

■ A message from our Chief Executive

This edition of *Recycled Water News* marks a very special anniversary.

Five years ago, approximately 350 people gathered at a farm expo near Diggers Rest to explore the possibility of using recycled water for farming.

From the farm expo came the idea for a newsletter to keep people updated about local developments in recycled water - and Recycled Water News was created.

Recycled Water News has since been regularly distributed to a subscriber list of 1000 landowners, government policy makers and other individuals interested in recycled water activities and innovation.

“For the want of rain ...” was a commonplace catchcry in our region five years ago. Now, this region leads Australia, both in building water smart suburbs and in finding innovative ways to revive farmlands through the use of recycled water. There has been a significant change in attitude to recycled water over recent years.

The lessons learnt are driving new government policies and redefining development by introducing sustainable practices to shape future communities and minimise our environmental footprint.

Western Water is proud of its role in promoting recycled water as a valuable resource.



John Wilkinson
Western Water
Chief Executive

■ Government grants spur water savings

A \$10 million Stormwater and Urban Water Conservation Fund has been established by the State Government to assist new stormwater infrastructure, demonstration and education projects at a local level.

Stormwater harvesting and urban water conservation are core elements of the Government's *Our Water Our Future* action plan to secure Victoria's water future for the next 50 years.

Western Water has played an active role in assisting its partners, Hume City Council, Salesian College, Sunbury College, Macedon Ranges Shire Council and the Department for Victorian Communities Country Football Grounds Assistance Program, to compile and submit three applications to the grant scheme.

If successful, funding will be used to assist projects such as:

- Connecting Gisborne's Botanic Gardens and Sankey Reserve to a recycled water irrigation system
- Constructing a recycled water storage dam at Woodend's Racecourse Reserve, for irrigation of the reserve, sporting grounds and parks
- Linking Sunbury College, Salesian College and Clarke Oval to recycled water

In all, ten ovals, a lawn bowls club, a vineyard, sporting grounds and public gardens are set to benefit from these three projects that will potentially utilise 53ML of recycled water.

Innovative approaches to stormwater management, local recycling and demand management are needed to stimulate cost effectiveness and secure the supply of alternative water resources. The Stormwater and Urban Water Conservation Fund will boost Victoria's use of alternative water supplies such as stormwater and recycled water.

■ Werribee escarpment works

After receiving a grant of \$10,700 from the Port Phillip Catchment Management Authority, the Pinkerton Landcare and Environment Group is set to tackle a major weed problem on the environmentally significant escarpment of the Werribee River Volcanic Gorge at Melton South.

The project site adjoins Western Water's Surbiton Park Wastewater Purification Plant and will link with a Melton Shire Council project at Greigs Road.

Working in partnership with the Landcare Group, Western Water will contribute \$15,000 towards the cleanup and rehabilitation of approximately 400 metres of the escarpment and riparian zone, at the junction of Toolern Creek and Werribee River.

Anyone interested in helping with spring planting at the escarpment can contact Frances Overmars of the Pinkerton Landcare and Environment Group on 03 9748 1294.

■ Recycled water signage

Western Water, in conjunction with its recycled water customers, has introduced new designs of recycled water signs to notify the community where recycled water is being used. Below is just an example.

For further information, please contact Anna May at Western Water on 03 5421 9470.



■ Global spotlight on recycling

Western Water's Recycled Water Manager, Les McLean, will tour recycled water projects in Singapore, Mexico and the United States (U.S.) later this year, as part of an organised International Recycled Water Study Tour.

The tour group will spend two weeks looking at recycled water technologies and projects including the creation of NEWater via desalination in Singapore, which imports half of its potable supply from Malaysia.

The group will tour Mexico and end with a four-day visit to California.

Les will also visit Florida, the second largest user of recycled water in the U.S. to explore the development of rapid infiltration basins for groundwater recharge, using recycled water.

■ Autumn calendar

April 21

AgriWest luncheon - Marketing your Business, Galli Estate Winery

Professor David Ch'ng, Associate Professor at the Melbourne Business School, Melbourne University, will speak about the forces behind globalisation and its effects on the Australian agriculture and business sectors. Angela Ruffo, proprietor of Tripod Farms, will give a practical insight into one of the nation's most successful gourmet lettuce growing enterprises.

Cost: Financial Members \$34, Non Members \$39

For further information or to RSVP for this event, please email daryl.wilson@wyndham.vic.gov.au

May 3-6

Third Australian Lettuce Industry Conference and National Vegetable Expo, Wyndham Events Centre

To be officially opened by Governor John Landy, AC, MBE, this industry conference will feature keynote speaker Freddy Leuenberger, a major grower, processor and distributor of salads and vegetables in Europe. The conference includes a number of half-day industry tours such as Western Water's biosolids composting project with PineGro and will feature the launch of Bacchus Marsh's new lettuce industry equipment innovation.

For further information please contact Jocelyn Williams on 03 5367 2582.