

# WATER MATTERS

VICTORIAN WATER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NEWS

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## MATTERS

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## Drinking Water Security - Protocol for managing threats to our water supply

Given worldwide events in recent years, there has been an increased focus on the potential for deliberate threats to contaminate the water supply system. The Melbourne metropolitan water industry and the broader community have developed a protocol to address the occurrence of a threat to contaminate Melbourne's water supply.

The key objective of the protocol is to provide a clear communication pathway between Department of Human Services (DHS) the Tactical Response Squad (TRS) and the four Melbourne water companies. This will drive efficient management of public health consequences, investigations and actions required to respond to a threat of Melbourne's water supply.

### *The aim of the protocol:*

- Early activation of all the agencies to get together and via three way communication ensure everyone understands the implication of the threat;
- Provide direction for the agencies involved in the first hours following the threat; and
- Establish a process to provide an agreed and appropriate course of action to the agencies involved in the Emergency Response.

### *To achieve that aim, the following were developed:*

#### **Role of the Threat Assessment Group**

The Threat Assessment Group comprises representatives from the three agencies (DHS, TRS and the water company). Initially the role of this Group is to gather information on the current threat from their respective agencies. DHS assess the potential impact of the contaminate on

human health, TRS evaluates the capability and criminal intent. The Water company examines the impacts to the water supply and sewerage system.

#### **Threat Matrix**

The Threat Matrix provides a guide for the Threat Assessment Group to determine the threat level. It is recognised that a decision on a recommended threat level is often based on limited information that is not always complete till a later date.

Threat levels have been categorised into Level 1-4 with a graded emergency response for each level. Each level has agreed actions categorised under security, operational and stakeholder notification.

#### **Regional Briefings**

The Department of Human Services arranged a series of meetings for regional Victoria to discuss emergency management in the event of threats to deliberately contaminate drinking water supplies and explained the threat matrix and the threat assessment protocol.

Konrad Gill provided insight into the work being done by Yarra Valley Water, the metro water authorities and Victorian Government agencies to develop plans to manage risks associated with deliberate drinking water contamination as well as protocols that exist between response agencies. A role-play put the process into context.

Together with Cheryl West of Yarra Valley Water there has been an opportunity to discuss and resolve communication issues and develop relationships with key personal from DHS, DSE, Victorian Police, regional water authorities and organisations with emergency management responsibilities.

For more information contact Konrad Gill or Cheryl West at Yarra Valley Water.

## From the CEO's desk



There has been much written lately about the importance of good corporate governance. In the wake of well publicised corporate collapses, which in part have highlighted the dramatic impact of poor governance practices on companies, no-one could argue that attempts to tighten up aspects of the governance function are warranted.

Board members and officers of water businesses are well aware of the import of good corporate governance as they operate in a very public environment where scrutiny of decision making is the norm (and indeed to be encouraged). Many board members take on their role out of a sense of public duty and a real sense of wanting to make a contribution to the communities they serve. Many are also driven by the compelling environmental issues that water businesses face.

Until recently, Board members and officers received statutory immunity for the decisions they made, provided they made them in good faith and exercised due diligence in doing so. As part of a policy framework, designed to ensure directors and officers operated in the same sort of environment applying to the corporate sector, the provisions for statutory immunity were removed from the Water Act last year.

This removal of immunity was accepted by the industry for the reasons outlined above - water businesses expect to operate to the highest standards of corporate governance.

Another element of the government policy however places board members and officers at an unacceptable risk compared to their corporate counterparts. Board members and officers of statutory authorities are precluded from receiving an indemnity from their authority for actions and decisions taken during and after their term of office, having to rely instead upon insurance as their means of protection. This is in stark contrast to the corporate world, where under the provisions of the Corporations Act it is permitted, and is common practice, for professional indemnity insurance and director's and officer's insurance to be backed by an indemnity from the company. This indemnity is to cover legal costs for any action and any outcomes that might not be covered by a standard insurance policy. Such indemnities do not of course cover illegal actions or actions taken without due care and diligence.

