

Message from Managing Director, Steve McKenzie



Steve McKenzie,
Managing Director

In this edition of NewsFlow, I did want to provide customers with a simple explanation of the weather and what to expect this summer, but due to recent weather events it's probably not that simple.

If we reflect on the just last 12 months, there's been a weird pattern of weather. In January the BoM said we were in a La Nina extreme wet weather cycle, but by September the BoM had flipped to declare El Nino dry conditions similar to what we experienced four years ago during the drought and bushfires.

Then, the message two months ago was - buckle up for a hot dry summer and prepare for bushfires, which did occur in October when we had a bushfire heading towards our Glenaladale water treatment plant and we evacuated our staff because of the fire danger. Then, on the same day, we had a flood alert and the Mitchell River broke its banks a few days later.

East Gippsland was drenched again recently with around 150-200mm of rain that caused power disruptions, road blocks and flooded the sewer network. I'm very proud to say that thanks to the amazing 24x7 response of our operations teams, customer water and sewerage services were uninterrupted.

So, as we go into summer, we are preparing for more unpredictable weather and building for the future with \$130 million of investment in our infrastructure over the next few years, and our staff will always do their best to provide safe water and protect the environment.

In closing, I'd like to wish all of our customers and community a happy and healthy New Year.

Keep wipes out of pipes!

We are asking for your help to keep wipes out of the sewer pipes, the number one cause for blockages in our sewer systems.

Even though some wipes are labelled as 'flushable', cleaning wipes, baby wipes, makeup wipes and other similar products do not break down in the sewer system and flushing these products down the toilet can cause sewer blockages that require costly repairs.

We care about our waste water network and we want our customers and visitors to think carefully about what they put down the drain or flush down the toilet. Our operators currently spend an average of two to four hours a week removing all kinds of wipes from our screening systems.

Unless wipes display the new flushable logo referencing AS/NZS 5328, we would encourage everyone to stick to flushing the 3Ps - pee, poo and (toilet) paper.

Talking Water

Tune into our monthly podcast broadcasts on REG FM (90.7 and 105.5FM) as well as on our website.



Lakes Entrance desludging works commence

To reduce odour and improve recycled water quality, we have commenced desludging works at our Lakes Entrance Water Recycling Plant.

Sludge is the organic material removed during the wastewater recycling process from wastewater generated by the community. These solids then undergo further treatment in the plant's sludge lagoon.

We will be removing approximately 1,100 dry tonnes of sludge from the lagoon, where it will then be transported to our storage facilities at Bruces Track near Kalimna and Newmerella towards Corringale. The removal of the sludge will take around three to four months to complete.



Customer Connect

Where: Orbost Office, 6 Clarke Street
When: Thursday, 21 December 2023
Time: 9am to 4pm

Drop in and chat to a Customer Support Team member face-to-face about your bill, flexible payment options, financial hardship or for any general enquiry you may have.

Stream flows, December 2023

Stream flow information as of 6 December 2023	Current stream flow (million litres/day)	5 year average stream flow (million litres/day)	Rating of current flow	Current flow as a percentage of 5 year average
Bemm River	2868.4	565.5	Very High	505%
Betka River - Mallacoota	413.1	55.2	Very High	748%
Brodribb River - Orbost, Marlo, Newmerella	965.7	352.4	Above Average	274%
Buchan River - Buchan	2112.0	369.5	Very High	572%
Butchers Creek - Omeo	17.2	6.5	Above Average	265%
Cann River	1289.3	239.8	Above Average	439%
Mitchell River	7432.5	2268.0	Above Average	328%
Tambo River - Swifts Creek	289.6	209.4	Average	138%

* Mitchell River 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.