

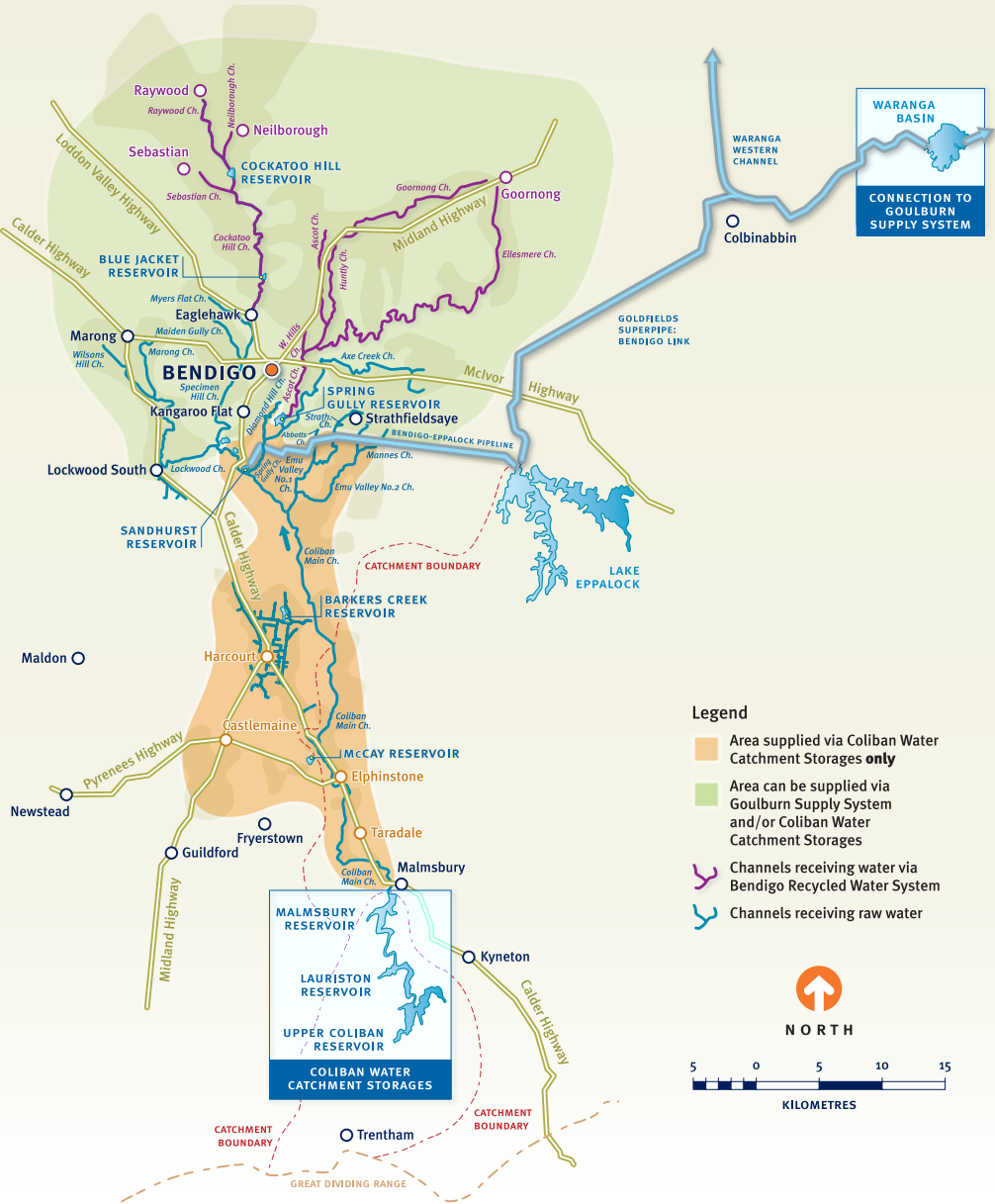
# Rural Water Guide

2023/24 RURAL SEASON



A guide for rural  
water customers

# The Coliban Water Rural System



## Rural season to open at 100% allocation

The **2023/24 rural season** is expected to start towards the end of October 2023, depending on demand.

A high volume of rainfall in Spring 2022 and Autumn 2023 has contributed to our Coliban River catchments – the Upper Coliban, Malmsbury and Lauriston reservoirs – being full.

Our 18% share of Lake Eppalock is also full, and this places us in an excellent position for the coming year.

Both raw and recycled water customers will be entitled to a 100% licence allocation.

Parts of our region were impacted by flooding last October. This led to the lowest demand for rural water since the January 2011 floods.

