

Newsletter to Barossa Infrastructure Customers

1 Water Use in 2010/11

Barossa Infrastructure is concerned at the low water usage this year due to the high rainfall. This has an impact on cash flow. It is important accounts are paid on schedule to enable your company to meet its bank commitments.

Many customers have advised they have surplus water. This cannot be traded as there is no demand for unused water. If you have a means of storing this water it is suggested that this be implemented.

To assist with your budgeting, we draw to your attention that in October many customers will be faced with a large account for unused water. BIL has sought to minimise the impact by not increasing the unused charge last year. This charge is effectively a fixed usage cost reflecting those costs that are not dependent on the amount of water used. It is a 22 cent or 32% saving on the Premium water charge.

2 2011/12 Water Year

The good news remains that with the storages at 80% allocations in 2011/12 will be 100%.

3 Barossa Infrastructure Web Site

BarossaInfrastructure.com.au is now the BIL web site and it will be used to keep customers updated on water quality and service issues. It will also provide general information on the company.

4 Meters

Barossa Infrastructure has received funding of \$704,000 from the Commonwealth Government to replace the mechanical flowmeters with more accurate battery powered meters.

This will

- meet national metering standards.
- significantly reduce maintenance of customer connections
- mean the filters before the flowmeters in the BIL connection may be removed or have a more coarse screen to reduce cleaning and maintenance
- provide customers with the opportunity to include equipment that allows remote monitoring

Replacements will be carried out over a period of 2 years with larger meters replaced first.

5 'Dirty Water'

Following the problems associated with fibrous material in the water blocking filters this season, an investigation has been carried out to confirm the source and identify possible solutions. The problem is caused by a slime, 'bryozoa', forming on the walls of the pipe and being released during periods of high flow. This problem is common to pipe systems with unchlorinated water, such as in the Riverland and is generally controlled by filtration in the customer's connection.

Enquiries revealed:

- **Filtration** – In the Riverland it has been reported that automatic backwash filters operate up to every 5 minutes during the worst of the cycle. This is similar to reports in the Barossa. The most important issue is not to let breakthrough occur in disc filters.
- **Scouring** – Scouring the lines can reduce the problem. In the Barossa this is difficult as BIL does not have surplus water for this purpose and discharges to the environment require EPA approval which might be difficult to obtain with such dirty water.

- **Chlorination** – has been used successfully, generally with regular slug doses. It is expensive and due to the length and volume of the BIL scheme may involve multiple injection points and scouring may still be required which would be environmentally unsuitable due to the presence of chlorine.

The best solution is good filtration with automatic backwashing. Disk filters need a controller that either stops flow or initiates a backwash at a predetermined pressure differential. BIL is commencing the installation of electronic flow metering as discussed above. Once this is complete the mesh filters on the BIL meters can be removed and replaced with a coarse screen if necessary.

It is recommended that BIL customers consult their irrigation suppliers about the best system for their vineyard.

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