerage services now and well into the future. We also have to ensure that these services are provided efficiently and represent good value for money.

"Taking inflation into account, the average residential customer, using 146kL (146,000 litres) of water a year, will see their combined bills for water and sewerage increase by \$49.80 overall for the 2022/23 financial year - from \$1,199.54 to \$1,249.34. The actual cost will be lower for those consuming less water and higher for those consuming more.

"During 2022/23 we are looking to invest around \$15 million in a major capital works program. This will involve replacing or upgrading ageing infrastructure and takes into account regulatory requirements and climate change, as well as regional economic and population growth. Key projects include:

- expanding areas under irrigation at our Paynesville and Metung wastewater treatment facilities, and additional upgrades to the Paynesville facility, to ensure wet weather environmental compliance
- completing energy efficiency upgrades to our Bairnsdale and Paynesville wastewater treatment plants and the Wy Yung transfer water pumping station
- undertaking upgrades to Lakes Entrance Wastewater Treatment Plant to improve its operating performance
- commencing work to install new drinking water storage tanks for Mallacoota, Lindenow and Lindenow South - to maintain and improve drinking water quality for customers.

"We will also be spending around \$25 million on the day-to-day operation and maintenance of our existing water and sewerage infrastructure, and supporting services, across the region.

"Customer priorities and preferences covered by our five-year business plan are being maintained. These include providing grants for environmental projects and maintaining current levels of financial assistance to customers experiencing genuine difficulty paying their water bills."



Steve McKenzie,  
Managing Director,  
East Gippsland Water

## Paynesville wastewater treatment facility public open morning - Saturday 25 June

On Saturday 25 June, we will be running a public open morning at our Paynesville wastewater treatment facility - where you can learn more about how wastewater from the local community is treated and recycled, and about upgrades to the site.

All the wastewater entering the facility is treated to a standard that makes it suitable to be recycled for environmentally beneficial purposes - most notably for irrigation.

Follow the journey along the treatment process and hear how East Gippsland Water has been addressing the challenges presented over the last 12 months from exceptionally high rainfall. Then hear how we are upgrading the wastewater treatment and irrigation infrastructure to contain the impacts of future extreme wet weather events on the site and to meet population growth.

Due to boggy ground conditions there will be no public car parking available at the facility. Access will be available only via pre-booked places on a FREE shuttle bus service, which will be operating between Paynesville and the site:

Departs Paynesville for wastewater treatment facility (pick up point - car park in front of Progress Jetty/toilet block, Esplanade)	Arrives back in Paynesville
- 9.00am	- 10.15am
- 11.00am	- 12.15pm

Interested? You will need to book a spot on the bus and tour in advance. Contact East Gippsland Water on 1800 671 841 and remember to wear sensible footwear and warm clothing on the day.



One of the wastewater storage lagoons at the Paynesville wastewater treatment facility

## Water snapshot

Stream flows on 17 June (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)	614.8	473.8	130%
Mallacoota (Betka River)	54.7	9.6	570%
Orbost, Newmerella, Marlo (Brodribb River)	492.1	167.7	293%
Buchan (Buchan River)	278.8	390.1	71%
Omeo (Butchers Creek)	7.6	4.8	159%
Cann River (Cann River)	170.1	270	63%
Mitchell River Supply System* (Mitchell River)	2,710.1	2,343.1	116%
Swifts Creek (Tambo River)	154.9	325.1	48%

\* 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 1,560 million litres of drinking water held in our storages across the region and approximately five 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.

## Works in brief

- A program has commenced to clean and reline 3.1km of gravity sewers in **Bairnsdale, Paynesville, Metung, Lakes Entrance, Orbost and Mallacoota**
- Ongoing upgrades are being carried out to our **Paynesville** wastewater treatment plant to improve the irrigation infrastructure
- Works are continuing this month to replace 550m of water main along the section of the Paynesville Road between The Grange and Main Road in **Paynesville**
- Construction of a new 430,000 litre raw water storage tank at the **Buchan** Water Treatment Plant is progressing well. The project is being funded as part of the Victorian Government's \$2.7 billion Building Works stimulus package
- Work is continuing to renew around 200m of ageing water main in Nicholson Street, **Orbost** - between Scott Street and Reed Street, and Stanley Street and Gladstone Street.

## Tenders and quotations

- **Contract 1419/A Marlo Water Network Disinfection Station** - Closes 4pm Friday 8th July, 2022
- **Contract 1452/A Orbost WTP Clear Water Basin Outlet Pipe and Structure Upgrades** - Closes 4pm Friday 8th July, 2022

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

## Positions vacant

- Manager Communications & Community Engagement
- Operations & Maintenance Trainee (Mitchell)

For more information, including a position description, go to [egwater.vic.gov.au/positions-vacant](https://egwater.vic.gov.au/positions-vacant)

## Shaping the future of our services - Latest news

Thank you to everyone who participated in our special forum sessions held in April/May to help us make some big decisions about key areas of our business.

This forum has played an invaluable role in our community engagement process as we look to invest \$200 million in the next ten years.

A key consideration was how should we fairly balance the cost of our services between current and future customers while considering customers in genuine financial hardship? The forum expressed strong support for bringing forward additional capital expenditure to soften price shocks in the future and increasing support for those experiencing hardship.

Their recommendations were carefully considered by our Board at their June meeting and will influence how we proceed with prices and services over the five years 2023-2028. Our Price Submission (our latest business plan) will be submitted to the Essential Services Commission (the water industry economic regulator) this September for review and community feedback, before it is implemented on 1 July next year.

Our Customer Committee have also played an instrumental role in the engagement process for the Price Submission - collaborating with us on the structure and review of the engagement conducted and how we should measure our performance against our key customer outcomes.

More information can be found on our website - click on the 'Your voice matters' link on the home page. For any queries please call our Customer, Community & Communications Team on 1800 671 841.



## 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.

## 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.