

Media Release



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Western Water says think before you flush

When it comes to sewage it's easy for most people to flush and forget. But what goes into the sewerage system can have serious consequences, including sewer blockages and spills.

Thanks to Western Water's Sewer Spill Prevention Strategy, the Melton and Moorabool region has had an almost 25% reduction in sewer spills in the past year.

"Our message is 'only ones and twos down the loo', because things don't just disappear when they are flushed," Western Water's Managing Director, John Wilkinson, says.

"At some point our staff have to deal with it, whether that's when it arrives at the recycled water plant, or when it causes a blockage in the sewer pipes," he says.

"When a blockage causes a spill, raw sewage can spill out into waterways, streets or even on people's properties."

The Sewer Spill Prevention Strategy, which will cost \$3.6m over three years, includes replacing ageing sewer mains and increasing inspection of sewers using closed circuit TV cameras (CCTV).

"We have already sent cameras down 4km of sewer mains in Woodend and 9km of mains in Bacchus Marsh. All the other towns in our service area will follow over the next two years," Mr Wilkinson says.

"With more than 1,120km of sewer mains, this is a huge undertaking, but the footage is a great way to spot problem areas before a blockage occurs."

Mr Wilkinson says the main cause of sewer blockages is tree roots entering pipes and growing to form a mass that blocks the pipe.

"People need to be careful about where they plant trees to ensure they are not over sewer pipes," he says.

"The other main cause of blockages is a build-up of fats and oils, so we are asking people not to pour liquid fats or oils down the sink, as they often solidify when they hit the sewer main."

To see what a sewer pipe blocked with a build-up of fats looks like, check out the CCTV footage at Western Water's website, at www.westernwater.com.au. Click on 'Sewerage' under 'Water and Sewerage Services'.

Picture Opportunity:

Western Water Recycled Water Plant staff have a collection of unusual items that have been flushed into the sewerage system. To arrange a photograph at Melton Recycled Water Plant call Kylie Smith on 0488 226 681.

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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

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