



07/05/2008 09:39 PM

To <water@esc.vic.gov.au>

cc

bcc

Subject

east Gippsland Water Charges 2007 - 2012

Attention
Sean Crees
Director Regulation Water

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest your reply to my original submission in March 2008. Being involved with Local Government for over twenty years I understand that public utilities such as waer supply have to be maintained and improved. This is done through rates and government grants. I have since read through the EGW draft revenue proposal for the next five years and find it rather intimidating and disturbing.

The figures themselves are rather a concern, with a net price increase for a vacant block of land increasing by nearly 40% from this year over the five year period. I find this rather extreme when CPI is somewhere in the vicinity of 4% and they have chosen 7.1% per annum. When we receive funding from the government we are lucky if it includes an increase in line with CPI. I believe in paying taxes but not at the rate as suggested in Chapter 6 of their draft plans. How can any authority justify such a high charge when the water is not connected and no waste water is put into the system? To argue that it is to assist in maintenance etc is a bit thin when you are not contributing to any deterioration in the system. I believe that if you use the water then you pay for it and therefore pay a much higher rate than those who are not contributing to any deterioration in the system, not just come up with an impost on the nearly 3000 blocks in the water districts to help balance the books.

My understanding of the matter is that it is all vacant blocks in the East Gippsland Shire serviced by EGW are to be charged this rate to be equalised by the end of the fifth year. Why is the rate so different now? \$180 in Bairnsdale and \$265 for others such as Lakes Entrance and Lake Tyers Beach. Surely all should be rated equally as they are in similar circumstances; vacant land and no water connected.

Why will it take five years to equal this imbalance up? It is not too difficult and would then lower the over all charge to all these block owners.

I sent an email to EGW on May 2 asking for the water prices on a vacant block of land in Lake Tyers Beach for the next five years. To date I have received no reply at all. Now with the date for submissions getting close I begin to wonder why?

I believe that the rate vacant block owners are charged should reflect the water use on those blocks and not just help to balance the books with charges I regard as over the top and unfair, as no doubt other vacant block owners do also.

As I have stated I object to paying such a huge amount when I do not use the service, and feel that the user pay system that the government advocates should be used in this case. That is if you use then you pay accordingly.

I await with interest your reply

Yours faithfully,
Michael O'Sullivan