

## Western Water, national recycling leader

Western Water has been recognised as the national leader for water recycling in the first National Performance Report for urban water utilities, recently released by the National Water Commission. Western Water has the highest water recycling rate of any major utility in the country. Nearly 6,000 million litres or 84 per cent of all inflows were recycled over 2005/2006. This is 72 per cent higher than the national average.

The report is the central source of information relating to the performance of urban water utilities on water consumption, asset management, customer service, environment and health compliance, finance and pricing.

Western Water Chief Executive John Wilkinson said the achievement was a result of Western Water's commitment to recycling water.

"We are proud to be leading Australia in this most important area. Our goal is to ultimately achieve 100 per cent beneficial use of recycled water by 2013, which reflects our overall commitment to sustainability," Mr Wilkinson said.

Over Summer 2006/07, Western Water recycled an average 96 per cent of all inflows into its seven recycled water plants. Western Water's recycled water plants serve the high residential growth areas of Sunbury and Melton, as well as the townships of Gisborne, Riddells Creek, Romsey, Bacchus Marsh and Woodend.

The plants at Gisborne, Sunbury and Melton are currently undergoing multi-million dollar upgrades to increase capacity and meet future growth.

The most significant project is at Melton where a new Class A plant is being constructed to service the new township of Eynesbury and to accommodate future growth at Melton South.

The \$18 million scheme will see a dual water supply provide Class A recycled water for domestic gardens, toilet flushing and irrigation of a championship golf course and recreational areas. It will save up to one billion litres of drinking water per year.

Achievements under Western Water's recycled water program have included:

- providing recycled water to Salesian College, Sunbury Secondary College and Clarke Oval at Sunbury
- connecting Gisborne's Sankey Reserve and Botanic Gardens to recycled water
- extending the existing Woodend Recycled Water Scheme to serve the multi-purpose Woodend Racecourse Recreation Reserve
- connecting the Romsey Recycled Water Scheme, which delivers supplies to a racehorse training complex
- an extension of the recycled water pipeline to Langama Park in Sunbury
- commissioning an eight-kilometre extension of the Sunbury-Melton Recycled Water Scheme to serve the Toolern Vale area.



Fil de Toledo, of Melton, with some of his healthy maize crop, irrigated with recycled water from the Surbiton Park Recycled Water Plant.

## Expressions of Interest: Riddells Creek and Gisborne Recycled Water Project

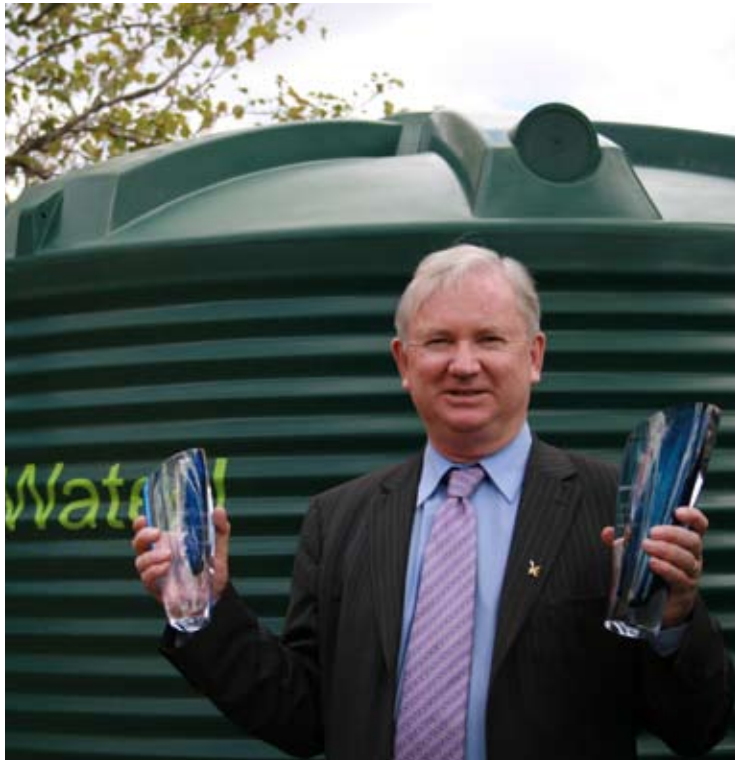
A new recycled water project to supply potential customers in the Riddells Creek and Gisborne areas is under consideration. Preliminary expressions of interest were sought in May 2007, with more than 25 registrations received by mid-June.

The proposed route of the pipeline has not been finalised and will depend on the location of suitable users, soil-testing and feasibility studies based on social, economic and environmental factors.

Under the scheme, the Gisborne and Riddells Creek Recycled Water Plants will supply suitable applicants with Class B and C recycled water, respectively. A full technical analysis of the water is available upon request.

This environmentally sustainable project will not only conserve precious drinking water, but provide a reliable supply of recycled water not subject to fluctuating seasonal rainfall or water restrictions.

To be suitable to receive recycled water, properties must meet specific criteria. For example, the areas to be irrigated with recycled water must restrict public and stock access during and after irrigation.



Hume Mayor, Cr Gary Jungwirth, with Hume City Council's savewater! awards<sup>®</sup> at Roxburgh Homestead Childcare Centre, Roxburgh Park. The centre now has a rain water tank which is used to water the garden.

### Did you know?

In three years, the Stormwater and Urban Water Conservation Fund has contributed to 66 water-saving projects for sporting areas, gardens, markets, shopping centres, manufacturing, industry and health.

The Victorian Government recently announced a further \$10 million in grants towards stormwater and recycling projects.

For more information on the fund, please visit:

[www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au) or phone Julia Campbell on: **03 9637 8741**.

The use of recycled water is strictly regulated by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Plumbing Industry Commission (PIC).

Recycled water has many beneficial uses. Class B and C recycled water can typically be used for irrigating recreational areas, such as sports ovals, fodder crops (excluding pigs), other non-food crops or human food crops that are cooked, processed, peeled and/or grow more than one metre above the ground. Class B and C recycled water cannot be used on residential gardens.

Charges for recycled water are based on volume. For example, Class B recycled water from the Sunbury-Melton Scheme is currently charged at \$280 per megalitre (ML) in the peak (November-March) irrigation season and \$200 per ML in the off peak (April-October) season. An annual \$500 fixed charge also applies.

For more information, please contact the Renewable Resources Team on 9218 5400 during normal business hours or visit our website: [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au)

### Hume is a winner for saving water

Hume City Council recently won a savewater! award<sup>®</sup> of excellence in the Government category for its outstanding efforts to conserve drinking water supplies.

With low water storages at the forefront of political debate and media coverage, the recent savewater! winners demonstrated exceptional commitment to conservation of our most precious resource.

Set to save more than 70ML of drinking water per year through waterwise initiatives, the expected water savings of the council will equate to around 28 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Funding from the Department of Sustainability and Environment enabled the council, in conjunction with Western Water, to extend the Sunbury-Melton Recycled Water Scheme, which now pumps recycled water to five major sporting complexes, irrigating seven ovals and one athletics track.

Hume City Council has also made efforts to retrofit several buildings with water saving devices, such as childcare and community centres. In addition, rainwater tanks have been installed at Sunbury Aquatic Centre and the council's Sunbury Depot. Council parks have been fitted with 'smart' irrigation and automatic sprinkler systems and turf is being replaced with drought tolerant species.