It is imperative that this policy position be changed and that board members and officers of statutory authorities be afforded the same rights as afforded to directors and officers under the Corporations Act. Failure to do so will lead to difficulties in attracting and retaining the people of the highest calibre that this industry needs.

Mark Harvey  
Chief Executive Officer

# SMART WATER MARK

## First National Outdoor Water Saving Scheme

The Victorian Water Industry Association is proud to announce its support of an innovative scheme, the first Australia wide program of its kind designed to reduce water consumption in outdoor use.

The **Smart Approved WaterMark** Program is a nationally endorsed water conservation labelling scheme that recognises products, services and organisations which promote water efficiency.



VicWater is committed to supporting Victorian water businesses in reducing per capita water consumption and ensuring that water use is as efficient as possible.

In Australian cities, between 30 and 60 per cent of household water is used outdoors, and this program will provide advice to consumers on ways to use water more efficiently by recognising approved products, services and organisations.

WSAA with the Irrigation Association of Australia (IAA), the Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia (NGIA) and the Australian Water Association (AWA) has developed and will implement the voluntary, non-profit program on behalf of its program partners.

The **Smart Approved WaterMark** scheme has called for the first round of applications by product and service providers and organisations who feel they are contributing to a reduction in outdoor water consumption.

Examples of products, services and organisations that may be considered under the scheme include:

1. **Products** - trigger hoses, programmable tap timers, drip systems, rainfall sensors, soil moisture sensors, mulch and any new products that contribute to water conservation.
2. **Services** - water efficient garden and irrigation design services, audit and retrofit services, education and training programs, information and advisory services.
3. **Organisations** - schools, local government, new urban developers, retail outlets and manufacturers with a demonstrated commitment to water efficiency.

Approved applicants will receive industry and consumer recognition through use of a distinctive, specially designed logo, and will have the satisfaction of knowing they are doing something positive towards protecting our most precious resource - water.

The **Smart Approved WaterMark** scheme will be launched to consumers in October, 2004. First round applications for assessment by an independent expert panel closed on 21 May, 2004.

Criteria, guidelines and application forms can be downloaded from [www.smartapprovedwatermark.info](http://www.smartapprovedwatermark.info).

For further information on the **Smart Approved WaterMark** scheme, contact Chris Wootton at WSAA on (03) 9606 0678 or email [chris.wootton@wsaa.asn.au](mailto:chris.wootton@wsaa.asn.au).

# WATERKEEPERS AUSTRALIA



What is your nearest river like? Would you drink from it or plunge in for a refreshing swim? Would you tuck in heartily to a grilled fish that you caught in the local bay or estuary? Does your nearest wetland teem with birdlife? Do the frogs call loudly at night? Or is your waterway troubled and stressed through too much water being taken out? Perhaps too much of the wrong thing is being put in, with your waterway used as a drain to carry away runoff and pollutants.



*Double Creek, near Mallacoota Inlet*

Australia is a dry continent, our rainfall is highly variable and there is intense competition for water for meeting human needs and the needs of other species. Public debate about the management and use of our water and waterways can be both willing and robust. **Waterkeepers Australia**, a national network of people offering care and protection for their local waterways, came into being to strengthen the voice of the community in this debate. We are a not-for-profit organisation committed to supporting community advocates - riverkeepers, baykeepers, etc. for protection of our waterways.

**Waterkeepers Australia** is a collaboration of **The Myer Foundation, Australian Conservation Foundation** and **Environment Victoria** and was inspired by the successful US Waterkeepers Alliance.

The national office is located in Victoria, and they work with and offer support to concerned and active community groups involved in waterway protection across Australia to complement their work of biodiversity and water quality monitoring, community education and communication. **Waterkeepers Australia** also works with the Environment Defenders Office in enabling Waterkeepers to engage in legal advocacy to protect local waterways.

**Waterkeepers Australia** can help with organisational development, how to become incorporated and how to raise funds. They also provide members with access to experts, legal advice, recent research and education programs.

**Waterkeepers Australia** are keen to cooperate with other community groups in this important work, contributing from our niche of community education, social and legal advocacy and support.