The climate outlook suggests conditions will be drier over the coming months.

### CATCHMENT STORAGE CUSTOMERS

Customers who receive a supply directly from Coliban Water catchment storages will have an allocation of 100% for the 2023/24 season.

Remember, 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 of 500 kilolitres per quarter.



**100%**  
capacity

in our reservoirs on  
the Coliban River



**69.6**  
gigalitres

Our water resource  
position is strong



**55**  
gigalitres

in Lake Eppalock  
(100% capacity of our 18% share)

\*all data from late August 2023



## Looking forward

### COLIBAN ASSIST

We're offering more ways to help rural customers thanks to Coliban Assist. With more programs and changes in eligibility, there are more ways to manage your rural water bill. This includes payment matching and bill smoothing.

These changes are designed to save you water, time and money by making it easier for non-concession card holders and small businesses, where appropriate, to use the program.

For more details on Coliban Assist you can visit **coliban.com.au/manage-your-account/coliban-assist** or phone our Customer Support Team on **1300 363 200**.

### REMINDER!

#### Water carter permits

Permits are required to take water from a standpipe in the Coliban Water region. Customers using standpipes in the Greater Bendigo area must also apply for an Avdata access key. For further information or a full list of standpipes in the area please visit **coliban.com.au**

### WHAT YOU'LL PAY THIS SEASON

#### Prices for 2023/24

Details of the rural fees and charges for the 2023/24 season were **mailed to all rural customers in June**.

From 1 July 2023, we entered a new pricing period as part of our Price Submission 2023 to 2028.

As we enter the first year of this period, new rural charges will increase by less than inflation, with most charges increasing by 5.7% compared to the 2022/23 charges.

You can learn more and download a copy of our latest fees and charges at **coliban.com.au/about-us/fees-charges** or contact us on **1300 363 200**.



### Compliance and enforcement

Tough penalties apply for the illegal take and use of water. We are responsible for compliance and enforcement and can investigate and prosecute breaches, including water theft or the unauthorised construction of, or damage to, channels and water meters.

Maximum fines of \$990,000 for companies and \$198,000 for individuals apply. We may also suspend or cancel water licences or issue penalty infringement notices for less serious offences.

Complying with your water licence is your responsibility, and our **Compliance Enforcement Strategy** ensures we maintain fair access to water resources for all.

You can learn more at **coliban.com.au/compliance-and-enforcement**

If you have any questions about breaches or want to report water theft, contact us on **1300 363 200** or email **rural@coliban.com.au**

# The year that was – looking back at 2022/23

## THE COLIBAN RURAL SYSTEM

- 769 licences supplied from a possible 1,351.
- The 1,351 licences is made up of 1,140 rural licences and 211 recycled water licences.
- Approximately 2,266 megalitres delivered.
- 1,560 megalitres was delivered to channel customers and 706 megalitres to pipeline customers.

Our rural system supplies untreated water to more than 1,140 rural licence holders via 500 kilometres of channels and pipelines.

Rural water is untreated, so it's not suitable for human consumption.

Unlike the water available from the treated urban drinking supply, no quality standards apply to this water.

Along the Ascot and Cockatoo Hill channel systems, 211 customers received fit-for-purpose recycled water. This water must only be used in accordance with the individual Supply by Agreements.

## Rural pipeline systems

These systems provide rural pipeline customers with year-round access to water. In 2022/23, the following was delivered via metered services:



**2,212**  
megalitres

delivered to 147 of 184 Harcourt  
pipeline customers



**895**  
megalitres

delivered to 80 of 85 Eppalock  
pipeline customers



**397**  
megalitres

delivered to 41 of 46 South  
Lockwood pipeline customers

## Maintaining and building our rural system

A program of new works and channel maintenance is planned throughout the year, designed to improve the delivery of services to our rural customers.

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

### Changes to our rural network

We have recently decommissioned our Kangaroo Channel as we continue to modernise our rural network.

The Axe Creek Channel is now an 'on demand' channel. Axe Creek customers have been notified of this change.

Upgrades have continued on the Coliban Main Channel as part of an ongoing program of work.

This included a site downstream of Malmsbury Reservoir, where works finished in March, and a second site near Faraday-Sutton Grange Road where works concluded in Winter 2023.

### Channel maintenance

Our annual channel maintenance schedule helps us improve and deliver services in a more efficient manner to our rural customers who rely on concrete and earthen channels and rural pipeline systems.

This year we have:

- Desilted parts of the earthen sections along Axe Creek and Emu Valley.
- Completed weed spraying.
- Replaced worn customer outlets.
- Undertaken multiple leak repairs throughout the delivery network.

