

## What our customers say

Each year Western Water conducts a customer satisfaction survey through an independent market research company. Many thanks to the 700 customers who participated this year and helped us to discover the following:

- Overall, customers rated our services 8.3 out of 10. 91% of customers say they are satisfied with our services.
- Nine out of 10 customers are satisfied with overall water quality. There is some room for improvement with water taste and smell and we will act on this as a matter of priority.
- 94% of customers are satisfied with our sewerage service. We will strive to maintain our high standards.
- One in five customers contacted us in the past year, most by phone. They rated their satisfaction with the service they received at 8.9 out of 10.
- Customers mainly get information about water directly from Western Water by telephoning, visiting the Sunbury office, or using the website. We will continue to improve our communication channels to ensure you find the information you need and have recently launched our new website.
- 81% of customers say tap water is their main source of drinking water. This is the highest level recorded since surveying began in 2004 when only two thirds of customers drank tap water.



**SAVE WATER TARGET 155**

# H<sub>2</sub>info

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## Securing our future: what's happening in your town?

**Bacchus Marsh Recycled Water Plant Upgrade** (\$2.5 million): To service the growing population of Bacchus Marsh, an upgrade of the Recycled Water Plant, including a new aerated lagoon, will commence in early 2011.

**Gisborne South Outfall Sewer** (\$3 million): Due for completion in September 2010, the new sewer will service the growing population of Gisborne.

**Melton Cogeneration Plant** (\$2 million): This facility will capture biogas produced in the treatment of sewage and produce heat and electrical energy to power Melton Recycled Water Plant, significantly reducing carbon emissions.

**Melton Recycled Water Plant Upgrade** (\$14 million): Construction of a new pump station and aeration tanks has commenced and will increase the treatment capacity of the plant.

**Merrimu Water Filtration Plant Tank** (\$4 million): Construction of a 10 million litre tank is underway to increase the drinking water storage capacity for Bacchus Marsh and Melton.

**Romsey Borefield Investigation** (\$450,000): This research aims to diversify the town's water supply options and will be completed by June 2011.

**Rosslynne Water Filtration Plant Tank** (\$4 million): Construction of a 10 million litre tank is underway to increase drinking water storage capacity for Gisborne and Sunbury.

**Sunbury Recycled Water Plant Upgrade** (\$2.1 million): Construction of a belt press dewatering unit will cut energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from the water recycling process. The new unit will facilitate the production of biosolids, a nutrient rich fertiliser.

**Woodend Recycled Water Plant** (\$6.1 million): Works at the Plant have increased the quality of recycled water used for the town's parks, sporting grounds and local agriculture.

**Mains replacement program** (\$800,000): A region wide mains replacement program is set to decrease the amount of water lost in pipe bursts and improve service reliability.

## Cogeneration launched

On 30 June, Minister for Energy and Resources Peter Batchelor officially launched Western Water's new Cogeneration Plant at Melton Recycled Water Plant.

The event was attended by key representatives from Western Water, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Environment Protection Authority.

In an Australian first, Western Water will use microturbine technology to produce electric and thermal energy from sewage gases at Melton Recycled Water Plant. This means the Class A Recycled Water Plant will be powered by 100% renewable energy.

Last September, Western Water Board chose Aquatec-Maxcon to build the \$2 million Cogeneration Plant. Managing Director John Wilkinson said the Plant will use a microturbine developed from aeronautical technology.

"This is the first time in Australia this technology will be put to work turning the gases produced in sewer systems into electricity," Mr Wilkinson said.

"An external heat exchanger installed alongside the microturbine will deliver heat energy for use in plant processes.

"Producing our own electricity from this renewable source will reduce costs and cut carbon dioxide emissions by 1800 tonnes per year – equivalent annually to taking 420 cars off the road," Mr Wilkinson explained.



Western Water's Project Manager Justin Boan at the Cogeneration Plant construction site at Melton Recycled Water Plant before the launch.

## Know your watering days and stay on Target 155

All towns in the Western Water service area are now on Stage 3 Water Restrictions. The easing of restrictions from Stage 3a is due to your water saving efforts towards Target 155 (155 litres per person per day) and also to the State Government's program of infrastructure development to boost supply.

While the voluntary Target 155 remains, Stage 3 Restrictions allow more flexibility to maintain your garden.

Plants may only be watered manually between 6 and 8 am, or midnight to 2 am for automatic drippers, on your watering days. Even and no-numbered properties may water on even dates e.g. 2nd, 4th, etc. Odd-numbered properties may water on odd dates e.g. 1st, 3rd, etc. Everyone may water on 31st. If someone in your household is over 70, you may water between 8 and 10 am. Lawns must not be watered with drinking water.

For more information about restrictions, visit [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au) or call 1300 653 126.

For more information about Target 155 and State Government water supply projects, visit [www.ourwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au)



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Recycled Paper

Western Water has a new, improved website with easier navigation, a comprehensive search function, an interactive service area map, up-to-date statistics (storage levels, water consumption, water recycling and greenhouse gas emissions) on every page and lots of other useful features and information. Visit [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au) to try it out.

