

Rural Water Guide

2020/21 rural season

A GUIDE FOR COLIBAN WATER RURAL CUSTOMERS



1300 363 200
www.coliban.com.au

CONNECT WITH US



For the 2019/20 rural season 1,015 licences were supplied. We delivered approximately 4,468 megalitres of water to 745 rural channel licence holders, not including customers on our three pipeline systems, which is 29 per cent of the available allocation.



The Coliban Rural System

Our rural system supplies untreated water to over 1,149 rural licence holders via 500 kilometres of channels and pipelines. Rural water is untreated; therefore it is not suitable for human consumption. No quality standards apply to this water, unlike the water from the treated urban drinking supply.

218 customers along the Ascot and Cockatoo Hill channel systems receive fit for purpose recycled water, which must only be used in accordance with the individual Supply by Agreements that are in place.

2020/21 rural season – 100 per cent allocation

The 2020/21 rural season will commence when we have sufficient water orders to run our systems efficiently. Due to the predicted rainfall forecast during winter and spring, we expect the season to open later than it has in recent years. Both raw and recycled water customers are entitled to a 100 per cent licence allocation.

This is the 10th consecutive year we have been able to open the season with a 100 per cent allocation.

Rural Pipeline Systems

These systems provide rural pipeline customers with year-round access to water.

In 2019/20 we delivered via metered services:

- > 900 megalitres to 149 of our 180 Harcourt pipeline customers;
- > 342 megalitres to 73 of our 83 Eppalock pipeline customers;
- > 147 megalitres to 45 of our 46 South Lockwood pipeline customers.

Potential new Harcourt customers

We continue to carry out hydraulic modelling of the new pipeline system to determine whether new customers can be connected. The supply of existing customers will not be affected by new customers joining the system.

To find out more about connecting to this system, please contact us on **1300 363 200**.

Remember to check before entering private land

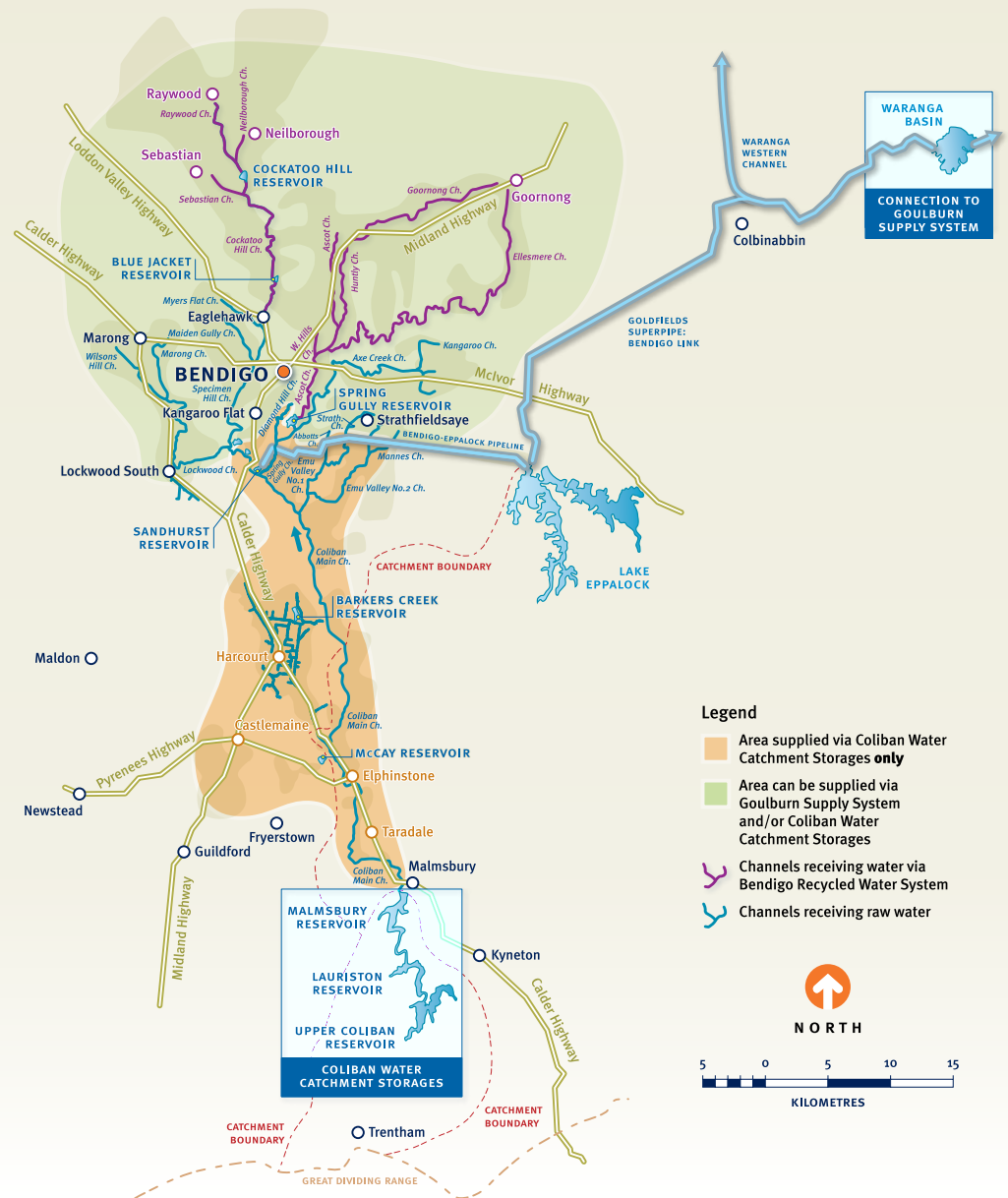
During recent rural water delivery seasons, we experienced some issues regarding rural customers accessing privately-owned land to maintain and operate their water delivery systems.

