

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Equality



Friday, 12 August 2022

VICTORIAN WATER SECTOR LEADS THE NATION TO NET ZERO

The Andrews Labor Government is leading the way towards a cleaner future, with a new agreement across Victoria's water corporations to reduce their emissions to net zero by 2035.

Minister for Water Harriet Shing inspected a new solar array at Central Highlands Water's Ballarat South Treatment Plant today to officially announce the Statement of Obligations, that will lock all 18 water corporations into reaching net zero by 2035.

The new obligations will support the Labor Government's ambitious target of halving emissions by 2030 and net zero emission by 2050. This will make Victoria's water sector the first in Australia to commit to net-zero emissions by 2035.

Victoria's water corporations are already working on changing emission-intensive operations to utilise the renewable energy they generate – keeping water bills low for Victorians.

The obligations require the sector to reduce its collective emissions by 42 per cent and source 100 per cent of electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

Central Highlands Water has installed more than 6,336 solar panels, which power almost half their energy needs at across 4 water and wastewater plants - saving up to 3,745 tonnes of emissions annually.

Other projects include Barwon Water's Colac Renewable Organics Network; Yarra Valley Water's Waste to Energy facility in Wollert, and Wannon Water's 800-kilowatt wind turbine - producing clean renewable energy for two years.

The sector is also exploring the use of sustainable recycled water sources for renewable hydrogen production and capturing more biogas from sewage treatment.

A net zero water sector by 2035 will mean the industry has reduced its annual emissions by almost 900,000 tonnes per year. The equivalent to the annual emissions produced by more than 250,000 cars on Victoria's roads.

Quote attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing

"Our water sector is setting the pace on emissions reductions – showing consumers and industry that we can tackle climate change and boost renewable energy use as our population grows."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio

"Renewable energy is key to meeting Victoria's ambitious 2030 target of reducing our emissions by 50 per cent, and it's important essential services like water can harness this reliable and affordable new energy technology."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"Local water corporations play a big role in regional communities, and their investment in renewables will lead by example for other local business and ensure they can continue to support jobs and a healthy environment."

Media Contact: Siobhan McKenna 0480 147 921 | siobhan.mckenna@minstaff.vic.gov.au