Please contact Greg Hunt, National Coordinator on **03 9347 3810** or email **greghunt@waterkeepers.org.au**, (web: **www.waterkeepers.org.au**) for further information on how to become involved.



*Catherine Brown (Company Secretary), Greg Hunt (National Coordinator), Paul Sinclair (Environment Victoria), Sir William Deane (Waterkeepers Australia patron), Tim Fisher (ACF) and Joanne Baevski (The Myer Foundation).*

## CITY WEST SIGNS SUSTAINABILITY COVENANT

**City West Water** has signed a statutory agreement with the EPA which will assist in the conservation of water and aid in the increase of recycling.

Speaking at the launch, Environment and Water Minister, John Thwaites, congratulated City West Water on their initiative.

Mr Thwaites said, "Reducing the salt content in waste water is one of our biggest challenges, and one of the main household sources of salty water is laundry products."

"As part of the Sustainability Covenant, City West Water will work with manufacturers, supermarkets and the community to influence the supply chain for laundry products, and make our waste water more friendly for re-use".

As part of the covenant, the water retailer will also work with companies to reduce their salt levels in manufacturing processes, where there is significant potential for recycling water.

"By signing this covenant, City West Water is playing a vital role in helping Victorians achieve important targets for recycling 20% of Melbourne's 'wastewater' and reducing consumption of drinking water by 15%."



*Mick Bourke (Chairman EPA), Don Swan (Chairman City West Water), Anne Barker (Managing Director City West Water) and Minister Thwaites sign the covenant.*

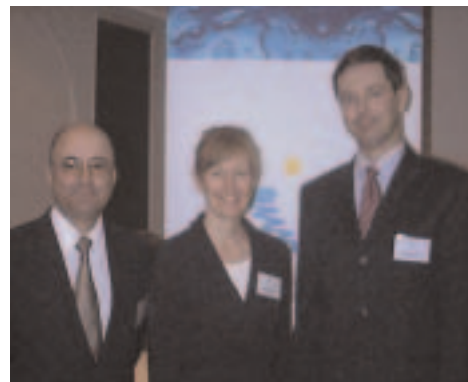
# SAFE DRINKING WATER WORKSHOP

More than 75 representatives from the Regional-Urban, Rural and Urban water industry, government and private sectors attended the recent VicWater Safe Drinking Water Workshop, held at the Grand Chancellor in Melbourne on 29th April 2004.

The workshop focussed on three key areas ... the Safe Drinking Water Regulations, developing Risk Management Plans and updates to the Water Quality Standards, in line with the proposed release of the new regulations, for public comment in June 2004.

The topical issue of safe drinking water is timely with the proposed release of the Safe Drinking Water and regulations on 1st July 2004.

The presentations at the workshop included presentations by the Department of Human Services, Brian Labza, and John Siapantas on DHS expectations for the revised regulations and developing risk management plans.



*Ms Celia Moriarty - Workshop Facilitator, with John Siapantas & Brian Labza of DHS*



*John DiPietro of BridgeSoft, Sally Parker of VicWater, Brian Ashworth of Barwon Water, Kristine Hunter of East Gippsland Water, Mike Chapman of GHD and Nish Sukumaran of South East Water*

Facilitated discussions involving DHS, various consultants and water industry representatives, took place highlighting current issues and improvements with water quality standards and software systems.

Presentations by Barwon Water, East Gippsland Water and South East Water drew attention to current risk management systems that were successfully established within these water authorities and drew attention to areas of the regulations/standards that required consideration when implementing data management and risk management systems.

Consultancy GHD's Mike Chapman presented on the quantification of risks and hazards, and Peter Donlon, Technical Director of WSAA presented the new NHMRC guidelines. American based BridgeSoft, also presented at the workshop, with John DiPietro exploring the asset management and risk software that had been developed and piloted by GVW. Presentations from the workshop can be downloaded at [www.vicwater.org.au](http://www.vicwater.org.au) under downloads.

## Road Management Act 2004

The **Road Management Act 2004** was passed through Parliament of Victoria on 5th May 2004 and received Royal Assent on 11th May 2004. The implementation of the Act will endeavour to deliver better road management, more consistent road standards, and a more efficient and safer Victorian road network.