Some of these private systems are covered by a registered easement, however many are not.

Rural customers are reminded to ensure they contact the landowner prior to entering private property. Even if there is an easement in place, it is the rural customer's responsibility to adequately communicate their intentions and provide sufficient notice.

Front cover photo: Katie Finlay and Merv Carr from Harcourt Organic Farming Co-Op.

Coliban Rural System Diagram



Pricing information

Rural fees and charges for the 2020/21 season were mailed to all rural customers in June. This season's charges have decreased in line with our other fees and charges.

At the start of the 2020/21 financial year, the cost of inflation was 2.19 per cent. From 1 July 2020, most of our prices reduced by around 1.8 per cent before inflation was added. That meant that the majority of prices increased by less than 0.5 per cent, well below the rate of inflation. You can view our fees and charges on our website coliban.com.au

Coliban Catchment Storages

Customers who receive their supply directly from our Coliban catchment storages have a 100 per cent allocation this season and can access this water up until 30 June 2021.

A reminder that continuous supply is not guaranteed during the normal period of operation. Customers should have a water meter installed or you will be billed for your full allocation at a rate of 500 kilolitres per quarter.

Compliance and enforcement

Victoria has a new focus on compliance for the rural and urban system, with tougher penalties for illegal take and use of water.

We are responsible for the compliance and enforcement of those rules and can investigate and prosecute breaches, such as water theft and unauthorised construction of, or damage to, channels and water meters.

The new measures have also:

- › increased the maximum fine for intentional water theft and related offences if they cause substantial harm, to \$990,000 for companies and \$198,000 for individuals;
- › allowed for the suspension or cancellation of licences for the wrongful taking of water and the interference with works of an authority;
- › enabled water corporations to issue penalty infringement notices for less serious offences.

Complying with your water licence is your responsibility, but if you're unsure of your obligations or want to know more about your licence, contact us and we'll help.

As part of the new changes, we have a new **Compliance Enforcement Strategy**, which continues our policy of maintaining fair access to water resources and imposing penalties for illegal take and use. This strategy is available on our website.

A strong, clear system for compliance is vital to support community confidence that the same rules apply to everyone in Victoria.

It's essential to deter people from illegally taking and using water, and harming the environment and other water users.

If you have any questions about breaches of the legislation or want to report water theft, you can contact Coliban Water on 1300 761 738 or by email on rural@coliban.com.au or visit our website.



Maintaining our channel network

Our annual channel maintenance schedule started in May and is a routine program, which helps us to improve the delivery of services to our rural customers. This year's works include:

- › concrete canvas lining installed at Lockwood, Specimen Hill, Axe Creek & Coliban Main channel to reduce leakage;
- › desilting of the following channels: Maiden Gully, Emu Valley, Lockwood, Marong, Wilsons Hill, Cockatoo Hill, Axe Creek, Ellesmere, Myers Flat, Goornong, Neilborough, Raywood;
- › weed spray to all earthen channels within the rural district;
- › leak repairs to channel banks of Emu Valley and various other locations;
- › re-sleeving Axe Creek siphon that is an aged asset and is leaking;
- › mechanical ditching to the following channels: Cockatoo Hill, Sebastian, Raywood, Neilborough, Axe Creek, Goornong, Ellesmere, Emu Valley Wilsons Hill, Marong;
- › outlet replacement;
- › servicing of the Harcourt modernised system pumps and fittings;
- › hand channel cleaning to all channel that we cannot access mechanically. This is completed by the Coliban Water Rural team with help from Dja Dja Wurrung for a period of 4 weeks prior to the water season.

