

The cover of the Community Engagement Strategy 2019-21 report. It features a background photograph of two young children in school uniforms running happily outdoors. The child in the foreground is a boy in a light blue shirt, and the child in the background is a girl in a blue and white checkered dress. The image is partially overlaid by a large white semi-circle on the left and a teal semi-circle on the bottom right. The title text is positioned within the white semi-circle.

**Community
Engagement
Strategy 2019–21**



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Background

Water is the backbone of the southern Riverina. It helps our communities grow and thrive. It's an essential resource which underpins everything we do from drinking to cooking and cleaning through to recreation, heating, cooling and the running of business, industry and agriculture—which not only feeds the Riverina but Australia.

Our mission is delivering our community safe and reliable drinking water at the lowest sustainable cost.

Formed in 1997 as county council (a single-purpose water supply local council), we are made up of four constituent local government areas, where we supply water to customers. Our Board is made up of a mix of councillors from each constituent council.

Our formation 22 years ago built on a long and proud history of close to 60 years of water supply in the southern Riverina. We look forward to building on this legacy as we move into a new direction.

Our community

We deliver safe and reliable drinking water to a community of more 73,000 people across more than 15,000 square kilometres in parts of the NSW Riverina.

We have more than 32,000 properties connected directly to our water supply network across towns including Holbrook, Lockhart, Urana and Wagga Wagga.

Our customers are diverse and range from households, to farmers, business, industry and other institutions such as hospitals, aged care facilities, the Royal Australian Air Force Base Wagga and education institutions including Charles Sturt University.

Our network

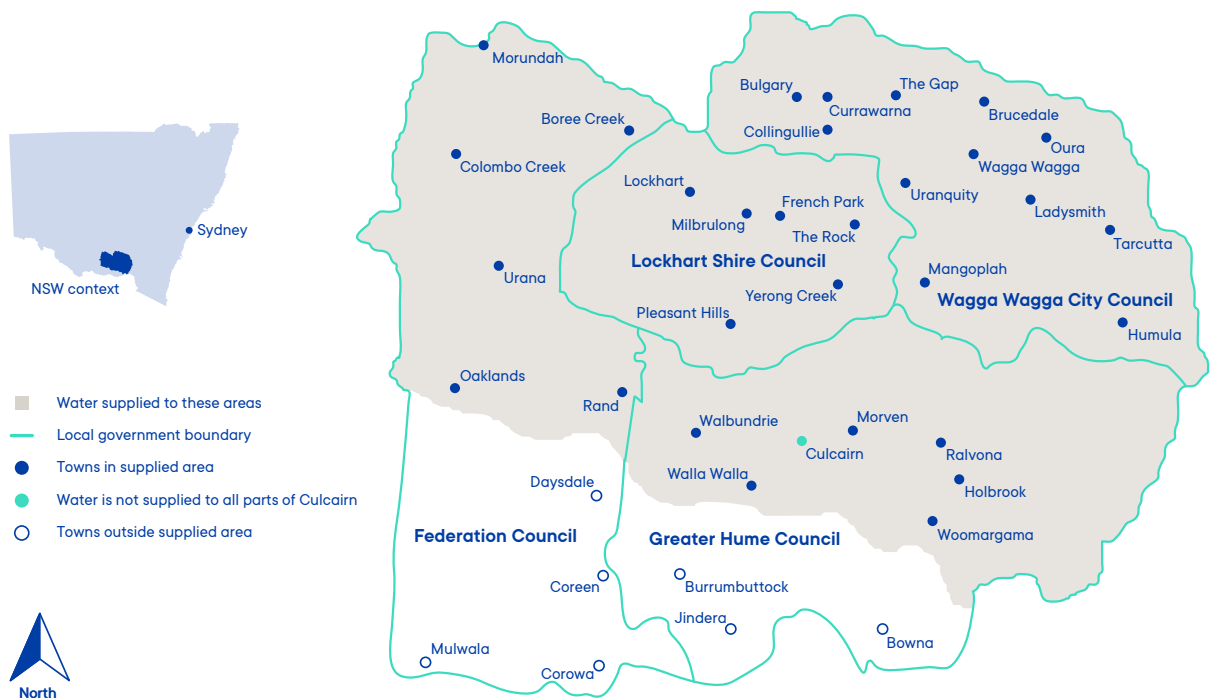
We have more than 32,000 properties connected directly to our water supply network made up of more than 1800 kilometres of water mains.

Stretching from Morundah to Woomargama and Urana to Humula, we cover the local government areas of Lockhart and Wagga Wagga and parts of Federation and Greater Hume (see below).

We draw water from the Murrumbidgee River which runs through the heart of Wagga Wagga. We also source water from 10 bores which makes up about 60 per cent of our source water supply.

Our water supply network includes 16 water treatment plans and more than 80 reservoirs.