The Road Management Act, in part, will change the arrangements under which the long standing practice of using road reserves for important community infrastructure are managed. Needless to say, this will have a significant impact on the water industry, with much of the asset base of the industry located in road reserves. Under the Road Management Act 2004, a provision was made for a Code of Practice and the Utilities Working Group, which consists of three, water industry representatives have been actively developing the Code of Practice to ensure interests of the Water Industry are effectively represented.

VicWater has been working closely with VicRoads (who have carriage for the proposed legislation) and with strong support from industry representatives have advocated successfully to Government our concern on this issue.

As a result, we believe that we have acknowledgement that through the development of a Code of Practice the vast majority of water industry access requirements will be exempt from permit and permit fee requirements.

The first workshop held by VicRoads in December 2003, confirmed a commitment to developing the Code Of Practice, and a follow on workshop was held 3rd June 2004, to define detailed components of this Code.

Three VicWater sector representatives on the Utilities Working Group are:

**Regional Urban** - Glenn Bewicke, *Goulburn Valley Water*

**Rural** - Ross Plunkett, *Goulburn Murray Water*

**Metropolitan** - Gabrielle Davis, *South East Water*  
replacing Ian Dockeary, *South East Water*

Through the nominated representatives and contributions from members in the development of the Code of Practice at the June 3rd Workshop, the interests of the Water Industry will be effectively implemented into the Code of Practice.

## Practical Planning and Assessment Tools for Planners and Engineers

More than 60 people attended the Sustainability Seminar at the LeMeridien in Melbourne on the 30th of April 2004. The seminar theme, "**Practical Planning and Assessment Tools for Planners and Engineers**" featured eleven presentations on current tools and approaches used in industry and abroad. Presentations included Gold Coast Water's Pimpama Coomera Score Card Approach used for the Sustainable Master Plan (*a 150,000 person development*), Toyota, City of Melbourne and several Victorian businesses.

Download presentations at: [www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=243](http://www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=243)



*Sustainability Workshop held at LeMeridien in Melbourne April 30th 2004*

# PORTLAND COAST WATER - 2004 People Management Award

Portland Coast Water endeavours to foster a forward thinking, enjoyable and flexible work environment for all staff.

In 2003 a staff survey was conducted to gather information that would allow the Authority to organise itself and plan its work so that job satisfaction could be increased, as well as contribute to achieving business success. It was a good opportunity for staff to let management know their thoughts.

One of the key priority areas that the survey identified was the need for more flexible working arrangements. Being a traditionally male work environment, combining work and family had not previously been a management priority. The Authority now sought to create an environment that would assist employees to balance their work and family needs by developing and implementing a Family Friendly Workplace Policy. The Authority embarked on creating a workplace culture where employees could balance their work and personal priorities whilst also providing an excellent service to customers.

**The Authority implemented a Family Friendly Workplace Policy in which they committed to provide:**

- Flexible working hours to the maximum extent possible without having a negative impact on the business
- Information technology, such as mobile phones and lap top computers, to meet employee needs in a crisis situation
- Work from home options to care for a sick child
- A 'Family Room' that allows children internet access to complete their school studies, play games, read books or listen to music. Children are allowed to come to work in an emergency situation or where childcare is unavailable



- Access to local community resources that cater for work and family needs.

**Resources utilised to assist work and family balance are:**

- Information technology
- Facilities for children in the office environment, including a 'Family Room' (An OH&S audit was conducted to ensure the environment was safe for children.)
- Flexible working hours
- Ability to work from home
- Guidelines, which display the clear intent of the initiative and the conditions for success.

**The benefits of the Family Friendly Workplace Policy to Portland Coast Water are:**

- Retention of valued staff members and consequently a more successful business
- Improved staff morale and motivation
- Increased job satisfaction
- Reduced workplace stress, through a balanced workload. This leads to better workplace health
- Increased willingness to use flexible work options such as an early start/early finish or working from home to meet family commitments rather than using sick leave entitlements
- Increase in staff involvement in direction setting and decision making
- An improved work culture.

