

## Biosolids enriching fields at Woodend

A thousand tonnes of biosolids – a nutrient-rich, organic soil conditioner and alternative fertiliser – has been spread across the carefully tilled fields of Woodend farmer Gavin Lester-Smith.

For the last four years, Mr Lester-Smith has been using biosolids produced from Western Water's Gisborne Recycled Water Plant across his 7.9Ha site, according to an environmental improvement plan based on the Victorian Environment Protection Authority's protocols.

This year, Mr Lester-Smith's soil quality and plant growth will be monitored with the assistance of biosolids specialists LV Rawlinson and Associates.

"This information will be used to assess the impact biosolids have in building the health and resilience we need in our prime farming land to remain viable in changing economic and climatic times," said Stephanie Gillespie, Manager Renewable Resources.



**Gavin Lester-Smith and Western Water's Stephanie Gillespie discuss the application of biosolids at the Woodend property.**



**Western Water's Trevor Hayes and Kylie Todd present Eynesbury's first residents - the Pritchard family - with their new customer kit.**

## Welcome home to Eynesbury

Western Water welcomes our first residential recycled water customers in their new dual reticulation homes at Eynesbury. The Pritchard and McRobb families each received a hamper as part of their new customer kits to help them settle into the recently established township, south of Melton.

The drinking water savings to be made by families residing at Eynesbury Township contributed to Western Water achievement of finalist status in the prestigious Premier's Sustainability Awards.

In the Built Environment Category, Western Water presented Eynesbury as a successful model of sustainable development.

"The innovative foresight displayed can be replicated by the water industry in future developments," said Anna May, Western Water's Project Manager Renewable Resources.

"The design of this development will enable drinking water savings of 4, 221 million litres per annum at full capacity; reducing consumption by 50% in each household and lowering greenhouse gas emissions by 22, 966 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum."

## Attention recycled water customers:

It is now off-peak season for recycled water. Please take your winter water allocation in accordance with your contract to optimise system performance. For more information, contact the Renewable Resources Team on 9218 5400.

## SolarBee trial aims high

In a bid to access renewable energy, Western Water is trialling the SolarBee – a floating pond and reservoir aerator equipped with solar panels – at the Woodend Recycled Water Plant.

The SolarBee uses the sun to perform the energy intensive task of aerating recycled water storages to prevent algal blooms. If the trial is successful, this will create savings in operation and maintenance costs, as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

“The machine draws up water from the depths and spreads it gently across the top of the water for continuous surface renewal to control algae,” explained Donald Mitchell from Envireco - the SolarBee’s distributor in Australia.

“The Woodend test is the second phase of our trial of the SolarBee,” explained Western Water’s Senior Environmental Engineer William Rajendram. “The machine was previously tested on a drinking water reservoir at Lancefield Water Filtration Plant.

“The SolarBee has already had good results at Barwon Water, so it is anticipated that it will replace conventional aeration systems at many if not all of Western Water’s treatment plants.

“We are confident of reaching our 25% greenhouse gas emission reduction target by June this year with the assistance of the SolarBee.” Mr Rajendram said.



Envireco’s Donald Mitchell and Ian Buist install the Solar Bee, watched by Western Water’s William Rajendram.

## Improved supply for Dixon Field at Gisborne

A grant from Regional Development Victoria’s Small Towns Development Fund to Macedon Ranges Shire Council has enabled the extension of the existing recycled water supply at Dixon Field in Robertson Street, Gisborne.

The extension reaches an additional soccer field and a cricket ground. Western Water supplies recycled water to the entire Dixon Field recreation precinct, comprising a croquet club, three soccer grounds and the cricket ground.

The sports grounds are utilised for a variety of other community activities, so the improved recycled water supply is of great benefit to Gisborne residents.



Recycled water signage at Dixon Field, Gisborne.

## Fighting fire with recycled water

Western Water recently held a training session on the use of Class A recycled water for fire fighting, attended by more than twenty volunteers from the Parwan Brigade of the Country Fire Authority.

Attendees visited the residential development at Eynesbury - with reticulated Class A recycled water supply - to inspect fire fighting appliances including hydrants, hydrant covers and marker posts. They also completed a tour of Western Water’s Class A Recycled Water Plant at Melton.

The session concluded with a presentation by Western Water’s Recycled Water Coordinator Trevor Hayes covering the regulatory framework for recycled water, Occupational Health and Safety matters, and other recycled water schemes in Victoria.