



Quality water project enters next stage

Ecological assessments have been completed at our **Quality Water for Wannon** sites at Heywood, Port Fairy and Portland. The results will help us ensure we're protecting our environment and any endangered flora and fauna.

The assessments were conducted in the spring and summer when the animals are most active, and plants are blossoming – making them easier to identify.

The assessments identified several plants that are endangered in Victoria. This information allows us to design protections into our sites that minimise our environmental impact. These include building barriers around endangered plants, avoiding certain areas where possible, and offsetting our environmental impact in other ways.

It also gives the broader community and government agencies valuable information about our native wildlife and the protection they need.

With the assessments complete we can now refine our design plans and start the process of engaging contractors to begin work on improving the water quality in all three towns. You can keep up to date on our plans by following us on engage.wannonwater.com.au

Supporting the community

Our *Ripple Effect* grants and sponsorship program supports organisations within our region to make a positive impact on our community. This year we received nearly 40 grant applications and over 25 applications for merchandise sponsorships.

Merchandise such as water bottles, sports packs and garden trigger nozzles will be packed and sent off to not-for-profit organisations, schools and social enterprises in May. Don't worry if you missed out this time around – you'll have another opportunity to apply for merchandise sponsorship in August.

Our grant recipients will be announced in June. So, be sure to keep an eye on our social channels to find out who was successful.



Protecting our native habitats

Our work to care for the environment extends to championing sustainable site management to protect and boost local biodiversity values. Some of the important work we've been undertaking across our sites includes:

- Removing invasive woody weeds at Bald Hill in Portland to allow threatened species of bandicoots, orchids, lilies and wildflowers to thrive.
- Restoring the ecosystem at an important remnant grassy woodland near Dunkeld to support the endangered Button Wrinklewort and **critically endangered** Striped Legless Lizard.
- Revegetating the Casterton Sewage Treatment Plant to create a suitable habitat for the endangered Red Tailed Black Cockatoo.
- Entering into stewardship agreements with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority to protect the critically endangered Australasian Bittern population and remnants of the Victorian Volcanic Plains.

Visit our website to hear how we're managing the rare and precious habitat at our Dunkeld Grassy Woodlands site...





Water saving tip

Did you know we use almost half of our household water in our gardens?

Choosing waterwise plants makes sense – they're low-fuss and they look great!

Think about grouping plants with similar watering needs so you can create a beautiful garden and water more efficiently.

And remember, watering early in the morning or late in the afternoon helps reduce evaporation and ensures your plants get the moisture they need. You can also use mulch around your plants to retain moisture in the soil and keep weeds at bay.

Small changes like these help us make every drop count.

Find more **water saving tips** on our website...



The Otway supply system

We manage a complex range of water sources across our 24,000-square-kilometre region, supplying nearly 12,000 megalitres of drinking water each year.

The Otway supply system is our biggest and most complex, providing two-thirds of all our water needs. This includes supplying water to Warrnambool, Allansford and Koroit via the South Otway pipeline.

The Otway system has a consistent streamflow pattern and has reliably supplied water to meet demands for more than 40 years. However, circumstances can change over time, and that's why we use modelling software to help project how much supply will be available into the future under a range of climate scenarios.

We also prepare and publish an Annual Water Outlook each year. The most recent outlook, released in December, confirms there are no water restrictions on the horizon for our customers.

While Bureau of Meteorology climate data shows that some parts of South West Victoria have faced their driest 12 months on record, the outlook explains how we're well prepared to meet the urban water demands from customers.

Read the Annual Water Outlook: wannonwater.com.au/awo



Did you know?

The average family would need **30 big brown bins** to dispose of all their sewage and wastewater each week. **Learn more...**



Wet wipes block pipes

Wet wipes may seem convenient, but they can cause big problems for our sewerage systems. Unlike toilet paper, wet wipes don't break down easily. When they're flushed, they can clump together and create blockages in pipes. This can lead to costly repairs and messy overflows.

To keep our sewerage systems running smoothly, **please dispose of wet wipes in the bin** instead of flushing them down the toilet. This small change can make a big difference in preventing blockages and ensuring our pipes stay in good shape.



Ease the pressure of paying your bill

Setting up a payment plan can help ease the stress of paying your bill each month. You can pay smaller amounts more often, making your payments easier to manage.

Contact our Customer Support Team on 1300 926 666 to set up a plan today or chat about other ways we can help ease the pressure.