In summary, it is worth noting that strong leadership and commitment from the CEO is imperative at all stages of any program. Involve staff and respect their opinions.

Use the staff survey as a means of determining gap areas that need improvement.

## John Konings Retirement - WIMMERA MALLEE WATER

Wimmera Mallee Water's Chief Executive John Konings is retiring after 18 years in the job and 39 years working in the Water Industry.

John has made a valuable long-term contribution to the water industry through his role at Wimmera Mallee Water and as a long-standing member of the Association of Rural Water Authorities (ARWA).

John has actively brought rural issues of environmental, social and economic importance, to the attention of ministers and boards advocating the needs and impacts of such issues to rural communities.

John Konings pioneered the piping of the northern Mallee Catchment channels of the domestic and stock supply at an estimated cost of fifty million dollars. He has pioneered the piping of the Wimmera region's outdated and water inefficient earthen channels.

Wimmera Mallee Water recently announced and welcomed John Martin to the role of CEO.

## Mijo Darveniza ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP

Matthew Drysdale of Yea is the inaugural recipient of Goulburn Valley Water's Mijo Darveniza Engineering Scholarship.

Goulburn Valley Water's Chief Executive, Mr Laurie Gleeson said that the Authority established the "**Mijo Darveniza Engineering Scholarship**" for students who attended a Goulburn Valley high school and whose parental home address is within the Goulburn Valley region. "Matthew graduated as dux of Yea High School in 2000 and he is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Environmental Engineering at Monash University.

"This is the first year of the Mijo Darveniza Engineering Scholarship and to be eligible for the scholarship students must be completing their second year of tertiary study in a water engineering related field," said Mr Gleeson. "As the recipient of the scholarship Matthew will receive two benefits, a cash component and summer vacation employment for two consecutive years."

Mr Gleeson said that the aim of the Scholarship is to promote the water industry to tertiary level students and provide support to a full time student from the Goulburn Valley region.

Full details about the scholarship can be obtained from the Authority's website [www.gvwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.gvwater.vic.gov.au).



*Mijo Darveniza (Chairman Goulburn Valley Water) and Matthew Drysdale*



## VicWater Training Network 2004

The first meeting of the VicWater Training Network for 2004 was held in Melbourne on 5 May. The meeting was well attended and for several attendees this was their introduction to the Network.

Joan Whelan from the National Local Government Industry Training Advisory Body opened with a presentation on the recommendations of the Phase 1 Scoping Report for the Review of the National Water Training Package followed by discussion on the proposed Phase 2 (Development), which it is expected will commence in the second half of 2004.

John Flett of Goulburn-Murray Training Services presented on the Water Authorities of Gippsland (WAG) project where over 150 members of the current workforce are receiving training and assessment to achieve Certificate III in Water Industry Operations. John Groom of East Gippsland Water and Jim Watt of Southern Rural Water ably assisted John.

*We believe this is probably the largest project of its kind in the water industry in Australia and congratulations to participants for progress so far!*

Alexandra Mannell of Holmesglen TAFE then presented on the development of a new course in **On-Site Construction Supervision**.

The VicWater Training Network identified this course as a priority for development during consultations in 2003 and it is pleasing to see the interest it is currently generating.

The meeting of the Network concluded with a Plenary Session where Paul O'Brien outlined the results of the Training Needs Analysis Project including the proposed development of a Core Competencies document which will assist water businesses to identify and source appropriate training.

Enquiries on any of the above to Paul O'Brien, Training Manager  
VicWater (03) 9639 8868  
or [etab@vicwater.org.au](mailto:etab@vicwater.org.au)

# TRAINING IN COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

## *Training in Community Consultation is well accepted in the Australian Water Industry*

Making community consultation productive and meaningful for water businesses and communities can be a challenge.

Ideally community consultation should contribute to better decision-making, but all too often it would appear, the public sees consultation as a sham. Authorities are sometimes unwilling to listen to what the public has to say, allow too little time for any consultation process and have a vested interest in preferred outcomes.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) offers training in public participation (or community consultation as it is more often called in Australia).

IAP2 is a not-for-profit association established to advance the practice of public participation world wide. The Australasian Chapter was established in 1998.

