

## fact sheet

### **Agnes Water/1770 Integrated Water Project**

Gladstone Regional Council is now contractually bound to deliver the Agnes Water/1770 Water Infrastructure Program as outlined in the contract with UUA.

#### **When was the desalination Contract signed?**

The contract for the desalination plant was signed with United Utilities on 16 January 2008.

#### **WHEN IS WORK EXPECTED TO START**

It is envisaged that construction will start in May 2009.

#### **COST OF PROJECT**

- The capital cost of the project is \$40 million.
- \$27 million from the State Government's Smaller Communities Assistance Program and the Water and Sewerage Program will fund the first stages of the project.
- Infrastructure will be provided in modular form so that augmentations can be readily installed as required.

#### **What is wrong with our current water supply?**

The current water supply will only be viable for a few more years at the most. A long term solution needed to be sought and after 4 years of research the desalination plant was the best option.

#### **What happens in the desalination process?**

The desalination process starts in the ocean and goes through several steps.

- Seawater is taken from the ocean via a pipe.
- Water travels along the pipes into a settlement tank.
- From the settlement tank it is pumped through two sand filters and two progressively finer rope-wound carbon filters.
- Before the water leaves the plant, it is chlorine dosed to provide residual disinfection.
- It is then further disinfected with UV (ultraviolet) light.

#### **Will the discharge be monitored?**

There will be a discharge into the ocean but this will be controlled by stringent guidelines provided by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). This will then be monitored by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) who will require the desalination plant to be licensed from next year.

#### **Environmental Impacts**

It is not expected that there be any long term environmental impacts to the surrounding area however it is inevitable that some impact will occur during the construction period and may include:

- Land clearing
- Noise
- Vibration.

## fact sheet

The Environmental Protection Agency, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Department of Natural Resources and Water have outlined strict conditions of approval to ensure minimal impact on water quality, beach dunes and local flora and fauna.

### **What about the turtles?**

Nesting turtles are being considered and the construction will be planned to avoid any construction work at the beaches during turtle nesting season. Vibrations, lighting and noise will all be issues that the GBRMPA and council will be monitoring together following strict guidelines.

### **Where is the desalination plant to be located?**

The desalination plant will be located at Springs Road where the current water pump station is located.

### **Will the plant be visible?**

The desalination plant will not be visible from the road. There will be two pipelines to the beach which will be underground. There will be a pump station the size of a garden shed at the beach, with most pumps being located below ground.

### **Will residents be able to see the pipelines?**

The pipelines will be underground and there will be minimal disturbance to the beach areas.

### **Can we still access the beaches where the pipelines are situated?**

Public access will still be available to the beaches involved.

### **Will the water be safe to drink?**

The potable water produced will be tested regularly and must meet stringent standards, including World Health Organisation guidelines. The plant must comply with strict environmental standards and will be regularly monitored and quality tested.

### **How will the water infrastructure program work?**

In Seventeen Seventy, Council will provide water infrastructure to the property boundary. It will be the property owner's responsibility to connect the scheme to the house and ensure that the internal plumbing meets plumbing standards. The costs associated with this are the responsibility of the property owner.

### **What will be the cost to ratepayers?**

Financial model has been developed so that the impact on rates is limited by the increase in the Council cost index of 4.5%. The access rate will be approximately \$340 and the consumption rate \$2.98 per kilolitre.

### **Can I connect to the water supply?**

If you are not in the declared water area you cannot connect to the water supply.

### **What about the noise from the plant?**

The desalination plant's noise levels will be monitored by the EPA.

### **Will there be employment opportunities?**

There will be employment opportunities during construction, but will decrease significantly once plant is built.

## fact sheet

---

**Will water restrictions still apply once the plant is operational?**

Water restrictions will continue after the desalination plant is built and Council will be reviewing and revising the Drought Management Policy.

**Where else are there desalination plants in Australia?**

Heron Island and Kangaroo Island both have desalination plants and information regarding these plants can be found at

<http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Education/OurWaterSystems/Desalination.htm> and  
<http://www.osmoflo.com.au/sendfile.php/id/3a9e341fc900269293da971f631f5803/name/Desalination%20Plant%20Supplies%20Resort?PHPSESSID=00679b2fe422464bf3ec003b3d48bc09>

**Can the plant be stopped by those who are currently opposing it?**

There is still opposition to the desalination plant and letters have gone to many different government departments trying to halt the project. At this point the project still has a green light.

---

**For further information or enquiries please contact Council's Water and Sewerage Manager Phil Boshoff on 49700745 or email [philb@gcc.qld.gov.au](mailto:philb@gcc.qld.gov.au)**