



StreamNews

A bulletin for Melbourne Water diverters
Issue 28 - June 2021



Water theft enforcement

The Australian Government recently requested that all Water Corporations increase their focus on compliance and enforcement across their regions. As a result, Victoria's Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) have released a new metering framework as well as a new compliance and enforcement policy. The new policy will be linked to our current enforcement and compliance procedures.

In addition changes to the Water Act and Regulations enable Water Corporations to issue fines (Penalty Infringement Notices) for breaches of the Water Act or Regulations as prescribed in the Water (infringements) Regulations 2020. We are working closely with DELWP and Fines Victoria to implement this functionality through the 2021/22 financial year. Further information about infringement notices will be provided later in the year.

We have a responsibility to our customers to ensure all water usage is within licence conditions and that breaches of the Water Act are fully investigated. With this in mind we aim to increase our presence in the field in a compliance role in line with our obligations under the Act, with any breaches dealt with effectively. Additional information regarding our compliance approach has been added to our new compliance page on our website.

melbournewater.com.au/watertheft

ZERO tolerance on water theft
So there is an even playing field for everyone.
melbournewater.com.au/watertheft
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Metering Program

As part of the DELWP's new metering framework for Victoria's non-urban irrigation meters, it is a requirement that all Water Corporations meters comply with Australian Standard AS4747 and have telemetry to record and transmit readings installed by 2025.

We continue to set the benchmark for metering standards in the state. We have been implementing a program of meter upgrades to AS4747 and installing telemetry over the last 5 years as part of our capital upgrade program. Over 50% of our meter fleet currently meets AS4747 and National Measurement Institute - NMI-10.

During the global pandemic in 2020, we were able to continue to implement our capital upgrade program throughout the year, replacing almost 50 meters. We are well placed to meet the requirements and timeline that DELWP has set.

We are currently installing state of the art AS4747 and NMI-10 compliant, Siemens MAG8000 Electromagnetic and Arad Octave Ultrasonic meters.

These new meters provide benefits to both us and our customers. They provide the best possible reliability, ease of operation and longevity, and most importantly accuracy, giving a 0.2% accuracy compared to 5% with old mechanical meters. This means that our customers can be confident that they are taking the correct amount of water with less losses due to meter error.



Photo: Doug Gimesy

We are continuing to roll out installation upgrades of our telemetry system which employs both radio and 4G technology. With this network, we can remotely review live meter data to ensure compliance with licence conditions as well as receiving alerts for over-use, taking during bans and meter errors.

We will continue to investigate and trial new methods of technology for our telemetry network to ensure robust and reliable data for our customers and Melbourne Water.

Water Transfer Licence Application – now online

Our Water Transfer Licence application has been transformed into an online form enabling our customers to complete the entire application process including obtaining the required signatures in one online application. Customers will use this form for example when transferring a licence as a result of a property sale.

This is the first step towards transitioning our paper-based forms into a digital form and providing a streamlined process for both our customers and our Diversions team.

Do we have your correct contact details?



Please email or call the Diversions Team to update your contact details on our records. This will ensure you never miss out on important information regarding your licence.

diversions@melbournewater.com.au

New technology a game changer for the endangered Grayling

In an Australian first, Melbourne Water and the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research (DELWP) is using cutting edge technology to tag and track the endangered Australian Grayling and other native migratory fish in the Tarago and Bunyip Rivers.

The Passive Integrated Transponder technology will help inform and support better conservation management.

Melbourne Water's Environmental Water Delivery Lead Sarah Gaskill said the purpose of the innovative technology is twofold.

"It will allow us to better understand the migratory behaviours of these fishes and links to environmental conditions, and how delivery of environmental water flows may help them move and thrive.

"We have been studying the fish in this waterway for around 12 years with the help of the Arthur Rylah Institute and are excited with this new technology.

"We have installed three 'listening' stations along the Tarago and Bunyip Rivers and tagged around 150 native migratory fish, including Australian Grayling, Tupong, Common Galaxias and Short Finned Eels.

