



## Birregurra Sustainable Communities Water Update

### Birregurra water supply upgrade underway

Barwon Water commenced work to upgrade Birregurra's water supply which will see the town's ageing local water treatment plant, open supply channel and storage basins decommissioned and replaced with a 19-kilometre underground pipeline from Colac.

Through Birregurra Sustainable Communities – Water, the Birregurra community have saved around 38 million litres of water since the program commenced, but there's also significant water savings to be gained by connecting the town to Colac's water supply.

At present, Birregurra's water is sourced from the open Wurdee Boluc and Birregurra channels and is stored in open basins prior to treatment. The water treatment plant has reached the end of its operational life and to manage the town's supply from a water quality, cost and environmental perspective Birregurra will be connected to Colac's supply via a 19-kilometre pipeline.

The supply upgrade will save water by reducing losses from evaporation from the Birregurra storage basins, particularly during summer, and through other system efficiency improvements. It will also reduce electricity usage, in turn reducing carbon emissions and electricity costs.

Construction works will take place along the pipeline alignment, between Forrest Street in Colac, and Bowden Street in Birregurra and will be completed by mid-2024. We'll work with landowners directly impacted by construction works on their properties. During works, there will be some altered traffic conditions. Signage and traffic management will be in place to ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

We'll continue to keep the local community informed through a dedicated project website as well as a series of community pop-ups.

For more information and project updates please visit [yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/birre-upgrade](https://yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/birre-upgrade).

### Using water sustainably during winter

When it's cold and wet outside we often forget about water and how we use it in and around our homes. However, there are many ways to make our homes more water efficient, even during winter.

- A quick check and adjustment of your irrigation system is a great place to start. By installing a rain sensor that will automatically shut off your irrigation system when it rains, or simply turning it off during winter will help save water.
- Having your plumbing checked and making any repairs is another good way to save. A plumber can check for leaks, find older pipes that may be at risk of bursting and need replacing, as well as making recommendations to help you with your garden irrigation set up. Barwon Water has plumbing support programs for eligible customers, to check your eligibility visit [www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/water-and-waste/saving-water/waterassist-home](https://www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/water-and-waste/saving-water/waterassist-home).
- Updating to an efficient hot water system is a great way to reduce energy costs and save water. The Victorian Government has information about reducing energy costs by upgrading to a more efficient hot water system to find out more visit [www.energy.vic.gov.au/for-households/victorian-energy-upgrades-for-households/hot-water-systems](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/for-households/victorian-energy-upgrades-for-households/hot-water-systems).

For further details on the Birregurra Sustainable Communities – Water program and our Living Laboratory project, visit [www.yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/birregurra](https://www.yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/birregurra)

## New registration process for farmers to use for their onfarm tyres

A new Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) registration for farmers using waste tyres in silage production will help reduce the risk of fire and harm to human health and the environment.

Stockpiled tyres can pose a significant fire risk. Tyre fires are hard to extinguish, emit toxic smoke and can contribute to harm in the environment. Having an understanding of a farm's tyre stocks will help mitigate the risk and severity they pose.

EPA South West Regional Manager Carolyn Francis said silage production is critical for a healthy agricultural industry.

"The registration strikes the right balance between making sure farmers can feed their stock while also helping to reduce the risk of harm to human health and the environment," she said.

Farmers, or anyone, using and/or storing 5m3 (about the size of a small skip bin) of waste tyres as weights for silage production, have until 1 July 2023 to apply for a registration.

"We've made the process to apply for a registration as easy as possible. It's free, fast and can even be done on your smart phone.

"By having farmers and others, who use waste tyres for silage production, apply for this free registration, we are all doing our part to ensure waste tyres are correctly stored and managed to help reduce the risk of fire or environmental harm," Ms Francis said.

For more information and to apply for a registration by 1 July, go to [www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/permissions/registrations/b04-guidance-on-waste-tyres-for-silage-production](https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/permissions/registrations/b04-guidance-on-waste-tyres-for-silage-production).