

recycling water for a greener island



Water is a precious resource too valuable to flush away....

Studies are currently being undertaken to identify the environmental, economic and social benefits to the Phillip Island area of recycling waste water, ensuring an appropriate balance can be achieved and one that maximises benefits to the local community.

Securing water supplies for current and future needs in the area was given a kick start recently when Westernport Water was awarded a \$2.85 million Federal grant to partly fund a new state of the art Class A recycled water plant at the Cowes Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The Australian Government grant has been made available through the National Water Security Plan for Cities and Towns, on behalf of the Commonwealth's Water for the Future strategy.

The Corporation's Managing Director, Mr Murray Jackson, was pleased with the Government's contribution announced in early June by the Federal Minister for Water, Senator Penny Wong.

"With the increasing demand for water and risks from climate change, Westernport Water recognises the need to develop alternative solutions to meet future water supply needs for the region". "The challenge is to manage our limited water resources in an environmentally responsible manner, exploring fully every opportunity for reuse and water savings" Mr. Jackson said.

The Phillip Island Recycled Water Scheme could prove to be an asset to the area, supplying Class A recycled water to new residential developments and surrounding agricultural and commercial businesses on Phillip Island.

Murray Jackson commented, "The funding will make possible the construction of more water-efficient infrastructure through bringing new technology to the Corporation."

"Reclaimed water is a valuable resource that will improve the reliability of our water supply by conserving drinking water supplies for high demand periods" he commented.

The recycled water "purple pipe" initiative has taken off around the world, with many new residential developments adapting to use recycled water. In these areas the community has driven recycling initiatives in response to periods of shortages in potable water supply and to reduce effluent discharges to waterways.

The Phillip Island community has the opportunity to be a partner in this great initiative. Shearwater Estate in Cowes and the Whyte Sands development have both adopted the purple pipe system and residents of these areas will be the first to trial Westernport Water's Class A dual pipe system, when Class A comes online.

Westernport Water's Environment & Sustainability Coordinator Benita Russell commented "this is a positive step for sustainability on Phillip Island as recycling our water frees up water for the local environment, and reduces the amount of treated effluent that is discharged to the ocean, minimising impacts to aquatic environments by reducing nutrient and sediment loads into Bass Strait."

Class A recycled water has numerous uses being suitable for toilet flushing, garden watering, washing boats and vehicles on grassed areas, fire fighting, ornamental ponds, irrigating and maintaining community parks gardens and local sporting grounds.

- The population of the Westernport Water supply network and the district's future water supply needs are forecast to grow 58% by 2030 and 166% by 2055, (Sustainable Water Strategy Central Region Action to 2055).
- Less than 10% of the water used by urban and industrial consumers in Australia is recycled. (Melbourne Water)
- Currently 9% of the waste-water captured by Westernport Water Pyramid Rock Rd site is treated to produce Class B recycled water for reuse on sporting ovals and Phillip Island Golf Course. Westernport Water has outlined a plan to achieve 23% water recycling by 2015.



Reclaimed water quality is strictly monitored by the Department of Health, and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), to ensure a consistently high quality water standard.

The proposed upgrade to the Cowes Wastewater Treatment Plant will adopt similar methods that are currently used for Class A production across many water corporations.

Yarra Valley Water currently supplies recycled water to municipal areas of Hume, Maroondah, and Whittlesea. City West Water supplies Class A to new estates in the growth corridor including Manor Lakes, Bluestone and Riverwalk and Western Water supplies the Melton Tabcorp Park.

Mt Hotham has demonstrated a great example of resource management with the use of reclaimed water to expand its water supplies for snow making. This demonstrates how introducing measures to improving environmental sustainability of a small community can have economical benefits.

Phillip Island and surrounding Bass Coast communities have continually demonstrated their commitment and passion towards the sustainable growth of the area. This reuse/recycle initiative provides opportunities for future development and an alternative cost effective method to easing water supply pressures whilst considering the beautiful natural surrounding that we all cherish.

For more detailed information, readers should consult EPA Victoria's Guidelines for Environmental Management Use of Reclaimed Water, (EPA, Publication 464.2, June 2003) or Westernport Water customer service on 1300 720 711. ☐

Check out www.westernportwater.com.au for some great water saving tips.



Purple Pipe at Shearwater Estate, Cowes



Phillip Island Football Club uses recycled water



Phillip Island Golf Course uses recycled water



Where treated effluent meets the sea