

MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Wendy Reeves Ph: 5150 4434



21 December 2022

Recycled water releases halted through festive season

Recycled water releases have ceased for the festive season, following a successful period of releases combined with irrigation.

Unrelenting rain due to consecutive La Nina weather events resulted in the need for recycled water releases at several locations in East Gippsland throughout the past 14 months to relieve pressure on storages.

East Gippsland Water Managing Director, Steve McKenzie, said the outcome was a good one for East Gippsland's water recycling systems and the community.

"The wet weather meant our usual means of using the recycled water, through irrigation, wasn't possible due to the ground already being saturated," Mr McKenzie said.

"Three years ago we were battling with the consequences of drought, and for over 12 months we have been dealing with sustained wet weather.

"Our teams worked exceptionally hard through difficult conditions this year to safely and responsibly combine irrigation wherever possible with recycled water releases to ensure the best possible outcome for everyone and the environment.

"We really must thank the community for its support and patience during this difficult season.

"The Bureau of Meteorology is telling us that this year has broken many records in terms of rainfall and we have certainly felt that here in East Gippsland.

"If this weather pattern continues through 2023, we will need to resume releases in some regions, but for now we have created enough space to allow for the influx of visitors to East Gippsland over the Christmas/New Year period.

"Our preference is for environmental re-use through irrigation and we are at the mercy of the weather conditions to allow this to occur.

"We are also planning upgrades at several wastewater treatment sites to increase storage capacity and cope with population growth in a changing climate and I will provide regular updates on progress of these projects," Mr McKenzie concluded.

Ends