

Rural Customer Update



*Goldfields Superpipe
construction underway*

*Please let us know what
information you would like
to see in future issues.*

*Call Frank or Carmel on
1300 363 200.*

Season 2007-2008 Forecast

A commonly asked question from rural customers at present is: "Will I receive any water this season?" Each year we announce our first rural allocation on 15 September. This year 15 September is a Saturday so the announcement will be Monday 17 September.

Whilst recent rains have been encouraging and have wet our catchment, inflows into our reservoirs have been minimal. Currently we do not have enough water in storage to support a rural season and with reservoir levels at only 8.7% (9 July) we hope that continued rain will result in run-off and allow us to offer an allocation this year.

Projects to improve water security are underway including the Goldfields Superpipe, Epsom to Spring Gully Recycled Water Project and the Rural Reconfiguration Project. These projects will benefit rural as well as urban customers.

Works on the Goldfields Superpipe are on target to deliver the first water in September 2007. More than 29.8km of the 46.5km pipeline has been laid and the first two of six pumpsets were delivered in late June. We publish weekly progress updates on our website.

The Epsom to Spring Gully Recycled Water Project delivered water for the first time in March. Groundwater from Bendigo Mining's operations is being pumped into Spring Gully Reservoir and is also being used on some City of Greater Bendigo facilities including parks, gardens, sporting facilities and Lake Weeroona.

Whilst these projects will improve water security, the only long term solution to water security is rainfall.

Goulburn Murray Water makes its first season allocation each year on the first business day in July. On 2 July Goulburn Murray Water announced a 0% first allocation. This is the fifth consecutive year the Goulburn system has opened with a 0% allocation, but this is the first time the Murray system has not opened the season with an allocation.

Without significant inflows into our reservoirs this Winter and Spring, our 2007-2008 Rural Season will again be a 0% allocation. We will continue to provide updates as the season approaches.

Geoff Michell, Managing Director

Reservoir Levels

We update reservoir information on our website every week. Click on the Reservoir Levels icon on the Home Page at www.coliban.com.au



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Rural Reconfiguration Project

Engineering consultants are currently preparing 'concept' design plans for the Axe Creek, Ascot & Cockatoo Hill systems.

Information days will be arranged when the concept designs are completed for comment. Customers will be notified by mail dates have been set.

Consultation for the Harcourt system is completed with the summary of surveys being prepared in preparation for the next stage of planning.

Following consultation with customers serviced by the section of the Lockwood Channel between outlet numbers 40 to 60, we are exploring the possibility of replacing this section of channel with a new pipeline.

As the Jackass Flat area has been identified for future residential development with a third pipe system to allow for the use of recycled water we have commenced consultation on the channels in this area. This includes the licence holders on the Jackass Flat, Ironstone & Sparrowhawk channels.

Rural System News

Jackass Flat Pipeline

The new urban main to replace the Jackass Flat pipeline has been completed. All connections to the urban (potable) water supply have been completed. These customers are now covered by the Customer Charter – Urban and Supply by Agreement, instead of the Rural Customer Charter.

Both our Urban Customer Charter and Rural Customer Charter can be found on our website www.coliban.com.au by clicking Customer Services on the Home Page.

Updated Rural Charter

The Rural Charter is currently being updated to bring it in line with Essential Services Commission (ESC) requirements. The draft was work-shopped with members of our Rural CAG in early July.

Changes are not significant. Responsibilities of both Coliban and our rural customers remain the same.

Once approved by the ESC, rural customers will be advised.

Water Harvesting from Channels

Generally, customers can request to have outlet/s open during the off-season to harvest water from the channel. This year, Coliban Water will be harvesting all water from channels that flow to reservoirs. Outlets on the following channels **will not** be opened:

- Coliban Main
- Harcourt Main
- Specimen Hill
- Lockwood
- Cockatoo Hill
- Raywood
- Spring Gully

State Government Drought Assistance Package.

On 23 October 2006 the State Government announced a new drought assistance package. This assistance was in the form of a rebate to assist with the fixed charges for all irrigators, and stock and domestic customers on systems that received less than 50% of water allocation for the 2006-07 season.

The final account for the 2006-07 season which includes the final rebate under this drought package has recently been issued.

At this stage we have not received any information from the State Government that this rebate will continue for the 2007-08 season.

Rural Customer Advisory Group (CAG) Member Update

Current Membership:

Paul Mannes	Tobias Ansted
John Vercoe	Jennifer Goddard
Kerry Lorenz	Vicky Gaudion
Malcolm Burrows	Peter Mazur

Gavin Privett and Paul Browne have recently resigned from the Rural Customer Advisory Group. We thank them for their commitment and input while members of the CAG.

Expressions of Interest to participate in the Rural CAG will be advertised in the near future. If you are interested in participating in this group, you are encouraged to submit an Expression of Interest. The advertisement will appear in the 'Public Notices' section of the Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday edition. EOI will close on 31 July 2007.

Faults and Service Difficulties

All faults or service difficulties (other than orders) should be directed through our Customer Contact Centre on: 1300 363 200.

This will ensure a prompt response, and avoid delayed response when baliffs are off-duty or out of mobile range and do not get your message straight away.