

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for the Coordination of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning – COVID-19
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for Water



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NEW WATER ENTITY TO SUPPORT MELBOURNE'S GROWING WEST

Melbourne's fast-growing outer west will be better off with a new water provider, Greater Western Water, creating jobs and significantly reducing household water bills into the future.

The Minister for Water Lisa Neville, Chair of Western Water (WW) Andrew Cairns and Chair of City West Water (CWW) David Middleton announced today the integration of Western Water and City West Water – along with funding to begin the revamp of the current Western Water office at Sunbury.

With population growth booming in the west, more infrastructure will be needed to serve the growing community, and without intervention, Western Water would see annual bills increase by up to \$500 over the next ten years.

Integrating the two water corporations will mean current WW customers not only avoid these price rises, but by 2029 their annual bills will be on average \$160 cheaper than they are today. City West Water customers will also see savings of up to \$110 on their annual bills compared to where they are now.

The new entity will have the financial resources and staff to cope with the growth and demand for new water infrastructure in the region – supporting jobs and economic activity.

The integration will occur on 1 July 2021 and the transition will be overseen by a committee with an independent Chair and board members from both Western Water and City West Water, with reforms including:

- All existing non-executive staff will transfer to the newly integrated water entity – no job losses
- The Sunbury and Footscray offices and all depots will be retained, keeping jobs in the west
- \$500,000 will be invested in planning upgrades to convert the Sunbury office into a COVIDSafe Greater Western Water hub
- An additional 50 staff will be based at Sunbury over the next three years, and there will continue to be a strong executive presence at the office.
- Communities currently served by Western Water will have greater access to the Melbourne water system, providing them the water security they deserve through the desalination plant.

Western Water and City West Water have approximately 580,000 customers combined, which is forecast to rise to over 690,000 by 2028.

The formation of Greater Western Water follows work by DELWP, City West Water, Western Water and Melbourne Water to identify the best way to cater for population growth in the region and deliver high quality, affordable water services.

The chairs of both water corporations found integration was the only option to ensure customers continue to receive high quality, affordable water services in the face of growing demand for infrastructure and services.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville

"The integration of Western Water and City West Water will mean lower bills for customers well into the future and better services and water security for the region."

"We will protect existing jobs at both water corporations and continue to promote growth for the local economy, to ensure these reforms provide a sustainable future for the region."

Media Contact: Nikki Mott 0416 311 214 | nikki.mott@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Western Water Chair Andrew Cairns

“We are prioritising the liveability and affordability needs of our customers and community to ensure they continue to receive the services they need and value at an affordable price into the future. It will also boost local employment opportunities and allow for an upgrade to our Sunbury office.”

Quote attributable to City West Water Chair David Middleton

“This integration paves the way for greater integrated water management and service delivery opportunities as well as affordable infrastructure planning in Melbourne’s growing outer west.”