

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



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WATER FLOWING TO GEELONG

The Allan Labor Government has completed a major upgrade to the Melbourne to Geelong Pipeline, boosting water security for Geelong and securing the region's drinking water.

Minister for Water Gayle Tierney today announced the completion of the \$40 million project, expanding the pipeline's capacity from 16 billion litres to 22 billion litres every year – meaning up to 60 per cent of Geelong's peak demand can be met through the pipeline alone.

The works included modifications at two basins, which provides for the pipeline's water to reach a further 28,000 families and businesses in the Geelong region.

The pipeline stretches for 59 kilometres underground, connecting Geelong's storage at Lovely Banks with Melbourne's water supply network at Cowies Hill, west of Werribee.

This pipeline helped Geelong avoid water restrictions this year during one of the driest periods on record across central and western Victoria.

Barwon Water will continue to use the pipeline this summer to replenish local storages, which sat at 36 per cent of capacity at the end of winter – the lowest since 2008, during the Millennium Drought.

Earlier this year the Labor Government ordered 50 billion litres of water from the Victorian Desalination Plant in response to the driest summer in more than a decade with Geelong storages hitting a six-year low.

The Victorian Desalination Plant can provide up to one-third of the Melbourne's annual water demand, underpinning supply not just for Melbourne but also surrounding areas including Geelong and parts of Gippsland.

The Labor Government released the *Water Security Plan* earlier this year, which investigates how to maintain Victoria's world class affordable water supply as our population grows and climate gets drier.

Desalinated water, recycled water, stormwater harvesting and water efficiency programs are part of the Labor Government's work to ensure secure water supplies and put downward pressure on water bills.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Gayle Tierney

"The upgraded pipeline connection to Melbourne provides greater water security to the Geelong region, ensuring families have access to affordable, safe and secure drinking water supplies."

"With our population growing and the climate getting drier, we are investing in the critical infrastructure needed to move water to where it is needed."

Quote attributable to Member for Lara Ella George

"We are securing our water supply with this upgraded water pipeline, bringing high quality water to families throughout Geelong."

Quote attributable to Barwon Water Chair Peta Maddy

"The pipeline is part of a portfolio of sources that safeguards supply to customers and helps us continue to provide high quality, affordable and secure services."

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