If you would like to discuss channel maintenance in your area, please give us a call on **1300 363 200**.



BEE number – what is it?

The BEE (Bundled Entitlement Entity) is a unique identifying number that is automatically created in the Victorian Water Register when your licence is issued. You will find this number on your magnet or on your Copy of Record.

Your BEE number is needed when placing or cancelling a rural water order, or for identifying your property when making general enquiries about your account.

Ordering and cancellation process

Please have your BEE number handy next time you make a call.

- › To order water, please call **1300 761 738** between 7am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays and the Christmas/New Year break).
- › Have your BEE number ready (this is found on your fridge magnet).
- › Orders will only be accepted from either a registered licence holder or a nominated rural ordering authorised person for the account.
- › A minimum of 48 hours' notice is required when placing your order.
- › Last orders for the rural season will be taken up until 2.30pm on Friday 30 April 2021 for final water deliveries up to Friday 14 May 2021.

Please note that if your call goes to voicemail, please leave a message with your BEE number and contact phone number so we can return your call when available.

To cancel your water order you must provide a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

In the event of heavy rainfall, shorter cancellation periods will be accepted. However, you may be asked to take supply until water is able to be shut down within the system.

If you are part of a cooperative, please continue to place your orders with the coordinator of your cooperative group.

Uncontrolled outlets

We currently have 20 rural licences that can be supplied via 20 millimetre uncontrolled channel outlets.

These outlets have the ability to deliver water to the licence holder whenever there is water in the channel. The volume delivered via the uncontrolled outlets is deemed to be 10.9 kilolitres for every day that the channel they are connected to, is in operation.

Licence holders serviced by an uncontrolled outlet do not have to place water orders to obtain water via those structures, it is deemed to be delivered automatically whenever the channel is running.

Water Trading – temporary transfer

The temporary transfer process enables customers to make either all or part of their water allocation available for use by other Coliban Water rural customers for the current season only. On 30 June 2021 any volumes temporarily transferred this season will revert back onto the original licence.

Licence holders that do temporarily transfer will continue to be billed the Infrastructure Charge on that water, the licence holder receiving that temporary water will be billed the Volume Charge on the actual volumes that they use of the temporary transferred water.

Customers looking to make their water volumes available for temporary transfer need to take the Infrastructure Charge into account when they are determining what their trading price will be.

The \$65 Rural Transfer Administration Fee is normally paid to Coliban Water by the licence holder receiving the temporary water volume.

To make your water available for temporary transfer:

- > complete a transfer application form that is available on our website or by contacting us on 1300 363 200. When customers contact us seeking additional rural water volumes, the customers identified on the Rural Transfer List is provided to them;
- > place an advertisement online, in your local newspaper or on your local community notice board;
- > talk to local landholders.

Your responsibilities and ours

Coliban Water Maintenance Boundary:

Coliban Water is responsible for the maintenance of its assets within and up to the Coliban Water side of boundaries – as shown in the example on the diagram.

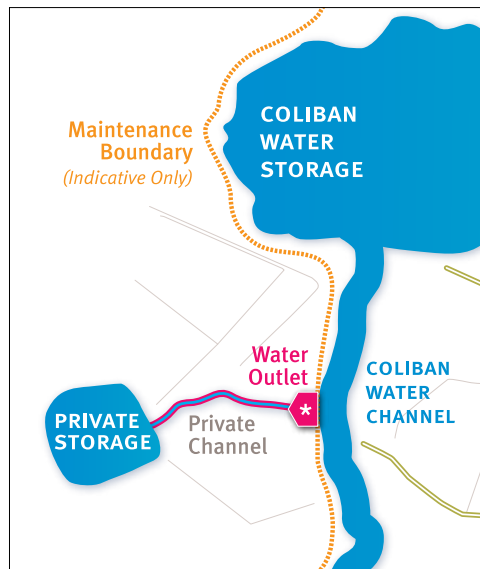
Coliban Water’s responsibility ends at this boundary.

Water Outlet:

The customer is responsible for ensuring that the outlet is free flowing from any blockages whilst their allocation is being delivered.

The customer is also responsible for maintenance of their private system from the downstream end of the channel outlet.

Your responsibility for the water supply starts at the outlet, not at your dam or property boundary.



Channel rosters – 2020/21 rural season

The rostered rural channels start and finish dates for the 2020/21 rural season are outlined below. Water will be available for supply to your property during the period of channel operation identified below.

