



# Waterways Local Update 2016-17

Melbourne Water's work to improve waterways and provide flood protection in the **City of Maribyrnong**.



**6.1 km**  
WEED CONTROL  
ALONG WATERWAYS



**IMPROVING**  
MARIBYRNONG RIVER



**MONITORED**  
WATER QUALITY  
IN WATERWAYS

Melbourne Water makes a vital contribution to the famous Melbourne lifestyle by underpinning human health, enhancing community well-being, supporting economic growth and balancing the natural and man-made environment.

Together with our partners, we look after 8,400 km of rivers and creeks, 428 wetland treatment systems and more than 1,400 km of regional drainage systems in the Port Phillip and Westernport region. This work is funded by the Waterways and Drainage Charge, which is paid by property owners and collected by retail water companies on our behalf.

Melbourne Water cares for many waterways. Some in your local area include:

- Maribyrnong River
- Stony Creek

# Healthy waterways

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## Maintenance and new projects

Each year we create and maintain healthy waterways by removing litter, debris and excess sediment. We remove and spray weeds, cut grass and plant native trees and shrubs.

### What we have done

### Why

**6.1 km**

**Weed control**

Introduced and noxious weeds can choke waterways and take over from plants that provide healthy habitats for birds and animals.

**2.5 m<sup>3</sup>**

**Sediment, silt, litter, debris removal**

Silt, sediment, litter and debris is removed for drainage and flood protection, and to prevent pollution building up in our waterways and wetlands. An excess of these can impact the habitat for platypus, fish and other animals, as well as native plants.

## Stormwater

We work closely with Council and local communities to better manage stormwater to protect the environment, provide alternative water sources and improve the stormwater that flows into local waterways.

### What we have done

### Why

**Through the Clearwater program, we supported Council to take a whole-of-water approach by providing a wide range of tools and resources, and opportunities to participate in a variety of activities**

This work helps to improve skills, increase knowledge and foster better networks across councils to change the way we manage water for healthy, connected communities.



Through our **Living Rivers** program, we worked with councils on projects that assist waterway health and create sustainable stormwater management solutions in your area.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/livingrivers](http://melbournewater.com.au/livingrivers)

## Environmental water

We work with government agencies, councils, industries, landowners and the community to provide the allocated water needed in rivers to maintain healthy natural ecosystems.

### What we have done

### Why

**Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Southern Rural Water and Western Water to deliver three environmental flow releases from the Maribyrnong River**

By releasing water into the river, we can monitor water quality and improve the flow of the Maribyrnong River.

**Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Western Water and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to identify options to recover water from the Maribyrnong River**

This project looks at options to recover water to improve the river's health, as part of the Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy.

## Monitoring and research

We regularly undertake extensive monitoring, investigations and research to help us better understand how we can improve local waterways.

### What we have done

### Why

#### Undertook monthly monitoring of water quality at two sites within your area. These tests measure:

- water temperature
- dissolved oxygen
- salinity (conductivity)
- pH level
- nutrients (nitrate, nitrite, ammonia, Kjeldahl nitrogen, soluble reactive phosphorus and total phosphorus)
- indicators of faecal contamination (*E. coli*)
- metals (arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, nickel and zinc)

Our water quality monitoring program is designed to assess broad-scale, long-term trends in water quality (typically over 8 -10 years). We use this data to help identify pollution sources and inform the community about local water quality.

#### Undertook weekly monitoring at one site to better understand recreational health risks during the summer period

We use this data to identify any pollution sources and provide information to the community.

#### Monitored sediment at Stony Creek and Maribyrnong River

We monitored sediment to improve our knowledge of contaminants and help guide our management of waterways.

## Planning for future development

We plan for future development to ensure growing communities do not threaten local waterways. We provide advice and assist new developments to ensure they do not increase flood risk.

### What we have done

### Why

**102** referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

To ensure proposed land subdivisions meet current standards for drainage and stormwater quality.