## A new wave of water education

**FOR PRESCHOOLS:** Western Water is launching a new preschool program: *Water is Precious!* This program is available to all kindergartens and childcare centres in our service area **free of charge**.

*Water is Precious!* includes resources for teachers, a fun presentation for 3 to 5 year olds and a water use assessment and conservation retrofit by our licensed plumber. For more information, or to make a booking, please call **1800 620 362** or email [westernwater@edunity.com.au](mailto:westernwater@edunity.com.au)

**FOR ALL SCHOOL LEVELS:** Western Water is celebrating National Water Week (17 to 23 October) with a performing arts competition and event: *Western Water's Wave*. The *Wave* is open to all schools in our service area. By 20 August, entrants must submit a digitally recorded 10 minute performance involving music, drama and/or dance, exploring the theme *Our Water: Our Past / Present / Future*.

In National Water Week, finalists will receive free transport to perform at *Western Water's Wave* and enjoy a day of environmental education and fun with great prizes to be won! For more information, teachers should telephone Western Water on **03 9218 5421** or email [education@westernwater.com.au](mailto:education@westernwater.com.au)

For information about Western Water's other free school and community education programs, including guided tours, presentations and teaching resources, please visit [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au)



## Is your meter in the clear?

Your water meter measures the amount of water that enters your property. Western Water calculates your water usage charges by reading your meter every four months.

Periodically, we will test your meter and if necessary, replace it at our expense, to ensure that it continues to provide accurate readings of your water consumption.

If your meter is hard to access, the property owner may be required to pay for any additional work involved in meter reading or replacement.

To provide easy meter access to our staff and contractors, and to prevent damage to your meter, you should:

- maintain at least 100mm of clearance around and underneath the meter - trim long grass and prune overgrown plants in the vicinity of your meter
- ensure that if your water meter is installed in a pit, the pit is clear of obstructions and self-draining
- provide Western Water with your daytime contact details in the absence of easy access to your property, to establish a convenient time when you can provide access.

**Want to save water and money?** Visit [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au) to learn how to:

- book a home water use assessment and conservation retrofit by our WaterTight plumber (\$180 value at a cost to you of only \$30 with a Western Water subsidy and a State Government rebate)
- upgrade your single flush toilet - there are several options and a State Government rebate available
- swap your old showerhead for a free water efficient model.

The new financial year brings changes to the Victorian Government's Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme. Visit [www.ourwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au) for more information.

## Water prices

From 1 July, your water bill will increase as determined by the Essential Services Commission - the regulatory body for the Victorian water industry. Western Water is determined to provide value for money to our customers.

Did you know that to deliver clean, safe drinking water to your property, Western Water maintains a system that includes more than 1,700 km of underground pipes, seven Water Filtration Plants and 56 storage tanks? In 2009/10 Western Water spent \$35 million to extend and improve drinking water, recycled water and sewage infrastructure to meet the demands of rapidly growing population in our service area.

The average household in our region uses 176,000 litres of water per year. In this financial year, compared to last year, the average household will pay around \$1.26 extra per week. Households using less water will be better off financially than heavy water users due to Western Water's tiered 'user pays' system.

Western Water offers many payment options and can tailor a payment plan for customers having difficulty paying their water bills. For more information, please telephone **1300 650 422** or visit [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au)

Type of charge	Price in 2009/10	Price in 2010/11
Sewerage service	\$443.48 per annum	\$468.15 per annum
Water service	\$174.56 per annum	\$193.43 per annum
Residential water usage per four months (billing period)		
0 to 53 kilolitres*	\$1.1222 per kilolitre	\$1.2435 per kilolitre
Between 53 and 106 kilolitres	\$1.4887 per kilolitre	\$1.6496 per kilolitre
More than 106 kilolitres	\$2.9775 per kilolitre	\$3.2993 per kilolitre
Non-residential water usage	\$1.4887 per kilolitre	\$1.6496 per kilolitre

\* 1000 litres = 1 kilolitre

## Our year of biodiversity

The United Nations declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity to celebrate and protect the range of life on earth. Biodiversity is a key focus for Western Water, partly because it ensures healthy water catchments. Western Water works closely with landcare and other community groups as well as the Catchment Management Authority, Melbourne Water. Action plans for 15 sites on Western Water properties include the removal of weeds and pest animals as well as thousands of plantings.

At our biodiversity sites in the past year, we have witnessed :

- protection, under an agreement with Melton Shire Council, of Pinkerton Forest - a 35 hectare remnant of Critically Endangered Plains Grassy Woodland located at Melton Recycled Water Plant
- the rare and successful nesting of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Pinkerton Forest
- the discovery of Matted Flax-lily - nationally listed as Endangered - at Gisborne
- removal of African Boxthorn along a further 1kilometre stretch of the Werribee River at Exford
- protection of 5 hectares of Plains Grassland and the identification of Clover Glycine - nationally listed as Vulnerable - at Bacchus Marsh.



The Water and Sewerage Concession provides eligible low-income households with a discount on water bills. The maximum concession amount has increased in 2010/11 to **\$40.83 off water service and/or usage charges and \$40.84 off the sewerage service charge per bill (for 3 bills per year)**. For more information, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/concessions](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/concessions)