



Business as usual in SA

While not boasting the vast metropolises that dominate Victoria and New South Wales, there has been plenty of trenchless work on offer in South Australia to service the water infrastructure that supports the state's growing population.

Water upgrades

SA Water has been hard at work maintaining the state's water infrastructure, with a series of works getting underway in 2021. In February 2021, the utility began the replacement of more than 1,500 m of water main in Wilmington alongside contractor Fleurieu Civil with a five-week completion time.

The works are part of approximately 30,000 m of main being renewed around SA throughout the next year, with the Wilmington works to include the installation of new pipe along the Horrocks Highway. SA Water GM Sustainable Infrastructure Amanda Lewry says PVC pipes will be used for the most of its water main replacement program.

"While it's difficult to completely stop water main leaks and breaks from occurring due to soil movement, weather and a variety of other environmental factors, we are committed to proactively limiting their frequency and any potential impact on our customers," she says.

"With the new pipes having an approximate life span of up to 100 years, this project ensures

we can keep providing our customers in the Wilmington area with trusted water services for years to come, as well as limit the potential for water main breaks and leaks on a busy regional road.

"It's one of many water main replacements we're undertaking as part of our four-year statewide \$155 million water main management program, and our sustained investment ensures a reliable supply of safe, clean water for our customers."

In March, SA Water also began undertaking a range of water network modifications along Flagstaff Road in Darlington, to enable the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's (DIT) widening of a busy section of the southern suburbs' key travel route.

A fourth lane is being added to Flagstaff Road between Hyland Avenue and Bonneyview Road, making it a permanent two-lane carriageway, and SA Water will be installing a cross-connection pipe from the northern end of Hyland Avenue and underneath Flagstaff Road.

Ms Lewry says as with all its projects across

the state, the utility aims to work closely with other government agencies and councils to, where possible, align works and minimise any community impacts.

"Our works will commence with the decommissioning of a nearby nine megalitre water storage tank, before we move on to the more complex pipe installation beneath Flagstaff Road," she says.

"The tank makes up one of 14 located along the foothills which serve a contingency storage role, should another part of the local network lose power for example. A detailed assessment determined the Darlington tank and supporting infrastructure can now be augmented with the new cross-connection being put in place to divert water to the remaining tanks.

"Along with enabling a major road upgrade, the installation of a new connection pipe also ensures we can continue to provide a reliable supply of safe, clean water to our customers."

The project, being undertaken with a John Holland-Guidera O'Connor joint

venture, is expected to take around eight weeks to complete.

Completed works

SA Water completed an \$11 million project to improve wastewater services in the state's southeast in February 2021. A team of more than 50 people worked across the project, replacing a section of the 30 km pipe responsible for delivering wastewater from around 26,000 Mount Gambier residents and businesses to the region's wastewater treatment facility.

SA Water Senior Manager of Capital Delivery Peter Seltsikas says the 570 mm diameter concrete trunk main's upgrade was staged over time to efficiently manage costs.

"First constructed in the mid-1960s, more than 5 million L of sewage pass through this important wastewater main each day," he says.

"This is the last section of the large pipeline to be replaced and ensures our customers will continue to receive reliable wastewater services for years to come, while reducing the risk of potential leaks or breaks impacting the local environment.

"We have worked closely with the Grant District Council and other community stakeholders throughout the duration of the works, and we're excited to have the new wastewater pipeline now installed and delivering for our customers."

The continued upgrades to the wastewater pipeline have been designed to improve the operations at SA Water's sewer pump station in Mount Gambier and reduce the likelihood of sewer blockages caused by non-flushable items like wet wipes, tissues and tampons.

Executive appointment

In 2020, Jacqueline Guerin was announced as SA Water's new Chief Financial Officer, bringing the organisation's female representation in the senior leadership team up to 75 per cent.

Ms Guerin brings more than 30 years of experience in senior financial roles within professional services, manufacturing, infrastructure and defence to her new position, and joined SA Water at the beginning of its 2020–24 regulatory period.

SA Water says this appointment means three-quarters of individuals in the company's senior leadership team are women, or five of seven. The company says 50 per cent of its non-executive board directors are female as well.

Ms Guerin says there are wide reaching benefits to having better female representation at all levels, yet businesses need to continue thinking broadly when it comes to improving workplace diversity.

"Having more women around the table is really important, but you also need people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, physical abilities and age groups," she says.

"From my own professional experience, a greater range of perspectives provides diversity of thought, leading to better ideas and decisions. In the water sector in particular – where I've worked for the past eight years – I am seeing improvements, with tailored industry development programs and policies, and outward support from industry leaders.

"It's terrific to know SA Water has a diversity and inclusion strategy which actively seeks opportunities for women

as well as new and emerging employees, and prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention, and a flexible and inclusive workforce."

The other female members of SA Water's Senior Leadership team are General Manager of Asset, Operations and Delivery Amanda Lewry; General Manager of Customers, Strategy and Innovation Anna Jackson; General Manager of Governance, Planning and Regulation Anne Westley; and General Manager of Customer Delivery Kerry Rowlands.

Interflow on board in SA

In December 2020, the South Australian Interflow team secured a four-year package of works with SA Water. Sharing the news on social media, Interflow says its SA team will enjoy completing works for its own local community.

"After 18 months of travelling Australia, performing a variety of different and challenging projects from the top of the Northern Territory to the bottom of Tasmania, our SA team can rest easy knowing that they've just secured four years of local work," the company says.

"Prioritising economic efficiency, environmental performance and social responsibility, SA Water has a long and proud history of delivering exceptional water and wastewater services to state residents. Working collaboratively with our customer, we will help SA Water to meet its goals while prioritising the wellbeing of residents."

Interflow says it will continue to share updates from the field as the program progresses. ●



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