

TASWATER

AN ADVERTISING FEATURE

WHAT is essential has taken many different forms as Tasmanians respond to living with COVID-19. Fortunately, we have moved on from the initial scramble for what we thought was essential (toilet paper, flour, rice and pasta sauce), and the community has reassessed priorities and adjusted to restrictions aimed at protecting our health.

TasWater's COVID-19 response incident controller Neal Synott says the company is also good at managing what is essential – supplying clean drinking water and treating sewage.

"It's something we often take for granted, and during this time when there is a lot we haven't been able to take for granted, TasWater remains determined that water and sewerage services are something you can rely on," Mr Synott said.

"Like all Tasmanians, TasWater is doing things differently to make sure things stay the same when you turn on the tap or flush the loo," he said.

With offices closed, the bulk of the company's staff is working from home, with some well-planned and creative business systems keeping everyone connected.

"If a customer phones TasWater with a fault or emergency, the call will still be answered by a customer service team member – the only difference being, they will be taking the call from their home office or the kitchen table, rather than our call centre," Mr Synott said.

"Even our service delivery crews are based from home, heading out each morning across the state to complete maintenance and emergency repairs. For those who do work on-site, TasWater has implemented strict processes to keep staff and the general public safe."

There is also a fully-staffed Operations Control Centre monitoring TasWater systems 24 hours a day, with a backup centre in a separate location in case COVID-19 impacts any staff members.

TasWater's laboratory is also



ESSENTIAL WORKERS: Water and sewer services operators Stephen Mills and Phil Close are part of the TasWater team making sure Tasmania's water and sewerage services keep flowing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Picture: PETER MATHEW

Customers respond to TasWater's bill support

AS the impact of COVID-19 continues, many businesses and households are finding their finances strained. TasWater would like to remind customers that it is ready to help when it comes to water and sewerage bills.

As well as offering relief to eligible small businesses on bills issued between April 1 and June 30, 2020, TasWater has extended payment assistance to all

customers – including homeowners, those who own rental properties, and vacant land.

Since last month, TasWater has been able to provide a range of options to support customers with their payments.

TasWater's Kendall Mahnken said customer support staff had been moved by the impact of COVID-19 on so many Tasmanians. "Our support program is

available to anyone who may need help with their TasWater bill and we invite people to contact us about their options, as the sooner we can get assistance in place, the easier we can make things for our customers," Kendall said.

TasWater has also put a 3 per cent price rise on-hold, freezing customer charges for the next 12 months to help all Tasmanian households and businesses.

analysing water samples collected from across the state to ensure water supplies continue to meet all the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. And it takes more than

frontline staff to keep TasWater's essential services flowing, with the continued management of everyday administration now happening in households around the state.

"Having staff working from home enables vital logistics and procurement services to continue, ensuring we have all the chemicals and technical equipment to run our

water and sewage treatment plants," Mr Synott said.

"Our engineers and project managers also continue to work on key projects, with TasWater's Capital Delivery Office preparing to start a range of shovel-ready projects with some COVID-19 restrictions now easing," he said.

"This is another way TasWater is supporting the community as we begin the process of recovery from COVID-19 and get Tasmania back on its feet socially and financially."

For now, the focus continues to be providing safe, secure and reliable water and sewerage services for all our customers — something Neal Synott reckons "we've got pretty-well sorted." taswater.com.au

TasWater – Community Update Southern Tasmania

TasWater staff working on through the current pandemic

TasWater has a statewide team which is working hard to ensure Tasmanians continue to receive reliable water and sewerage services despite the impact of COVID-19 on the community.

Our number one priority continues to be the provision of clean drinking water and safe disposal of sewage.

Water Services Operator Tash Fyfe is just one of the TasWater team, which works to deliver safe and reliable drinking water supplies to Hobart and the surrounding areas

"My daily routine is to undertake preventative maintenance and attend to any callouts that involve fixing any leaks or bursts in a water main supplying our customers," Tash said.

Tash, like many TasWater essential workers, participates in an on-call roster.

"For emergencies, it means at any time of the day or night we can be called out to get repairs done."

"When I see how many people and businesses have been affected

by the lockdown, I feel pretty lucky to have been able to keep working as usual."

"It's satisfying too to know that with more people having to spend a lot more time at home, we are still around to fix anything that may go wrong with the water supply or sewerage system," Tash said.

Tash and the rest of her team is also well prepared to protect both themselves and you, our customers, when it comes to meeting all the restrictions in place to manage COVID-19.

"We are pretty practised at knowing how to work on-site as a team to stay safe."

Our customers can still contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with any faults or emergencies by calling 13 6992 or emailing enquiries@taswater.com.au.

TasWater's Tash Fyfe, Trainee Water Services Operator who works in Hobart and the surrounding area.