Open date	Closing date
DIAMOND HILL CHANNEL	
28 Oct 20	4 Nov 20
25 Nov 20	2 Dec 20
23 Dec 20	30 Dec 20
20 Jan 21	27 Jan 21
17 Feb 21	24 Feb 21
17 Mar 21	24 Mar 21
14 Apr 21	21 Apr 21
ELLESMERE CHANNEL	
20 Jan 21	17 Mar 21
EMU NO.2 EPPALOCK CHANNEL	
11 Nov 20	25 Nov 20
9 Dec 20	23 Dec 20
6 Jan 21	20 Jan 21
3 Feb 21	17 Feb 21
3 Mar 21	17 Mar 21
31 Mar 21	14 Apr 21
28 Apr 21	12 May 21
NEILBOROUGH CHANNEL	
13 Jan 21	10 Feb 21

Open date	Closing date
WILSON'S HILL CHANNEL	
28 Oct 20	4 Nov 20
18 Nov 20	2 Dec 20
16 Dec 20	30 Dec 20
13 Jan 21	27 Jan 21
10 Feb 21	24 Feb 21
10 Mar 21	24 Mar 21
7 Apr 21	21 Apr 21
5 May 21	12 May 21
MARONG CHANNEL	
4 Nov 20	18 Nov 20
2 Dec 20	16 Dec 20
30 Dec 20	13 Jan 21
27 Jan 21	10 Feb 21
24 Feb 21	10 Mar 21
24 Mar 21	7 Apr 21
21 Apr 21	5 May 21
KANGAROO CHANNEL	
9 Dec 20	23 Dec 20
17 Feb 21	3 Mar 21

Open date	Closing date
RAYWOOD CHANNEL	
4 Nov 20	11 Nov 20
2 Dec 20	9 Dec 20
30 Dec 20	6 Jan 21
27 Jan 21	12 May 21
SEBASTIAN CHANNEL	
18 Nov 20	25 Nov 20
23 Dec 20	30 Dec 20
27 Jan 21	3 Feb 21
3 Mar 21	10 Mar 21
7 Apr 21	14 Apr 21
GOORNONG CHANNEL	
16 Dec 20	13 Jan 21
24 Mar 21	21 Apr 21

If your channel is not listed here, it is an unrostered channel.

Unrostered channels run on demand, based on customer water orders throughout the season.

Rural reconfiguration update

As urban encroachment in Bendigo continues, we continue to consider other systems such as Axe Creek and Emu Valley, and the longer term future of these channels which, may be impacted by growth. We'll continue to consult with customers on these projects.

Rural Customer Charter

Our Rural Customer Charter outlines the way we interact with customers about the standards and conditions of service and supply. It also sets out both our and our customers’ rights and responsibilities.

The Charter is available on our website or a hard copy can be printed on request.



Faults and service difficulties

Faults and service difficulties can be reported at any time by calling 1300 363 200.

Receive updates via text message

We offer SMS notification services for rural customers in relation to:

- › channel shutdowns;
- › upcoming channel maintenance;
- › rostered channels – notification prior to start;
- › christmas/New Year closure period;
- › demand management – gauge interest if small demand expressed for a channel.

If you have not received an SMS in previous seasons and are interested in receiving information via SMS notifications, please contact us to provide or update your mobile telephone contact information.

Electric fence signage reminder

Please have appropriate signage and an insulated connection on electric fences where channel outlets are located nearby. Our rural staff require a safe entry point at all times to access these outlets.

Coliban Main Channel renewal

Stage two of the Coliban Main Channel Renewal Project was completed in 2019. Six sections of channel totalling around 660 metres have been replaced as part of the works, which aim to improve efficiency and security of the channel while protecting its environmental and heritage value.

Stage one works were completed in August 2018, which replaced 2.7 kilometres of channel over four years.

Investigation is now underway to determine whether further sections of the channel will need to be renewed in the future.

The Coliban Main Channel is a critical piece of infrastructure which supplies the Bendigo and Castlemaine region with water as well as raw water to more than 1000 rural water customers.

Rural Customer Advisory Group (RCAG)

We have 10 rural customers that form our RCAG, who represent our various channel systems. They meet with us quarterly and help us to understand rural customer needs around engagement, rural operations and water trading. They are:

- › Chris Gay – *Cockatoo Hill*
- › Brian Stephens and Paul Mannes – *Eppalock Pipeline*
- › Malcolm Burrows – *Harcourt*
- › Charles Thompson – *Specimen Hill*
- › Jon Vercoe – *Lockwood*
- › Mark Browne – *Ascot (Ellesmere Channel)*
- › Jeremy White – *Emu Valley*
- › Colin Millar – *Coliban Main*
- › Barb Hamilton – *Axe Creek*

At present we are still seeking a representative for our Spring Gully system.

If you would like to know more about RCAG please go to our website or call **1300 363 200**.

Water carter permit reminder

A reminder that water carter permits are required to take water from a standpipe in the Coliban Water region. Customers using standpipes must also apply for an Avdata access key. For further information or a full list of standpipes in the area, please visit our website.