

CICL Member Update January 2019

Co-operative Limited

Water operations' update – Our operations staff are actively utilising the off channel storage and groundwater bores to meet customer¹ orders when their demand exceeds CICL's seven day advance order to WaterNSW. The storage is also used to capture and store any surplus water ordered.

Having access to the storage and groundwater bores has meant CICL, so far this season, has avoided the need to impose restrictions. The value of this cannot be underestimated in the current dry and hot conditions.

Our operational staff are required to place a seven day advance order with WaterNSW. In contrast, virtually all customer orders are placed with only two hours' notice. This situation presents challenges for operators, who are under pressure from WaterNSW to minimise any "over ordering".

CICL is also supplying water, at WaterNSW's request, to the Yanco Creek via the Catchment Drain and DC800. This delivery is subject to a commercial agreement with WaterNSW and helps reduce operational losses in the Yanco Creek.

Water Use Limit Changes for 2019/20 –

Customers are advised, in accordance with our CIA Water Use Policy, the annual water use limit including bore water use for the **2019/20** irrigation season will be **8.0ML/ha**. The annual water use limit for the current water year 2018/19 remains 7.2ML/ha.

The Board agreed to increase the annual limit at its December meeting. The water use limit has been increased for one year because the area of land with a water table within two metres of the surface in spring 2018 was at a record low. The Water Use Policy and Guidelines can be found at

<https://www.colyirr.com.au/policies/>

For further information please contact Bernard Star, Environment & Compliance Officer on T: 02 6954 4003.

¹ Customer is inclusive of members and non-members.

NSW Department of Industry Allocation announcements

15/12/18

High Security	95%
General Security	7%

The next allocation announcement is on Tuesday 15 January 2019.

CICL announcement and offer

Member benefit	10%
Additional offer	6%

Waterways

<http://www.colyirr.com.au>

P: 1300 850 105

WaterMart

Open

Allocation trade

Internal and external trade open.

Inter-valley trade

Trade into the Murrumbidgee is closed.

For up to date information on the IVT go to

<https://www.waternsw.com.au/customer-service/ordering-trading-and-pricing/trading/murrumbidgee>.

Accidental drainage events - A number of accidental drainage events have been reported or detected by compliance staff over the last month. Customers are requested to ensure that their on-farm recycle systems are sound. Any problems with leaking drainage inlets should be reported to compliance staff as a matter of urgency. Customers are reminded of the general prohibition on drainage of contaminated water into CICL drainage channels. Customers that were previously users of Metolachlor should pay particular attention to their on-farm drainage storage capacity.

Theft of Water - Placing a siphon over the top of a closed Flume Gate is an exercise in theft. It is unacceptable that some customers are prepared to engage in such an activity to the detriment of their fellow customers.

The CICL Rules deal with the unauthorised take of water and consequences that may be imposed. CICL will use the full force of its Rules to discourage water theft. Sanctions may include a fine and/or suspension of supply.

Taking water from the system without lawful authority also constitutes an offence under the Water Management Act, punishable by a substantial fine.

Please understand that the consequences of any unauthorised taking of water will be far more significant than a mere warning.

IREC Field Day Tuesday 22 January – CICL encourages customers to attend IREC's field day on Tuesday 22 January at their Field Station between 8.30am and 11.30am.

Further information is available at the IREC website at the following link
<https://irec.org.au/>

External issues

Murray Darling Basin Ministerial Council (MinCo) Meeting – The MinCo met in Melbourne on Friday 14 December. The Ministers agreed on the criteria which need to be met before an on-farm efficiency project is funded in NSW and Victoria.

Efficiency projects are infrastructure investments which will contribute water to what is commonly referred to as the "450GL of up water".

The Ministers have flagged this agreement as a major achievement. The criteria are detailed and aim to ensure there are no negative socio or economic impacts of projects.

The NSW Minister has worked hard with his counterparts in Victoria, South Australia and the Commonwealth to reach agreement on the long list of criteria which need to be satisfied.

CICL has expressed its concerns about the impact of further water recovery from irrigation farmers under the Murray Darling Basin Plan. Honouring the outcomes of this meeting will be important to minimise future risks of the Murray Darling Basin Plan on CICL's customers and Coleambally.

State Government fixed charge fee waiver - The administration arrangements between CICL and WaterNSW have not been resolved to our satisfaction. This is despite WaterNSW announcing details in August 2018 and CICL providing WaterNSW with the information sought by WaterNSW in a timely way. In the interim, CICL will continue to delay issuing its first and now second quarter invoices to customers.

Our invoice, when issued, will recognise the Government fee waiver of WaterNSW fixed charges and will be due 30 days from the date of invoice.

Conclusion - The primary purpose of this newsletter is to advise customers of the change in Water Use Limit for 2019/20 irrigation season. Whilst this may seem a long way away, this information may assist some customers utilise the flexibility provided by the increased limit, including assisting customers with their forward planning and farm development plans.

I sincerely hope the 2019/20 season will provide more opportunities for irrigation farming in Coleambally than 2018/19 has.

I also acknowledge the excellent work of our operational staff in managing our forward water ordering in December and early January. As a business we are focussed on the reliability of our service and working hard to minimise the potential for delivery restrictions.

I hope the next few weeks result in lower evaporation rates and improved crop growing conditions.

Clifford Ashby, CEO