**140** development applications reviewed

To ensure that growing communities don't contribute to an increase in flood risk.

**53** flood information requests reviewed

To provide flood information to property owners and people interested in purchasing or redeveloping property.

**43** applications for works near Melbourne Water assets and works such as bridges, shared pathways and jetties reviewed

To ensure waterways, and the plants and animals that live there, are protected from the potential impacts of building works.

**7** stormwater connection applications reviewed

To ensure waterways and the plants and animals that live there, are protected from the potential impacts of construction works.

# Flood protection

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While floods are natural and we can't stop them all from occurring, we aim to minimise the damage they cause to people, places and communities.

We manage the regional drainage system and work with Council, the Victorian State Emergency Service, the Bureau of Meteorology, property owners and developers to make sure flood information is up to date. We provide flood warning services, prepare flood response plans, and identify and construct new flood protection projects in areas with the greatest need.

## What we have done

## Why

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### Continued collecting hydrological data

Data is used to analyse flood warning during emergency situations, as well as for such things as development referrals and projects to reduce the risk of flood.

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### Worked with stakeholders to review plans and hydraulic reports to assist with West Gate Tunnel project

Ensure proposed works will not impact the floodplain, path of over-land flow, assets and waterways, and that the project is feasible, safe and possible for community use.

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Five volunteers in your area provide us with rainfall data by recording information from a rain gauge in their backyard. These figures and the data from our automated gauges provides us with valuable rainfall information.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/communityrainreaders](http://melbournewater.com.au/communityrainreaders)

## Working with the community

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The involvement of community groups, volunteers, land managers and farmers supports our management of local waterways and regional drainage systems. If you'd like more information about funding opportunities, please call 131 722 or email [river.health@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:river.health@melbournewater.com.au)

### Funding provided

### Grant

### For

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**\$10,978** Community Grants

Volunteer and community groups for works that protect or enhance riverbanks on public land, raise awareness, and provide training and education to protect local waterways.

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We also worked with the local community on several events and initiatives throughout the year.

## Who we worked with

## What we did

### Friends of Stony Creek

Provided support for monitoring water quality and the Waterbug Census through our programs.

### Footscray City College

Supported teachers to participate in the pilot program *River Detectives*, with the loan of a water quality kit and training to enable them to take students to test water quality and monitor waterbugs at Newells Paddock, Footscray.

### Waterwatch volunteers

Hosted a Waterwatch network meeting at Council for volunteers in the Maribyrnong catchment.

### City of Maribyrnong

### City of Maribyrnong

Presented on the Frog Census and local species, and actions the community can take to assist conservation.

### Community

### City of Maribyrnong

Delivered a workshop on the construction of frog habitats, installed a frog pond and associated habitat at Dobson Kindergarten and developed a package of supporting signage resources for frog habitat projects with Council.

### Newport Lakes Native Nursery

### Dobson Kindergarten

### City of Maribyrnong

Hosted a Waterwatch stall at the Sustainable Living Festival at Pipemakers Park to provide information and resources on Waterwatch programs.

### Community

### City of Maribyrnong

Discussed Waterwatch programs and citizen science at the Stakeholder Forum to support the community leadership program 'Growing Our Community' for emerging environmental leaders.

### City of Maribyrnong

Provided the school holiday 'Nature Explorers' frog program with Frog Census resources.



**Our Space Your Space** is an app that helps you find land managed by Melbourne Water that you can use for community projects, such as community gardens. We encourage communities to apply to use the land.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/ourspaceyourplace](http://melbournewater.com.au/ourspaceyourplace) or call 131 722.



**Waterwatch** is a citizen science program that encourages communities to monitor platypus, frogs, waterbugs and water quality in their local river or creeks. We empower our volunteers to collect data, protect the waterways environment and share their knowledge.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/waterwatch](http://melbournewater.com.au/waterwatch) or call 131 722.