### Detailed Business Case work will commence on rural modernisation

In August we welcomed a \$3.7 million investment announcement by the Federal Government to develop a Detailed Business Case for rural modernisation within the Coliban Rural Channel System.

The funding compliments our \$2 million investment in the project.

Building on the work completed in the Preliminary Business Case in October 2022, this investment will enable the engagement work with our rural customers to develop options to modernise the rural network.

These options will improve customer service levels and provide greater water efficiency, as well as deliver water savings – potentially up to 6.76 gigalitres a year.

Over the coming months we will develop the approach to engage with customers, which will include seeking advice from our Rural Customer Advisory Group. Whilst the engagement approach is being developed, we are not contemplating any major changes to the existing rural water network.

More information will be shared with rural customers as the Detailed Business Case investigations project commences – sign up for updates at [connect.coliban.com.au/rural-modernisation](https://connect.coliban.com.au/rural-modernisation)



Coliban Water Board Chair Bob Cameron, Managing Director Damian Wells and Federal Member for Bendigo Lisa Chesters.

# Easy ordering and cancellation process

## TO PLACE AN ORDER

<b>Step 1</b>	<p>Make sure you <b>have your BEE number ready</b>.</p> <p>Call <b>1300 761 738</b> between 7.00am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays and the Christmas/New Year break).</p> <p>If your call goes to voicemail, leave a message with your name, BEE number and contact phone number so we can return your call.</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	<p>Orders will only be accepted from either a registered licence holder or a nominated rural ordering authorised person for the account.</p> <p>If you are part of a cooperative, please ensure orders are placed by the coordinator of your cooperative group.</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	<p>A minimum 48 hours' notice (two working days) is required when placing your order.</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p>Customers on rostered channels will need to contact us before the start of the scheduled runs. This will ensure we can plan and deliver water efficiently.</p>
<b>Step 5</b>	<p>Orders for the 2023/24 rural season will be taken until <b>2.30pm on Friday 26 April 2024, for final water deliveries up to Friday 10 May 2024.</b></p>

## TO CANCEL AN ORDER

To cancel your water order please provide at least 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 can be shut down in the system.

### WHAT IS A BEE NUMBER?

A BEE is a unique identifying number that is automatically created in the Victorian Water Register when your licence is issued. You will find the number on your copy of record.

Your BEE number is required when placing or cancelling a rural water order – or for identifying your property when you make enquiries about your account.





## Water trading and temporary transfers

A temporary transfer allows customers to make all or part of their water allocation available for use by other Coliban Water rural customers for the current season only – any volumes temporarily transferred then revert back to the original licence.

### WHO PAYS WHAT WHEN YOU MAKE A TRANSFER?



#### What you pay

You continue to pay the infrastructure charge on the water.

If looking to make water volumes available for temporary transfer, please take the infrastructure charge into account when determining what your trading price will be.

#### What the other person pays

The person receiving the temporary water is billed the volume charge on the actual volumes they use of the temporarily transferred water.

They also pay a \$65 rural transfer administration fee.

**Almost 43% of rural water licences were not used by customers last season.**

To help others, we ask customers in this position to consider their needs and make their unused licence volumes available for temporary transfer.

To make these arrangements, download and complete a **Rural Transfer Application Form** available at [coliban.com.au](http://coliban.com.au) or by phoning **1300 363 200**.

Once you've completed the application form, your details will be added to a list made available to rural customers seeking a temporary transfer. You can also choose to place an advertisement online, in the local newspaper, or talk to local landholders.





# Your responsibilities and ours

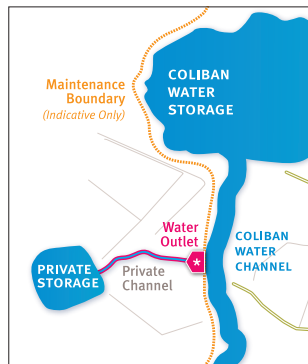
Your responsibility for the water supply starts at the outlet, not at your dam or property boundary.

## We're responsible for

- Maintaining assets within and up to our side of boundaries.

## You are responsible for

- Ensuring water outlets flow freely and are clear of blockages while their allocation is being delivered.
- Maintaining your private system from the downstream end of the channel outlet.
- Ensuring your deliver (drain to property or dam) is clean.



## UNCONTROLLED OUTLETS

We currently have 16 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 is deemed to be 10.9 kilolitres for every day the channel they are connected to is operating.

Licence holders served by an uncontrolled outlet do not have to place water orders to obtain water via these structures.

## SAFETY REMINDER

Remember to check before entering private land. If you require access to privately-owned land to maintain and operate your water delivery system, please contact the landowner prior to entering, even if there is an easement in place.

