



## Take winter water now

Recycled water customers are advised to use their off-peak or winter allocations now to replenish their on-site storages, to avoid shortages during the peak season.

Renewable Resources Manager Peta Maddy said "Reduced inflows to our recycled water plants last summer meant that Western Water was close to running out of recycled water. This year, with the approach of warmer weather, we anticipate a repeat of last year's scenario, so customers who have not yet used their winter allocations should stock up now while recycled water is still available.

"The reduction in available recycled water is a result of lower discharges to the sewers. A range of factors, including water restrictions, and people capturing shower water in buckets and diverting washing machine water, has contributed to this.

"Over the warmer months last year, the Sunbury-Melton recycled water scheme alone delivered more than 140 million litres of recycled water per month to 52 major customers, which equated to 96 per cent of all inflows. Which doesn't leave much to share around!" said Ms Maddy.

Western Water has developed a strategy to accommodate future demand, including constructing a 10 million litre storage at the Sunbury Recycled Water Plant. The \$1.5 million initiative is expected to be completed in the 2007/2008 financial year.

## Update on Eynesbury

Construction of the new Eynesbury Township, south of Melton, is progressing rapidly. Installation of residential water, sewer and recycled water pipework for Stage 1 of the residential development is complete.

Western Water is on track to supply high quality recycled water to Eynesbury by April 2008, having signed the construction contract for a \$7 million Class A Recycled Water Plant at Surbiton Park.

The plant will supply high quality recycled water to Eynesbury suitable for a variety of purposes including toilet flushing, garden watering and open space irrigation.

## Another great recycled product: Biosolids

Western Water has signed a three-year contract with Pinegro Products, to recycle biosolids from the Sunbury Recycled Water Plant. Pinegro is a major supplier of agricultural and horticultural soil improvement products. Biosolids are the solid matter remaining after sewage has been treated and most of the water content removed for recycling.

"Biosolids are high in nutrients and therefore have valuable fertilising properties," said Pinegro Products General Manager, John van Meel.

After years of trialling at Deer Park, in Melbourne's west, Pinegro Products developed a 12-week biosolids composting process that produces sufficient heat to destroy any pathogens. The biosolids are blended with screened green waste from local council collections, to assist with the composting process.

The resulting product is carefully and continuously tested to ensure that it meets EPA chemical content and treatment standards. It is used for landfill cover, and by landscapers, and also retails in garden centres.

"This process turns an unwanted waste product into a valuable resource, which is a great environmental outcome for both Western Water and the community," said William Rajendram, Acting Manager of Water Systems at Western Water.



Jamie Bingham, Pinegro Operations Manager, explains the composting works at Deer Park to William Rajendram from Western Water.

## Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Western Water recently conducted a workshop for employees to develop the company's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy, with the aim of working towards carbon neutrality.

"Our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions is based on our understanding of its connection to climate change, and consequently the availability of water supplies for future generations," said John Wilkinson, Managing Director of Western Water.

"From now on, greenhouse gas emissions will form a part of every consideration made by Western Water employees. We want to walk the walk. Our Greenhouse Gas Strategy will be finalised in October 2007."

Now for Future, a professional services company, facilitated the workshop using a 'World Café' session and group graphics.

"Many opportunities for greenhouse gas reduction were identified," explained Anna May, Project Engineer Renewable Resources at Western Water, who helped to organise the workshop. "For example, purchasing energy efficient pumps, and renewable energy options like biogas cogeneration from our recycled water plants."

### What is carbon neutrality?

Carbon neutrality is a net result of zero emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Organisations generally begin the process of achieving carbon neutrality by taking an inventory of their emissions, and then reducing the amount of energy they use – chiefly through a range of energy efficiency measures and behavioural changes (like using more public transport). Other options include shifting to renewable energy sources (like wind or solar power), rather than using electricity from coal-fired power stations, which are a major source of greenhouse gases.

## Recycled Water Irrigation Workshop

For all existing and potential recycled water irrigators, including councils, golf clubs, orchardists, winegrowers and fodder crop farmers: Western Water is running a one-day workshop on best management practice for recycled water irrigators.

The workshop will be held in late October at the Western Water offices in Sunbury. It will cover: irrigation scheduling and water budgeting, crop choices, irrigation systems, soil physics and chemistry, irrigation monitoring and management, and occupational health and safety issues.

Two well-known experts, Roger Wrigley and Cliff Dillon, will facilitate the workshop. Mr Wrigley has been a consulting engineer and environmental advocate for over twenty years, with extensive experience in recycled water irrigation schemes. Mr Dillon is a soil scientist who has spent eight years as an agricultural consultant for vineyards, orchards, nurseries and farms.

If you are interested in attending the workshop, please contact Trevor Hayes, Recycled Water Advisor at Western Water, on 9218 5400.



Western Water's Anna May explains her ideas for Greenhouse Gas reduction. Photograph courtesy of Now for Future Pty Ltd.

## In 2006/2007, Western Water...

- achieved 84% beneficial use of all recycled water, and was recognised as having the highest recycling rate in Australia by the National Water Commission;
- substituted a record 1,262 megalitres of recycled water for drinking water supplies, compared with the year's target of 700 megalitres;
- trucked a record amount (over 16 megalitres) of recycled water from three filling points within the region as part of an EPA Drought Relief Initiative;
- sought Public Expressions of Interest for 200 megalitres of recycled water available from the Riddells Creek and Gisborne Recycled Water Scheme;
- began supplying recycled water to Langama Park in Sunbury to irrigate four sporting grounds used by local soccer and rugby clubs;
- connected Woodend's Racecourse Reserve to a recycled water supply in an initiative that will ultimately save up to eleven million litres of drinking water per year;
- welcomed its 50th customer to the Sunbury-Melton Recycled Water Scheme;
- received the Hume City Council 2007 Business Award for outstanding achievement in environmental sustainability for the ongoing partnership with Hume City Council to provide recycled water to the region.

### Did you know?

Compared to a cold wash, washing clothes in warm water can add 1.5 kg more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, and using hot water produces up to 3 kg more greenhouse gases. So select a cold wash for your clothes and save money and the environment!



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bringing the region to life

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