Vivien Twyford is the International President of the Association, the first Australian to take that role. Vivien is also a licensed trainer for IAP2.

The Certificate consists of 3 modules -

- **Planning for Effective Public Participation**  
Two day course must be undertaken first.
- **Techniques for Effective Public Participation**  
Two day course.
- **Effective Communication for Public Participation**  
One day course, plus an optional module **Facilitation for Public Participation Practitioners**.

Practitioners from Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, Sydney Water as well as water businesses in New Zealand have found the course of great value. So much so that some have requested Vivien to develop in-house courses, based on IAP2 concepts.

One enthusiastic participant said after using the concepts taught in the program: "I am amazed at how the engagement of people using these methods is as meaningful to them as it was to me .... Therefore I wish to thank you so much, not only for teaching me and engaging me in the way you did, but also for being so generous with your experiences and tools."

Vivien Twyford says, "I really enjoy working with people in many different industries, helping to improve consultation and participation practice. I learn much from the various participants, and together we share experiences and ideas."

Anyone interested in finding out more about the IAP2 training, or in-house training offered by Twyford Consulting, can check either IAP2's website [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org) or Twyford Consulting's website [www.twyford.com.au](http://www.twyford.com.au).

Alternatively you can phone either Janis Parker or Vivien Twyford on (02) 4226 4040 or email them on [twyford@twyford.com.au](mailto:twyford@twyford.com.au).



# TASK GROUP TOPICS

## Safe Drinking Water

Presentations from the recent workshop held at the Grand Chancellor on 29th April 2004, can be downloaded at [www.vicwater.org.au](http://www.vicwater.org.au) under downloads.

The regulations are to be released in mid June 2004 and available over 28 days for public comment.

## Sustainability Task Group

Presentations from the recent Sustainability Workshop can be downloaded at:

[www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid+243](http://www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid+243)

## Sustainability News

Don't forget to check the Autumn 2004 edition of **Sustainability News**. It includes articles on Practical Sustainability, Reporting at City West Water, the Thomson Macalister Environmental Flows, a book review and more.

Download at:

[www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=179](http://www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=179)

## Water Efficiency Group

In December 2003, quantitative market research was carried out in Melbourne (with Retailers and DSE), relating to the Stage-2 water restrictions and the **"Our Water Our Future"** campaign.

The purpose of the Restriction Market Research carried out for the Retailers was to measure awareness and attitudes towards Restrictions, especially the Stage Two Restrictions.

The research was carried out in Nov/Dec 2003, replicating a benchmark study from March 2003.

Findings included:

- 95% aware of restrictions, and general awareness of stage-2 detail.
- Increasing acceptance of Government efforts to encourage compliance.
- Evidence of softening strength of support for water management issues.
- Focus remains on indoor usage reduction as well as outdoor.
- Key sources of awareness are from TV news programs, newspaper articles and announcements, and radio news.
- Interest in on-going reminders and updates, and concise information (simple, easy to understand, more graphs).
- Strong support evident for permanent restrictions, except **"No lawn watering at any time"**.

## Water Educators' Network

The Water Educators' Network met recently over 2 days in Bendigo (kindly co-hosted by Coliban Water & North Central CMA), and heard presentations from Greg Hunt about the newly formed "Waterkeepers Australia", Jane Ryan on the outcomes from the Waterwatch Victoria Review, and an update to the metropolitan water businesses' water conservation education program **"Water - Learn It! Live It!"**.

The group had the opportunity to visit the Bendigo Water Treatment Plant, the Science & Discovery Centre (including a performance of The Water Show), and selected sites along Bendigo Creek illustrating human impacts on water quality. The dining venue was quite unique - 62 meters underground at Central Deborah Gold Mine, at which the guest speakers (Geoff Russell & Doug Buerger) presented the history of water supply to the Coliban region, and the relationship between water management and mining.

Contact Kym Nixon ([kym.nixon@vicwater.org.au](mailto:kym.nixon@vicwater.org.au)) if you are interested in hosting or attending the next 2-day event.