Our rural staff always require a safe entry point. Please ensure you have appropriate signage and an insulated connection on electric fences where channel outlets are located nearby.



## Channel rosters 2023/24 rural system

The rostered rural channels start and finish dates for the 2023/24 rural season are outlined below. Water will be available for supply to your property during the period of channel operation identified.

OPEN DATE	CLOSING DATE
<b>DIAMOND HILL CHANNEL</b>	
25 October 2023	1 November 2023
22 November 2023	29 November 2023
20 December 2023	27 December 2023
17 January 2024	24 January 2024
14 February 2024	21 February 2024
13 March 2024	20 March 2024
10 April 2024	17 April 2024
<b>ELLESMERE CHANNEL</b>	
17 January 2024	27 March 2024
<b>EMU NO.2 EPPALOCK CHANNEL</b>	
6 December 2023	13 December 2023
24 April 2024	1 May 2024
<b>GOORNONG CHANNEL</b>	
13 December 2023	10 January 2024
20 March 2024	17 April 2024

OPEN DATE	CLOSING DATE
<b>MARONG CHANNEL</b>	
1 November 2023	15 November 2023
29 November 2023	13 December 2023
27 December 2023	10 January 2024
24 January 2024	7 February 2024
21 February 2024	6 March 2024
20 March 2024	3 April 2024
17 April 2024	1 May 2024
<b>NEILBOROUGH CHANNEL</b>	
10 January 2024	7 February 2024
<b>RAYWOOD CHANNEL</b>	
1 November 2023	8 November 2023
29 November 2023	6 December 2023
27 December 2023	3 January 2024
24 January 2024	8 May 2024

OPEN DATE	CLOSING DATE
<b>SEBASTIAN CHANNEL</b>	
15 November 2023	22 November 2023
20 December 2023	27 December 2023
24 January 2024	31 January 2024
28 February 2024	6 March 2024
3 April 2024	10 April 2024
<b>WILSON'S HILL CHANNEL</b>	
25 October 2023	1 November 2023
15 November 2023	29 November 2023
13 December 2023	27 December 2023
10 January 2024	24 January 2024
7 February 2024	21 February 2024
6 March 2024	20 March 2024
3 April 2024	17 April 2024
1 May 2024	8 May 2024

\*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.

Please note Axe Creek is now an unrostered channel.

# How we're working together



## RURAL CUSTOMER ADVISORY GROUP

Nine rural customers, representing various channel systems, make up our Rural Customer Advisory Group. This group meets quarterly to advocate for customers and help us understand rural customer needs around operations, water security, licencing and pricing. The group has been instrumental in driving key changes to allocation policy, recycled water licencing, efficiency penalties and outlet charges.

We are currently seeking representatives for the Spring Gully, Cockatoo Hill and Lockwood systems. It's a great time to get involved as we commence work on the Detailed Business Case which will determine the future of our rural system. If you're interested in joining, please contact **Darren Heritage** on **1300 363 200**.

## RURAL CUSTOMER CHARTER

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

The Charter is available from **coliban.com.au** or contact us for a hardcopy.

## Here to help



### For faults and service difficulties

Faults and service difficulties can be reported at any time. Simply call **1300 363 200**.



### Easy email billing is here

It's easy to do your bit for the environment (and you'll never misplace a bill again) when you register for eBilling.

To sign-up, simply visit **coliban.com.au** and fill in the form, or call us on **1300 363 200**. While you're at it, make sure your other contact details are up to date too.



### SMS service updates

Register for SMS updates about channel roster periods, system faults, demand management and more.

To register, contact us today on **1300 363 200** and provide your mobile phone number.



### Check-out the Rural homepage

You can find comprehensive information about the rural system at **coliban.com.au**. Click on **Rural** for the information you need.



### Because life doesn't always go to plan

Our Coliban Assist program has a range of options to help rural customers. This year the program has expanded its eligibility so we can help more customers – call us on **1300 363 200** to find out more.

## CONNECT WITH US

Talk to our Customer Support Team  
**1300 363 200**

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Visit our website  
**coliban.com.au**

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### Get social



facebook.com/colibanwater



twitter.com/colibanwater



youtube.com/colibanwater



linkedin.com/company/  
colibanwater

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### Face-to-face

37-45 Bridge Street,  
Bendigo VIC 3550

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### Need help to read this guide?

For a large print or text-only  
version call us on **1300 363 200**.



Call **13 14 50** to access  
the free Translating &  
Interpreting Service.



If you are deaf, or have  
a hearing or speech  
impairment, you can  
contact us through the  
National Relay Service.