



**Murrumbidgee
Irrigation**

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MEDIA RELEASE

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MI to pull plug on Main Canal

There will be no irrigation supply from the Main Canal for up to eleven weeks, from late May, to allow Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) to upgrade all major regulating structures.

MI CEO, Brett Jones, said this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to change the way the business operates.

“We are committed to delivering value to our customers,” he said.

“These upgrades will do this by increasing Main Canal flow capacity and flow rates, which will in turn help us to reduce long term costs.”

The \$15 million dollar refurbishment of the Main Canal, funded by the Australian Government, is critical to enable MI to maximise the benefits of the \$118 million already invested in automation projects across the network.

“It will also support any future investment in the network,” said MI CEO Brett Jones.

From 26 May to early August (approximately 11 weeks) there will be no access to irrigation water from the Main Canal, and the supply systems that branch off it.

“This means that we are unable to schedule a winter watering period this year,” explained Mr Jones.

“We are looking at all avenues to minimise the impact on customers but due to the nature of the works only limited options are available.

“I encourage customers to consider the value of starting the winter with a full soil water profile and maximising on-farm storage where possible.”

MI is working together with local Councils to ensure town water supplies can be managed throughout this period. Water will be reserved in pools in the Main Canal (for Griffith) and the Gogelderie Branch Canal (for Leeton) for town supply.

To minimise the shutdown period MI is coordinating their works with Water NSW, who will be conducting essential repairs at Berembed Weir during this time.

The Sturt Canal will not be drained, but will still have sections closed at certain periods of the 2017 winter shutdown to allow for annual maintenance works.

Further information is available on our website www.mirrigation.com.au/Modernisation/Modernisation-Projects/Main-Canal-shutdown-2017

ENDS

Photo: MI Division Operator Vince Vitucci working on the Main Canal at Yenda.

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