## Urban Water Restriction Working Group

The Urban Water Restriction Working Group is finalising the Discussion Paper, which will be released to the Victorian Water Industry for comment in the very near future.

Contact Kym Nixon ([kym.nixon@vicwater.org.au](mailto:kym.nixon@vicwater.org.au)) for further details.

## Dams Working Group

The Victorian Water Industry Dam's Working Group is currently addressing training issues.

Other topical issues for the Working Group include headworks portfolio risk assessment, and decommissioning dams.

## RUWA Media Task Group

Western Water is chairing a Regional Urban Water Authority (RUWA) task group that will focus on the development of RUWA media/event protocols in collaboration with representatives from the Minister's media unit and the DSE communications unit.

Contact Mary-Beth Hayes for further details, phone: **03 5421 9449** or email Mary-Beth at: [marybeth.hayes@westernwater.com.au](mailto:marybeth.hayes@westernwater.com.au)

## Sustainability Network

If you want to receive occasional updates on relevant activities and copies of **Sustainability News**, please email [sustainability@vicwater.org.au](mailto:sustainability@vicwater.org.au) and type 'SUBSCRIBE' in the subject field.

If you want to get in touch with the Task Group, share ideas or ask a question, email the same address and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

# TRADE WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN- - Guidelines & Industry Template

In March the VicWater/EPA Trade Waste Partnership launched **Trade Waste Management Plan Guidelines and an Industry Template for Improving Trade Waste Discharges** going into Victoria's sewerage treatment facilities.

"These innovative guidelines and accompanying templates will greatly assist industry in identifying opportunities to reduce their trade waste and reduce the contaminants in these flows," said EPA Victoria Chairman, Mick Bourke.

"Such reductions will assist in reducing the impacts on the sewer and water treatment plants as well as helping to maximise the use of reclaimed water and biosolids which can be limited by contaminants such as salt and metals."

The Guide and practical template was developed in partnership between EPA Victoria and the Victorian Water Industry Association (VWIA).

The work of Goulburn Valley Water, South East Water, Central Highlands Water and Barwon Water is gratefully acknowledged.

Mr John Dainton, Chairman of the Victorian Water Industry Association (VWIA) has urged industry to adopt these improved guidelines. "The Guidelines provide trade waste customers with a practical way to reduce their discharges to sewer and potentially save money, and they provide Victoria's water businesses with an action plan from customers on how they will reduce key contaminants, by when and by how much."

"It represents a proactive flexible tool other than enforcement by which the water industry can engage its customers," Mr Dainton said.

Mr Bourke has pointed out that whilst the monetary benefits of reductions and improvements to trade wastes entering the sewerage system are important, the environmental benefits should not be forgotten.

To download a copy of the guide go to [www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=156](http://www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=156) or phone (03) 9639 8868 for a hard copy.



## RESIDENTIAL HARDSHIP GUIDE

Applicable to residential customers only, the Guide outlines a minimum standard of service when dealing with customers experiencing hardship. It focuses on consultation and communication between the water business and stresses that customers in financial hardship have their situation assessed on a case by case basis, in a manner showing respect and sensitivity.

The document is to be used in conjunction with Customer Contracts, Charters and policies put in place by individual water businesses that may well exceed the practices outlined in the Guide.

The Guide was developed by the IWA Special Interest Group on Customer Service and included input from all Victorian water businesses across each sector and external stakeholders such as the office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) (EWOV) and financial advisers/counsellors.

A generic electronic DL brochure is currently being produced for member businesses to tailor if so desired.

Download the guide at:  
[www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=186](http://www.vicwater.org.au/default.php3?sectionid=186).

## The Sustainability Web Resource Centre

Chair of the Sustainability Task Group, Tony Kelly launched VicWater's Resource Centre which aims to provide members with relevant information about current tools, activities and links relating to sustainability. Topics covered include Communication and Education (including newsletters and workshop presentations), Assessment and Decision Support Tools, Reporting and Key Performance Indicators. The web resource centre will evolve over time as new information becomes available and feedback is received about the type of information needed.

Visit: [www.vicwater.org.au/sustainability](http://www.vicwater.org.au/sustainability).



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