

MEDIA RELEASE

23 April 2008

BEGA VALLEY SAVES MILLIONS OF LITRES OF WATER A YEAR

The Water Loss Management Program has assisted the Bega Valley Shire Council in saving 120 million litres of water a year on the NSW south coast.

Investigations into the amount of leakage in Merimbula and Tura's water distribution systems were undertaken by the Water Loss Management Program and the Bega Valley Shire Council. As a result, financial assistance of up to \$45,000 has been provided to help find and repair leaks, and to install flow meters to monitor water demand and leakage into the future in these distribution systems.

"We used acoustic leak detection technology to locate hidden leaks in some 60 kilometres of pipes, and then excavated and repaired the leaks," said the Manager of Water and Sewerage Services at the Bega Valley Shire Council, Jim Collins.

"The Water Loss Management Program helped us fully understand water losses and how to measure them in our system," he said.

"Currently the work is focussed on the Bega Valley Shire Council water supply system; however, it will also be able to identify some leaks which are in private household pipes. Residents/owners will be advised that they may have a leak in their household water pipes, but they should also check their system for leaks," said Jim Collins.

"Bega Valley Shire Council is to be commended on their early action and pro-active approach to investigating water losses and reducing leakage in their water systems," said Stewart McLeod, Chair of the NSW Water Directorate.

"These leaks are not apparent from the surface but can run-off into the groundwater table, stormwater, sewer or water course. The acoustic leak detection equipment and techniques have made the identification and location of leaking pipes much more efficient and cost effective than in the past."

"The benefits of this work literally 'flow on' to the environment via local creeks and rivers. In this case it means an additional 120 million litres per year will flow down to Tantawangalo Creek."

"There are currently 25 councils which have applied to the Water Loss Management Program to help reduce their water losses, with water savings of almost 5,000 million litres of water per year expected from these councils," said Councillor Robert Bell, Chair of the NSW Water Loss Management Program.

The program works with councils to quantify their water leakage and provides financial assistance to implement cost effective water saving projects.

"The total cost of the Bega project, for example, is expected to be less than \$142,000, a small price to pay for saving millions of litres of precious water per year," said Councillor Bell.



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Water Loss Management Program

FOR REGIONAL NSW WATER UTILITIES

The Water Loss Management Program is a four year, \$22 million project which is one-third funded by the Australian Government through the Water Smart Australia Program, with the remainder from participating regional councils.

Local Water Utilities interested in applying for assistance under this program should contact, Mirko Sramek, Program Manager, on (02) 9242 4127.

Media Comment:

Cr Robert Bell, Chair of the NSW Water Loss Management Program

Stewart McLeod, Chair Water Directorate

Jim Collins, Water Manager, Bega Valley Shire Council

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