

### Contact Details:

**Address**

37 - 45 Bridge Street,  
Bendigo

**Mail**

PO Box 2770  
Bendigo Delivery Centre,  
Bendigo VIC 3554

**E-Mail**

coliban@coliban.com.au

**Facsimile**

5434 1341

**Phone**

**1300 363 200**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week,  
for reporting faults and  
emergencies; and during office  
hours for all other calls

**Office Hours**

Monday—Friday  
8.00am—5.30pm  
Call **1300 363 200**

### Publisher Details:

This newsletter is published  
by Coliban Water for its rural  
licence customers.



### Tell us what you think!

This newsletter is for *you*, so please let us know what you like about it, and what you'd like to see in future issues. Call 1300 363 200 and speak to Frank or Kerri.

## FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ...

We know that our rural licence customers have had a difficult year, with capacity in the 2004/05 season again limited to 65%.

In the three weeks to 24 June, with recent rains, the contents in the Coliban storages have risen to 32.6% of capacity. Eppalock contents are at 5.5%. Runoff into the storages is gradually increasing, but we are still reliant on good rains over July and August.

There is, unfortunately, still no guarantee that we will have a full capacity season in 2005/06. We continue to watch the skies and hope for more rain ...

As I flagged in the last 'Coliban Channel' newsletter, Coliban Water is currently undertaking a major review of our rural supply system.

The Board of Coliban Water is committed to maintaining a sustainable rural supply system.

Stage 1 of the review is now complete, with consultants having been engaged to review and enhance existing data, specifically dealing with mapping information and the location of outlets, regulators and measuring points; the channels' location with respect to parks, reserves and forests; customer information (number of customers on each channel, volume of licence entitlements etc.); water usage information; and channel efficiency ratings.

Coliban Water is currently considering the issues raised by the consultants, and will be looking for an outcome that provides for significant water savings through minimisation of losses; improved total system reliability; improved flexibility of system operation; and a reduction in Coliban's risk profile.

It is expected that, as options and individual channels are subjected to detailed investigation, a range of consultation opportunities will be provided for customers.

On another matter, the 2004 State Government White Paper 'Our Water Our Future' identified that all customers would be required to contribute to an environmental fund through their normal accounts.

For urban customers, a 5% environmental levy came into effect on 1 October 2004. For rural licence customers, a 2% environmental levy comes into effect from 1 July 2005.

This is included in the new tariff structure for 2005/06, detailed on the following page.

**Geoff Michell**



## CENTRALISED ORDERING FOR SOUTHERN CUSTOMERS

From season 2005/06, rural licence customers in our southern areas will change to a centralised ordering system for placing water orders.

This will benefit customers by providing a much longer period of time for placing orders, from 7.00am to 12 noon, Monday to Friday.

It will also enable bailiffs to plan their operations more effectively. A new phone number will be provided to affected customers in their pre-season information pack (distributed in October).

# Rural Customer Advisory Group (CAG) News

The Group has met three times since the last newsletter – in December, March and June. As we undergo a period of significant change in the water industry statewide, the Rural CAG has dealt with a recurring theme of discussions on:

- Progress discussions on the rural system review; and
- Discussions on the impact of the Essential Services Commission (ESC), and preparation of Coliban Water's 'Water Plan', submitted to the ESC earlier this year

In addition, agenda items have included water storage modelling and centralising southern rural orders.

New members appointed to the CAG for 2005 and 2006 are Paul Browne, Peter Mazur and Jennifer Goddard, replacing foundation members Mark Browne, Peter Raeburn and Bronwyn Young. The CAG farewelled departing members at our December meeting.

New members were given background briefings prior to their attending the first meeting of the year, in March.

## Rural CAG Members:

Gavin	<b>Privett</b>
John	<b>Vercoe</b>
Kerry	<b>Lorenz</b>
Malcolm	<b>Burrows</b>
Tobias	<b>Ansted</b>
Vicky	<b>Gaudion</b>
Paul	<b>Mannes</b>
Jennifer	<b>Goddard</b>
Paul	<b>Browne</b>
Peter	<b>Mazur</b>

## Rural Licence Fees and Charges 2005/2006

On June 15 2005, the Essential Services Commission (ESC), the independent government regulatory authority, released its pricing determination for all regional urban water authorities for the next three years, from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2008. The determination includes an average annual increase for 2005/05 of 4.4% plus CPI across all of Coliban Water's urban water and wastewater services.

The new pricing framework includes a stepped tariff water consumption pricing structure for residential customers, which is designed to encourage more efficient water use as the price of water increases as the volume of water used increases. Non-residential urban customers will pay a flat rate for water usage. Coliban Water's three-year plan makes provision for a capital investment program of \$47.4 million.

Under the ESC's determination, rural licence customers *will not* pay a stepped tariff for water consumption. Pricing for rural licence customers for 2005/06 will have an average increase of 6.8%, plus CPI.

All rural accounts now include an environmental contribution that is required to be paid to the State Government to be used to improve and protect our rivers and water sources, save water in towns and farms, and support water recycling initiatives. The 2% environmental levy is included in the tariffs as listed.

Fees for 2005/05 are:

ITEM	2005/06	
Annual Access Fees:	Pipeline	\$ 714.50
	Channel	\$ 606.33
	Storage	\$ 92.29
Volumetric Charges (per ML)		\$ 46.64
Capacity Charge (per ML)		\$ 91.30
Outlet Fees (1st outlet @ no charge)	2-5 Outlets	\$ 21.83
	6-10 Outlets	\$ 32.75
	11+ Outlets	\$ 39.70
Rural Licence Transfer Fee		\$ 57.05

Note: Accounts are sent out Quarterly

## Faults and Service Difficulties

All faults or service difficulties (other than orders) should be directed through our 24 hours / 7 days contact number – 1300 363 200.

This will ensure the fastest possible response, and avoid the problem that arises when bailiffs are off-duty or out of mobile range, and do not get your message in a timely manner.