

**CENTRAL GIPPSLAND OLDER ADULTS RECREATION NETWORK INC.**  
**POST OFFICE BOX 66**  
**MOE VIC 3825**

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008

To: Gippsland Water & Essential Services Commission.

I, Lois Williams of 9 Trent Street, Newborough, and the above organization of which I am the volunteer Project Officer/Treasurer wish to register our strong opposition to the proposal to double our water rates.

We are Aged Pensioners or Seniors, and find it extremely difficult to make ends meet at the present. Did you consider this fact when making this decision? We have no capacity to increase our income to cover this extra cost. Does this mean, we forgo the capacity to feed ourselves and pay for other necessities (medicines etc.) on what we will have left after the doubling of our water bills?

Why was the Ratepayers Forum held only in Traralgon and not more widely publicized? Why was such a meeting not held in all towns affected by this decision? Was it to make sure there was not a large body of objectors. Travelling to Traralgon, if we knew about it, would incur more cost, and people would find it difficult to get transport at night. Why should we pay the cost of the water factory which will benefit companies such as Maryvale Paper Mill & other smaller dairy food processors? Why should we pay for the cost of a water treatment disposal facility for the township of Loch Sport, a town not even in the Gippsland Water area?

Did you ever consider the financial impact on the ageing population (the lowest water users) and low-income families in the Valley? Why was the expression "user pays" not applied here? The beneficiaries and users of this infrastructure, as well as State and Federal Governments should be responsible for funding. Every effort should be made ensure that these costs are not the responsibility of ordinary household users.

Why, also can the beneficiaries of this infrastructure negotiate supply contracts, but ordinary customers are forced to pay 100% more.

**There is no equity in this water rate increase proposal, even blind Freddy could see and understand this.**

**A PETITION WILL BE FORWARDED BEFORE THE DUE DATE.**

Yours faithfully,

*L Williams*

Lois Williams  
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