Riverina Water supply area



Strategy aim

We understand that our community and customers are our most important asset. The development of our first Community Engagement Strategy marks a new direction for our organisation and coincides with the appointment of our first Community Engagement Officer who will facilitate the strategy rollout.

In moving from a transactional relationship with our customers, the aim of this strategy is to bring a stronger engagement focus to our interactions with community. We believe this will help our community take greater ownership of our brand and our activities.

Over the next two years, this strategy will enable us to engage with community through a range of different ways including social media, events, education and branding, as well as giving back to our communities through our Community Grants and Donation programs.

Strategy aim: To engage community in new and innovative ways to build lasting two-way relationships. These relationships will empower our community to take ownership/pride of our brand and service.

Key message/tagline

Providing quality water everyday

This is a concise, down to earth message which embodies our mission statement. The message is designed to clearly portray our driving goal for our audience.

Stakeholders

Primary stakeholder group	Key interests	What we want them to know/calls to action	How we'll reach them
Community including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Direct customers › Indirect customers › Community groups › Business › Industry › Agriculture › Other institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Water quality and safety › Water affordability › Water security › Service delivery › Water conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › We provide safe and reliable drinking water at the lowest sustainable cost › We've got water for when you need it › We've undertaken strategic planning to ensure our supply area's water supply and now and into the future › Our workforce is specialised and experienced to ensure our water supply is safe and secure › Making every drop count through conservation and technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Events and tours › Customer service › Media and social media › Website › Consultation › Passive marketing › Partnerships with community groups › Branding › Meaningful merchandise › Communications collateral including customer newsletter › Refill stations

Secondary stakeholder groups

- › Water industry including:
 - Water utilities
 - Advocacy groups
 - Professional associations
 - Suppliers
 - Contractors
- › Government including:
 - Local councils
 - Other county councils
 - Local Government NSW
 - NSW Government
 - NSW Health

How we'll communicate

Our 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey results tell us traditional media such as print, TV and radio account for more than a third of one-way communication from us to community. In contrast the combined preference for communication via these channels is five per cent.

While mail dominates as both the usual (82 per cent) and preferred (71 per cent) method of communication, primarily through customer bills and customer newsletter, email is significantly underutilised (see usual and preferred communication methods table below).

As audiences continue to shift to online platforms, we will continue to maintain our existing channels while investing in digital channels including email, our website and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. These channels allow us to continue the digital experience through digital advertising and video where we can share information in effective and engaging ways.

While promoting email as a primary method of communication, Riverina Water will investigate opportunities to build a customer data base which will allow us to digitise our customer newsletter, share updates about service issues and other news.

We'll also invest in our website to ensure a rich and informative customer experience which empowers community with the right tools and information to resolve customer-service related issues. We'll also focus on education resources to promote behaviour change through awareness of water wise practices.

Two-way communication

Increasing opportunities to communicate via digital platforms such as social media will foster two-way communication often in real time, where community can engage with content, ask questions and be given a response. In some cases, these interactions could lead to meaningful conversations which benefit the wider community through the sharing of information and tools.

Usual and preferred communication methods

	Usual	Preferred
By mail	82%	71%
Riverina Water Newsletter	18%	7%
Local newspaper	16%	2%
Email	14%	30%
Television	12%	3%
Radio	8%	1%
Website	9%	4%

Please note: As respondents were able to select multiple answers, the figures show which proportion of the total respondents chose each method.



Chanel composition

- › Social media
- › Email
- › Riverina Water website
- › Newspaper editorial and advertising
- › Face-to-face engagement including events and site tours
- › TV and Radio content and advertising

Awareness and behaviour

Our 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey identified areas for further awareness including:

- › Sprinkler ban between 10am and 5pm
- › Stepped tariff
- › Water conservation
- › The Riverina Water supply network
- › Projects available for community consultation

We'll continue to develop and promote content across all channels to improve awareness of these areas. This information will aim to promote behaviour changes where applicable.

Reporting

The progress of this strategy will be reported in the Riverina Water Annual Report.

Progress updates will include a quarterly Media and Social Media Report covering all media and digital communications including social media and the Riverina Water website.

The primary key performance metric for the strategy implementation and rollout will be the successful delivery of each applicable action item.

Overall network water consumption will be monitored and assessed for changes in line with water wise education.