"When the fish pass a listening post, we receive a signal on our system – this is real time live data. We can link this back to conditions in the waterway to understand what flows they need to move and when.

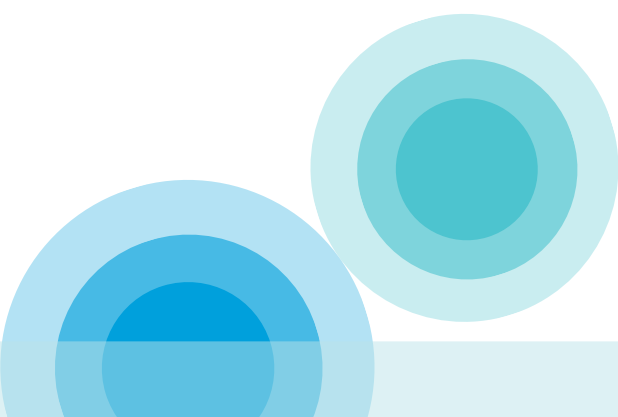
"This in turn informs us of when to deliver extra environmental water flows from the Tarago reservoir upstream to help support their lifecycles," Ms Gaskill said.

For now, the team have been closely monitoring the autumn flows in the river to observe the downstream movement of the fish.

For the Australian Grayling, it may mean a 100-kilometre round trip! They swim the 50 kilometre journey downstream to spawn and then make the 50 kilometre return back upstream.

They will be tracked every part of their amazing swim thanks to the technology monitoring their extraordinary life cycles.

Findings from the first data readings will continue to inform Melbourne Water, researchers and scientists about the best waterway conditions for the Australian Grayling and other native fishes in the system.





Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways

Melbourne Water is excited to share our new incentives program – **Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways**.

Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways is an evolution of our existing grant programs with a stronger focus on innovation, liveability and collaboration across all areas of water management. It will bring together several successful Melbourne Water grant programs into a single streamlined application process.

Melbourne Water is making the incentives program more flexible to accommodate the needs of our customers and community allowing for increased partnership opportunities. Allowing our customers and community to take action on a broader range of emerging challenges. Councils, community groups and public land managers transitioned to the program at the end of 2020.

Later in 2021, private land managers and owners will be able to apply for a broader range of funding opportunities for holistic projects under the new program.

All activities funded under the Stream Frontage and Rural Land Programs will continue to be funded under the new program. The increased flexibility of Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways will allow you to apply and then start your activity at any time during the year.

More information is available on our website. melbournewater.com.au/LCLW

If you would like to obtain more information please get in touch via our Customer Service Centre on 131 722, incentives@melbournewater.com.au, or contact your Waterways and Land Officer.

Rural Land Program

The Rural Land Program provides assistance and funding opportunities for landholders to undertake works that will keep soil and nutrients on their farm and out of waterways.

The program has been designed to help landholders improve on-farm management practices through financial and technical assistance. Benefits include increased productivity for the property owner and improved waterway health for the broader community.

The Rural Land Program is about improving the management of water sensitive areas such as:

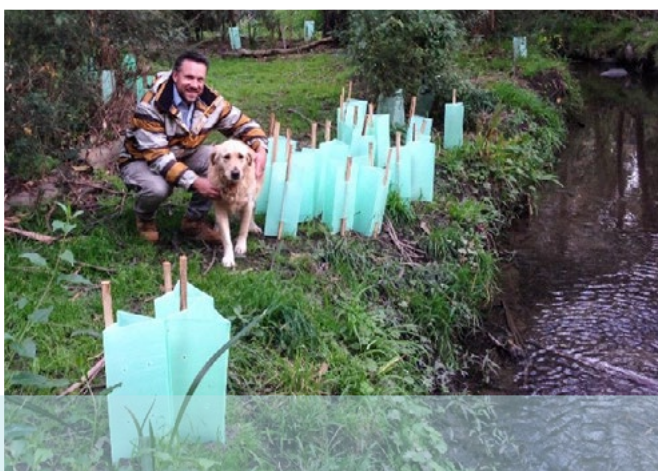
- waterways
- drains
- dams
- wetlands
- gullies
- low-lying and seasonally wet areas.

