

Woodend's Racecourse Reserve Connects to Recycled Water

Woodend's Racecourse Reserve has connected to a recycled water supply in an initiative that will save up to seven million litres of drinking water per year.

A joint initiative between Macedon Ranges Shire Council and Western Water, the \$393,000 project has been funded through the State Government's Stormwater and Urban Water Conservation Fund and the Department for Victorian Communities Country Football Grounds Assistance Program.

Currently supplying Woodend Golf Club and Gilbert Gordon Oval, the recycled water main was extended by 500 metres to reach the reserve, which will be irrigated with an automatic watering system. Prior to construction, a thorough survey was completed to minimise environmental impacts to the area, and innovative construction techniques were used, including ploughing instead of excavation of the pipeline channel through native grasslands.

Record Summer Recycling

The worst drought on record in the Western Water region is highlighting the value and benefits of recycled water.

The resource is proving a boon for schools, public reserves and farmers as storage levels fall and restrictions limit residential and commercial use of drinking water supplies.

Western Water is currently recycling 96 per cent of all inflows into its seven recycled water plants to meet significantly increased demand as a result of little to no rainfall across the catchment.

The Sunbury-Melton Recycled Water Scheme alone has delivered more than 140 million litres of recycled water during December 2006 to 52 major customers. They included vineyards, public ovals, hobby farmers and recreation reserves. This is nearly three times the amount supplied in December 2004. More than 1.7 million litres are being taken under temporary trucking arrangements as part of Western Water's Drought Relief Program.



■ Peta Maddy, Renewable Resources Manager, inspects Woodend's Racecourse Reserve.

Renewable Resources Manager Peta Maddy said the drought had focused the community on sustainable water management, particularly recycling.

"It is crucial we manage and use water smarter to meet future challenges, such as climate change and population growth," she said.

"Recycled water has long been identified by government and the water sector as an important tool in ensuring security of supply. The drought has served to show the community the key role recycled water will play in this regard."

The drought, however, has presented recycling difficulties, with demand outstripping supply several times during the summer months.

Ms. Maddy said there had been a number of supply interruptions during peak periods along the Sunbury-Melton pipeline.

"Water restrictions in particular have meant reduced inflows into the Sunbury recycled water plant of two million litres a day, or 20 per cent less than previous daily inflows.

"This reduction is attributed to a range of factors, including people capturing shower water in buckets, diverting washing machine water and fewer discharges to the sewer generally.

• Continued next page

"The result was a parallel reduction in available recycled water that, in turn, translated into shortages during hot weather when customers were drawing heavily on supplies."

Western Water has developed a strategy to accommodate future demand, including a call to existing recycled water customers to replenish their on-site storages during cool weather.

Ms. Maddy said there could be some delays in approving new connections to the Sunbury-Melton scheme. This depended on whether the drought and associated restrictions continued to impact on inflows into the recycled water plants.

The use of recycled water is not subject to the restrictions currently in force throughout the region.

AgriWest's Fine Food and Wine Exhibition

AgriWest recently held a unique Fine Food and Wine Exhibition, which included a progressive lunch showcasing high-quality produce grown using recycled water. Speakers included Arris recycled water specialists, Managing Director Jim Kelly and Director Dr Daryl Stevens, Spencer Flint, of Olive Hill Estate, Peter Nilon, Manager of Werribee Agriculture, Tony Ramunno, General Manager of Witchmount Estate, and John Learmonth, Director of Mt. Gisborne Cherries.

Hosted at Witchmount Estate winery, which has been making award-winning wines for almost 15 years, recycled water experts from the agricultural and horticultural industry shared knowledge gained from decades of growing high quality produce using recycled water.

Keynote speaker Jim Kelly discussed recycled water use in Australia and in a global context, touching on his pivotal role in developing industry communication tools.

Sponsors of the event included Western Water, Bendigo Bank and the State Government.

Did you know?

The water industry is among the top twenty consumers of electricity in the State, and in 2004/05 was responsible for producing more than 810,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) emissions. Or equivalent to the pollution from 187,000 cars.

Western Water is currently working with Sustainability Victoria to develop a greenhouse emissions reduction strategy to identify the best way to reduce its carbon emissions.

Western Water's New Address

From Monday 30 April 2007, Western Water's Administration Centre will be located at 36 Macedon Street, Sunbury, 3429.

Account Enquiries: **1300 650 422**

General Enquiries and after hours emergencies: **1300 650 425**



L-R Jim Kelly, Managing Director of Arris, Kaye Kilgour, Chair of AgriWest, John Wilkinson, CEO of Western Water, and Scott Elkington, State Manager of the Bendigo Bank, sampling some recycled water produce at Witchmount Winery, Rockbank.

Enviably Position for Macedon Ranges Shire

Macedon Ranges Shire's pro-active approach to irrigating with recycled water has placed it in an enviable position for the winter sports season despite tough water restrictions.

Currently, half the 20 sports and recreation fields within the shire are irrigated to some extent using non-drinking water. With a progressive Sports Fields Irrigation Plan for 2006/07, the council proposes continuing expanding and upgrading access to recycled water.

To improve the safety and quality of playing surfaces, the shire has taken a long-term, sustainable approach to water use, with the aim of providing safe sporting facilities while conserving valuable drinking water supplies.

Rod Clough, Macedon Ranges Shire Council's Manager - Recreation and Culture, says: "Using non-drinking water is a cheaper and more reliable source of irrigation and ensures the safe presentation of sports fields and a continuation of the health and social benefits associated with sports."

"Macedon Ranges Shire is in a unique position compared with its metropolitan counterparts. While Stage 3 restrictions and lack of rain have meant that many urban councils are having to prioritise the use of grounds due to heavily restricted irrigation, most sports clubs in the Macedon Ranges have had to make little if any compromises. However, there is more to be done and the council looks forward to working further with Western Water."

Recycled water projects undertaken by the shire with the support of Western Water and State and Federal funding are saving a massive 80 million litres of drinking water, or 80 Olympic size swimming pools, each year.



recycledwater
bringing the region to life



This newsletter is produced with 100 per cent Waterless Printing technology. Printed with vegetable based inks on 100 per cent recycled Australian stock.