

MEDIA RELEASE

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Gladstone's bubble still hasn't burst

Despite substantial rainfall across Queensland over the past six months, Gladstone's rain bubble has yet to burst, with water levels at Awoonga Dam stubbornly below fifty percent.

As we celebrate World Water Day tomorrow, Saturday 22 March 2025, it's a reminder of how important water is.

Awoonga Dam, Gladstone region's primary water source, has seen its levels steadily decline and now sits at just 46% capacity, with a water level of 32 metres.

The single-source water supply is a risk to regional development and economic stability, as Gladstone's industries, which are highly dependent on water, produce more than \$6 billion in gross product per annum (Source: Gladstone Regional Council Annual Report 2023-2024).

Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) has worked with local, state and federal governments and key stakeholders for almost a decade, investigating the most appropriate solution to Gladstone's single water source dilemma.

The Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline (FGP), currently under construction, is a \$983 million infrastructure project designed to improve water security for the region. The FGP includes a water treatment plant, pump station and reservoirs along its alignment.

The 117 kilometre pipeline, from the lower Fitzroy River to the existing GAWB network at Yarwun, will deliver a second source of water for the Gladstone region, improving water security and helping ensure the continued operations of Gladstone's industries and community.

While the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline will deliver long-term water security when it comes online in 2026, responsible water use remains critical today. GAWB is encouraging residents, businesses, and industries to take simple steps to reduce water use and ensure a sustainable supply for the region.

GAWB Chief Executive Officer Darren Barlow said water conservation is everyone's responsibility.

"We all have a role to play in conserving water. Small changes - like fixing leaks, watering gardens in the early morning or evening, and using water-efficient appliances - can make a big difference," Mr Barlow said.

Industry can also contribute by reviewing water usage, implementing efficiency measures, and adopting best-practice water management strategies.

"Every drop we save today helps secure our water future. Together, we can ensure Gladstone and the wider Central Queensland region remain water-resilient, now and into the future."

"While not yet operational, the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline is already delivering positive benefits across the region.

“At the peak of construction, the FGP created more than 400 jobs and recently completed road upgrades near Rockhampton have enhanced road safety for locals,” said Mr Barlow.

“In addition, the FGP has a target of spending \$90 million locally, and I’m delighted we have exceeded this, with more than \$134 million of our allocated budget spent in the Gladstone and Rockhampton regions as well as \$201 million in Queensland at the end of February 2025.

“GAWB is pleased to see this project already delivering tangible benefits to the Gladstone and Rockhampton regions such as jobs, supply contracts and local capability raising,” Mr Barlow said.

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. Gladstone Area Water Board owns and operates Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

For more information about Gladstone Area Water Board and the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline project, including to subscribe to regular FGP updates, please visit www.gawb.qld.gov.au

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