

# Media Release



Tuesday, 12 January 2010

## Western Water pump systems set with extra sensors for fire protection

Western Water is boosting fire protection measures at pump stations and water filtration plants in the high risk fire zones around Macedon, Woodend and Melton as Victoria endures its first week of extreme fire weather for the New Year.

Western Water Managing Director John Wilkinson said with the onset of extreme fire conditions, Western Water, along with all local agencies, are on daily alert to ensure emergency management infrastructure is operating at peak performance.

“During a bushfire the demands of the fire services and events, such as loss of power, may mean we cannot maintain water pressure or an uninterrupted mains water supply,” Mr Wilkinson said.

“However, we have many measures in place to maintain and guard water services.

“Four pump stations at Macedon and Woodend and both water filtration plants at Woodend are now being fitted with special heat sensor automatic sprinkler systems and a similar system is due to be installed at the Merrimu raw water pump station near Melton next month.”

Mr Wilkinson said the new sprinkler systems comprise roof mounted copper piping with sprinklers, which can be activated by pre-programmed heat sensors, switched on manually or set off remotely via Western Water’s computer SCADA control system.

“These deluge sprinkler fire response systems are connected directly to the water supply system but can also be fed from the head pressure in the line, if there is a power outage,” Mr Wilkinson said.

He said bushfire preparedness work this season also included instigating a new maintenance regime with Councils to ensure local fire hydrants and access points to fire-fighting water are kept clear and in good order.

“Public response to this clean-up campaign with Councils and the CFA has been terrific and shows the value of community based efforts, such as the Adopt a Hydrant program,” Mr Wilkinson said.

“This new system of continuous upgrades has been rolled out in conjunction with councils, which are responsible for funding local hydrants, and together we have tackled higher fire risk areas first.

“All hydrants in Macedon and Mount Macedon have been inspected to make sure they can be easily located, they are visible with correct markings and there are no impediments to accessing them in case of a fire,” he said.

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### About Western Water

Western Water is one of Victoria’s 13 regional urban water corporations. We provide water, recycled water and sewerage services to over 53,000 properties and 134,810 people in an area of 3,000 square kilometres. Our region extends from Lancefield in the north to Melton and Rockbank in the south and from Myrning in the west to Bulla in the east. We incorporate parts of Hume City Council and Melton, Moorabool and Macedon Ranges Shire Councils.

### Media contacts

Helen Grimaux | Media Advisor | 0419 356 361 | [helen.grimaux@westernwater.com.au](mailto:helen.grimaux@westernwater.com.au)

Brigid Wenn | Manager Communications | 03 9218 5521 | 0419 314 700 | [brigid.wenn@westernwater.com.au](mailto:brigid.wenn@westernwater.com.au)

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“With all hydrants now clear and in good working order at Macedon and Mount Macedon, the focus is on tackling Woodend next month.”

Mr Wilkinson stressed the importance of leaving clear access to local fire hydrants so emergency service vehicles can get water out of them quickly and save lives and property. Residents who are concerned about the state of their local fire hydrants can contact **Western Water** on **1300 650 422**.

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