



## A message from Steve McKenzie Managing Director



We are preparing to enter a hot and dry weather cycle. Bushfire alerts are already being announced around Australia and in East Gippsland, the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) reported that July 2023 was the driest July on record and August rainfall was well below average. This is very different from the wettest on record conditions we experienced in the last few years.

It is expected the BOM will declare an El Nino soon. El Nino is the type of dry cycle we had during the droughts and bushfires four years ago.

We know from the drought we had between 2017 and 2020 that our rivers are resilient and reliable most of the time, so I am confident that there's little prospect of water restrictions this summer. However, we are working to deliver long term water resource improvement projects to build capacity for growth and climate variability. Our biggest project is a new \$26 million water storage basin at our Woodglen Water Treatment Plant and we are also working on water storage upgrades for Marlo and Mallacoota.

We also need your help to be more water efficient and incentives are available such as the Water Efficiency Rebate and WaterSmart Programs to assist you to do this.

More information about these programs is available on our website or by contacting us. Water conservation is important to ensure we manage our water resources sustainably and also helps reduce the load on our sewerage plants and recycling farms.



## Meter reader safety

The safety of our staff is our highest priority and unsecured dogs can be a big issue for our meter readers. Any unsecured dog has the potential to pose a threat or safety concern.

A number of our meter readers have experienced being bitten by a dog or can't access a property to do a meter reading because of unsecured dogs, so we need your help to keep our meter readers safe!

### What can you do to keep our meter readers safe?

Because our staff need access to read your water meter, we urge you to help create a safe environment.

- Keep dogs restrained - dogs are often very protective of their family and home
- Try and keep your dog indoors around the time of your scheduled meter readings, these occur every quarter
- If your dog is outside, make sure it is securely away from the meter.

### Why it's a good idea to secure your dog

- You may think your dog won't hurt anyone but our meter readers don't know that and might be concerned about approaching an unrestrained dog
- If your dog isn't restrained, incidents can happen, particularly if you are not home
- Vehicles and motorbikes can excite or aggravate dogs. If your dog is loose it may want to chase the meter reader and put them at risk
- If your meter is not easily accessible or obstructed in any way, the meter reader may need to enter your yard
- Even a good dog can have a bad day.



## Water supply bushfire preparation

It's that time of year when we should be thinking about bushfire preparation and that includes water supply during a fire.

While we will make every effort to maintain water supplies in the event of a bushfire, supplies cannot be guaranteed and customers should not rely on the reticulated water system if they choose to stay and protect their property during a major fire event.

During a bushfire, the advice is to leave early as the safest option to protect yourself and your family, as the water supply system is only designed to cope with everyday needs. Excessively high levels of demand from our customers and emergency services place the water supply under extreme load, this may lead to a drop in water pressure or loss of supply.

In addition, water supply availability may be impacted by damage to our infrastructure itself – leaving firefighters with insufficient water to extract from hydrants, particularly at the end of a system or at a high point.

The bushfire situation may also prevent East Gippsland Water staff entering a bushfire zone to gain access to infrastructure, this in turn may make it impossible to maintain normal water pressure, quality or an uninterrupted supply to every household.

## Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

During October/November, we will be undertaking our annual Customer Satisfaction Survey and this is your chance to let us know how we are doing. This survey is one of the most important ways for us to learn from our customers and improve our services.

You will also have the chance to win a \$100 credit on your water bill and the odds of winning are great as we have a total of 10 x \$100 credits up for grabs.



The survey will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and any personal information collected is only for the purposes of entry into the competition. So, watch out for an email in your inbox to participate.



## Customer Connect

We are continuing the roll out of our Customer Connect program and have commenced our monthly face-to-face customer support visits to Orbost.

You will also see us at other outer regions, local markets and events across East Gippsland, and where possible, we will advertise where you can find us in the local media and on our social media pages.

It's always great to chat to our customers and visitors to the area, so hope to see you soon!



## PERMANENT WATER SAVING RULES

### Residential and commercial gardens and lawns



Can be watered using a watering system, between 6pm and 10am.  
Can be watered with a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, bucket or watering can at any time.

### Vehicle washing - including car, boat, motorbike and other vehicles



Can be cleaned at any time, but only if using a hand-held hose with a trigger nozzle, a high pressure water cleaning device, a watering can or a bucket.

### Hard surfaces - including driveways, paths, timber and concrete decking or building facades



Can only be cleaned if it is required as a result of an accident, fire, health or safety hazard or other emergency, using a high pressure cleaning unit, hose fitted with a trigger nozzle or bucket.

### Fountains and water features



Can only be used if they recirculate the water.

To find out more, visit [egwater.vic.gov.au](http://egwater.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 671 841