

IN THE FLOW!

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

East Gippsland **Water**

Local students get creative for National Water Week 2022

East Gippsland Water is celebrating National Water Week, with the theme Our Water Stories.

National Water Week aims to build awareness around the value of water, and the importance of using water wisely to protect our water environments and resources.

East Gippsland schools showed great enthusiasm this year to participate in the National Water Week poster competition. It was the best participation rate since before the Covid-19 pandemic, with more than 340 entries from 12 schools across the district.

In addition to regional category winners, we were lucky enough to have local students pick up state-wide awards, William Hodge from Buchan Primary School won the top prize in the Additional Needs category for Victoria. William's colourful poster (below) illustrates the issues Buchan's water supply system has faced during the past five years, including bushfire, drought and flood.

Grace Strecker from Bairnsdale Primary School was runner-up in the state competition for the Grade 5/6 category and she also won the regional competition in the same category. Her beautifully illustrated poster was a plea to save the environment through water conservation.

Congratulations and thank-you to all students and schools who participated!

Winners:

Victoria – Additional Needs

William Hodge - Buchan Primary School

Victoria – Grade 5/6

Grace Strecker - Bairnsdale Primary School

Regional – Grade Prep

Elly Austin - Newmerella Primary School

Runners-up

Skye Rojas - Orbost Primary School

Charlotte Durston - Newmerella Primary School

Regional – Grades 1-2

Ava Voigt - Swan Reach Primary School

Runners-up

Kaiabelle Hare - Metung Primary School

Noah Bowen - Buchan Primary School

Regional – Grades 3-4

Grace Hotchins - Metung Primary School

Runners-up

Piper Crawley - Metung Primary School

Stella Kuick - St Mary's Primary School, Bairnsdale

Regional – Grades 5-6

Grace Strecker - Bairnsdale Primary School

Runners-up

Laura Jeans - Bairnsdale Primary School

Jacque Renaut - Cann River P-12 College

Regional – Additional Needs Runners-up

Jayden Bristow - Bairnsdale Primary School

Theo Mills - Swan Reach Primary School

Regional School Award sponsored by Southern Rural Water
St Joseph's Primary School, Orbost

Big Wet continues to disrupt

The third La Nina weather event in a row is continuing to cause issues among some local business sectors.

At East Gippsland Water we are continuing to struggle in the area of irrigation, which we usually step up at this time of year to complete the water cycle of releasing recycled water back into the environment.

The amount of rain experienced in East Gippsland throughout winter and now spring has meant our land



William Hodge's artwork, which won the Victorian prize.

normally used for irrigation is so wet, it simply can't absorb any more.

You will have heard about our controlled recycled water releases taking place recently and these releases will be necessary as long as the wet weather continues.

Contrary to inaccurate accounts, the water being released is treated to standard suitable for environmental purposes and irrigation, not raw waste.

In some instances, the recycled water is of better quality than the water body into which it is being released.

Independent water testing is completed on a regular basis during the release, to ensure the consistent quality and no risk to the environment or the community.

For the latest information on controlled recycled water releases, visit our website.

Greenhouse gas emissions – our annual report

We have a target to reduce East Gippsland Water's greenhouse gas emissions by 44 per cent by 1 July 2025 - which would take our annual emissions down to a maximum of 4,650 tonnes of CO₂-e equivalent (t CO₂-e). In October 2021, we brought forward the target for us to achieve net-zero emissions from 2050 to 2035 at the latest, with the corporation powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2025.

Our performance for 2021/22

We recorded net greenhouse gas emissions of 7,825 t CO₂-e for 2021/22 - meaning they were 1 per cent lower than our targeted maximum of 7,900 t CO₂-e for the 12 months.

This result was marginally higher than our result last year, primarily due to the necessity to treat higher volumes of wastewater as a result of exceptional wet weather events. A reduction in water consumption balanced out some of the increase seen via wastewater. Our involvement with the Kiamal Solar Farm project, which was officially commissioned in January 2021, continued to help us

achieve a reduction. In June, we voluntarily surrendered 560 Large Generation Certificates (LGCs). This enabled us to report an extra 560MWh of renewable electricity consumption and to reduce our emissions accordingly.

Other initiatives implemented, or furthered, during 2021/22 included:

- The installation of a 22kW ground mounted solar array at our Mallacoota Wastewater Treatment Plant. This was progressed under a community-driven initiative involving the Mallacoota Sustainable Energy Group and the Energy & Innovation Co-operative, with funding from Sustainability Victoria.
- Planning and tendering for a large-scale solar installation at our Paynesville wastewater treatment facility - due to be commissioned later in 2022.
- Further progressing the installation of a biogas-powered generator at our Bairnsdale Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Active engagement and collaboration with other water corporations, industry bodies, community networks and external agencies to pursue best practice in energy management and greenhouse gas reduction

Local businesses invited

We are inviting local consultants, contractors and those considering tendering for East Gippsland Water projects to an information briefing tomorrow (20 October), 4-6pm at the Bairnsdale RSL. Information including OH&S requirements, environmental and water quality management, upcoming works programs, tender tips, government requirements and administration will be discussed, followed by a Q&A session with senior staff. Register via email at egw@egwater.vic.gov.au or call 1800 671 841 for further information. Tea and coffee will be provided.

For employment opportunities and details of our Capital Works Program, please visit our website.

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.

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