Action plan

1. Community engagement and events

Approach: We will focus on benefit-led and innovative ways to connect with our community and stakeholders

Aim: To build relationships with community and stakeholders and to encourage audiences to actively think about water use through education

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- 1.1 We will sponsor and attend Fusion to 2020. We will lead the promotion of sustainable water practices and focus on minimising our waste footprint at the event

 - 1.2 We will run water treatment plant tours for students and other groups

 - 1.3 We will develop water wise gardens and green walls at our Wagga site in partnership with experts including CSU ecologists and ErinEarth. These sites will form part of tours to the WTP

 - 1.4 We will run water wise campaigns to promote the sustainable use of water/best practice and to create related behaviour change in our community

 - 1.5 We will run tap water campaigns including the distribution of branded table water bottles to local cafes and restaurants in our supply area

 - 1.6 We will develop an interactive customer service area including display boards with current information, wall artwork/photography, iPad surveys on customer service levels, self-service functions, digital logins for guests etc

 - 1.7 We will seek to consult with community during policy development in new and innovative ways
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2. Drinking water refill stations

Approach: We will work collaboratively with our constituent councils to rollout water refill stations

Aim: To encourage community and stakeholders to think about water supply and the benefits of tap

2.1 Each calendar year we will have one drinking water refill station available upon request for each of our rural constituent councils and two for Wagga City. Each council will choose the installation location within the Riverina Water supply area boundaries and manage cleaning and graffiti removal as required. Stations will be directly connected to the Riverina Water supply network. Riverina Water will manage the installation and ongoing operational maintenance. The refill station design will include the Riverina Water and relevant constituent council logo.

- › We will also replace the existing plastic refill stations with stainless steel units

2.2 As part of Fusion, we will provide tap water for attendees through portable refill stations and we'll promote BYO bottle in addition to supplying reusable bottles

- › We will also Investigate using biocups for events
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3. Social media

Approach: We will use social media to engage with community in meaningful ways and direct people to our website where they can further engage with content

Aim: To increase awareness of Riverina Water, our services, projects and initiatives while also empowering community to think about their water use through education

3.1 We will build our presence on Facebook by 10 per cent each calendar year

3.2 We will build our presence on Twitter

3.3 We will build our presence on Instagram

3.4 We will build our presence on LinkedIn

3.5 We will build our presence on other social media channels including YouTube and investigate emerging social media channels

3.6 We will report quarterly on our social media analytics

3.7 We will develop and implement a social media policy

3.8 We will use social media to facilitate customer enquiries

4. Customer newsletter

Approach: We will develop relevant, engaging, customer focused and benefit-led materials

Aim: To inform and educate community and stakeholders about our organisation, our services, projects and initiatives while also empowering community to think about their water use through education

4.1 We will produce a customer newsletter quarterly

4.2 We will create an electronic direct marketing version of our newsletter, in line with privacy and data storage requirements

5. Visual identity

Approach: We will develop a contemporary and community-focused visual identity and brand identity style guide. The visual identity will be the visual element of our brand experience and will be implemented across internal and external visual touch points

Aim: To visually communicate our brand, frame how community and stakeholders think about our brand, build brand recognition and raise our brand profile

5.1 We will develop a visual identity and verbal identity

5.2 We will develop a brand style guide

5.3 We will develop a suite of marketing, communications and business collateral materials using the new visual identity

5.4 We will replace existing outdoor signage with new on brand signage

5.5 We will replace water refill station signage with new on brand signage

5.6 We will investigate opportunities to incorporate branding and art onto infrastructure in creative ways

6. Donations

Approach: We will promote our new Donation Program

Aim: To identify donation opportunities that benefit our entire community

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- 6.1 We will develop a Donation Policy and program to replace our defunct Sponsorship Policy and program
 - 6.2 We will develop application and acquittal forms to support the program
 - 6.3 We will launch and promote the new program in late 2019
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7. Grants

Approach: We will promote our Community Grants Program

Aim: To support a wide range of community projects and activities that enhance life for the wider community

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- 7.1 We will develop a community grants program
 - 7.2 We will develop online application and acquittal forms to support the program
 - 7.3 We will launch and promote the new program in 2019
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8. Environment

Approach: To minimise our waste footprint as part of production

Aim: To be an environmentally responsible organisation

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- 8.1** Promote water related days/weeks of significance including:
- › World Water Day—March
 - › World Water Week—May
 - › National Water Week—October
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- 8.2** We will look for opportunities to use sustainable suppliers and sustainable production options (types of materials, printing, freight, supplier location etc) in the development of marketing and communications collateral
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- 8.3** We will take a digital-first approach to marketing and communications materials where appropriate to reduce the reliance on hard copy assets and production
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- 8.4** We will minimise instances of over ordering stock resulting in waste
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- 8.5** We will reduce our waster footprint by developing meaningful water-related/water wise merchandise with ability for reuse. In line with this approach, we will also not consider large merchandise requests and will not consider requests for merchandise not aligned with this approach
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9. Website

Approach: To develop a digital-first customer friendly experience through an engaging and practical website. The site will act as a one-stop shop where customer needs can be managed end-to-end

Aim: To inform and educate community and stakeholders about Riverina Water, our services, projects and initiatives while also empowering community to think about their water use through education and servicing customer needs

9.1 We will engage external suppliers to rebuild its website

10. Media

Approach: We will deal with media in a professional, responsive, transparent and proactive way

Aim: To minimise media risk and to be seen as trustworthy and transparent

9.1 We will develop and implement a media policy

9.2 We will identify opportunities for proactive media coverage

Riverina Water

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