



Media Release

Date: 20 January 2011

Re: Cradle Mountain Water's Flood Effort

It was a case of 'all hands on deck' for Cradle Mountain Water crews, when floods affected the North West Coast last week.

In what has been described by some as a 'mini Brisbane', Cradle Mountain Water employees endured hazardous conditions to respond to call outs to residents affected by the flood.

"Our crews worked day and night in an effort to restore water supplies to residents along the Coast and repair wastewater infrastructure," Cradle Mountain Water CEO Andrew Kneebone said. "We had 36 wastewater pump stations affected by the floods, either by overflows or power outages. We also suffered two significant water main breaks, one in Palooka and one in Penguin."

"The Palooka break was the result of what is normally a 10m stretch of the Don River swelling to a 300m torrent, which swept a 525mm water main from its moorings across the river. Our crews worked late into Friday night and all day Saturday to carry out a temporary repair in extremely hazardous conditions, and were not able to affect a more permanent repair until the water levels had subsided to a safe level," Mr Kneebone said.

"The Penguin break was also the result of the water main across the river being swept from its moorings by the extreme flow. We had a crew working from midday Friday through until 5am Saturday morning to carry out repairs on this break, as well as repairing wastewater infrastructure in the area," he said.

"Throughout this period we endeavoured to update residents on the progress of the works as much as possible, via local media, the 13MYWATER (13 6992) number and our website. Clean drinking water was available via the taps at the Melrose Hall Fire Station and a water tanker was located at the Lakeside Caravan Park, providing water to residents," he said.

The effects of the flood were also felt closer to home for the water corporation.

(more...)

“The Forth Treatment Plant was also shut down and offices at the Forth site were evacuated on Friday afternoon, as a result of the rising Forth River. Access to the area was shut off after around 3pm with parts of Pumping Station Road completely under water. Residents from Latrobe through to Ulverstone were asked to conserve water over the weekend as a result of this shut down, however treatment plant operators were able to get the plant operational by Saturday morning.”

“Given the conditions that our crews were working in over the weekend, we are extremely fortunate that no-one was injured whilst responding to call outs and repairs,” he said.

“And while thankfully this type of event is not a regular occurrence, it did provide the corporation with an opportunity to test our emergency responses. We have learnt a lot from the experience, and this knowledge will enable us to fine tune our emergency management plan in the event of future incidents.”

-ENDS-

Photos of the Palooona Main Break, Penguin Main Break and Forth River flood are attached for reference and publication.