The Rural Land Program is available to landholders who own or manage rural land in these catchments:

- Woori Yallock, Wandin Yallock, Olinda, Stringybark, Yering, Hoddles Creek and Little Yarra
- Upper Jacksons, Upper Deep Creek and Upper Werribee
- Upper Bass, Lang Lang and Tarago

Rural Land Program information

For more details on the services offered through the Rural Land Program contact Melbourne Water's Rural Land Officer Rowan Hore at: rowan.hore@melbournewater.com.au or mobile 0428 709 708

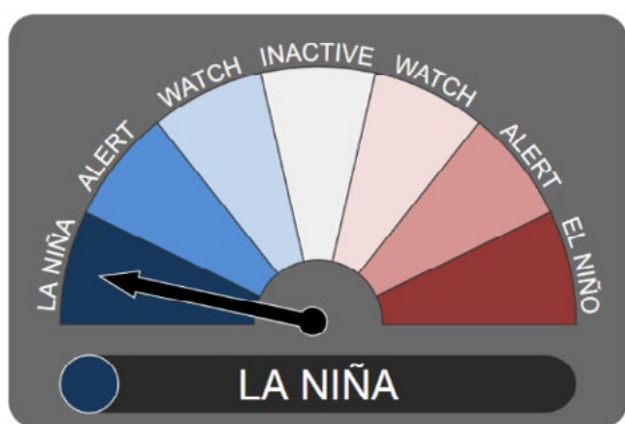


Dam Safety - Time to check your dam

Good rainfall across parts of Victoria has tested the integrity of some farm dams over the last six months, serving as a timely reminder for landowners to carry out routine maintenance coming into winter.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) announcement of La Nina conditions in recent months, have been bringing higher than average rainfall across Eastern Australia. The last significant La Nina event was in 2010-11, which was Australia's wettest two-year period on record.

These conditions make it more important than ever to ensure farm dams are safe and operating properly.



A dam is a valuable asset on any farm, providing essential stock or irrigation water supplies and should be regularly inspected during the year as part of preventative maintenance. Dam failure not only leads to expensive repair bills; it also means lost production while the dam is repaired.

If you are a dam owner, we suggest that you include enhanced inspection and monitoring programs, cleaning spillways and outlet pipes to pass flood water, review of emergency response procedures and the repair of any cracks and other defects prior to re-filling.

You can carry out routine maintenance works on a dam without requiring a licence providing the works are limited to:

1. Clearing out weeds
2. Removing vegetation from the dam wall
3. Minor works to repair erosion damage on the crest, embankment or spillway
4. Maintenance of the compensation pipe



Any works that put at risk the integrity of a dam will require a works licence and are not considered routine maintenance. This type of work includes:

- Any alteration to the capacity or wall height
- Modification of the crest, spillway, and compensation pipe
- Reconstruction of the dam wall due to damage
- Repairs that result in a disturbance to the embankment – such as removing a section of the embankment to replace or repair a compensation pipe

A potentially hazardous dam is any dam on a waterway or a dam as described under Section 67 (1A) of the *Water Act 1989* as follows:

The dam has a wall that is 5 metres or more high above ground level at the downstream end of the dam and a capacity of 50 megalitres or more; or

The dam has a wall that is 10 metres or more high above ground level at the downstream end of the dam and a capacity of 20 megalitres or more; or

The dam has a wall that is 15 metres or more high above ground level at the downstream end of the dam, regardless of the capacity; or

The dam belongs to a prescribed class of dams.

To access further resources please visit <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/managing-dams-and-water-emergencies/dams/guidance-notes>

For BOM alerts visit: <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/outlook/>

It would be appreciated if you plan to do any maintenance works of your dam or dams that you first contact Melbourne Water on 131 722.

Keep up to date with what's happening

For more information about this project or our other activities please call the Diversions Team on 131 722 or visit www.melbournewater.com/water/waterway-diversions



For an interpreter, please call the **Translating and Interpreting Service** (TIS National) on 13 14 50

