Be there when I need you

How we performed

Overall, customers have provided positive feedback in relation to dealing with Westernport Water; 96% of customers who dealt with us stated that we were easy to deal with. We had just one incident after hours that caused us to miss our target for average response time to 'Priority 1 bursts and leaks'.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Number of customer complaints (per 100 customers)	0.35	0.29	< 0.6	☺
Average response time (min) to Priority 1 bursts and leaks	57	6	< 30	😐
Average response time (min) to Priority 2 bursts and leaks	23.78	36.38	< 35	☺
Customer satisfaction with 'Ease of Effort' (% of survey respondents)	96%	92%	> 89%	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

Westernport Water performs well in the outcome - Be there when I need you. Its customer service is consistently strong, and staff are easy to reach when issues arise.

We appreciate the noticeable improvements in response times for Priority 2 bursts and see the organisation as genuinely committed to resolving issues. The fact that 44% of customers don't know whether Westernport Water responds quickly to disruptions tells us the organisation is often quietly resolving issues without customers even noticing.

The Panel acknowledges Westernport Water missed its target for Priority 1 bursts and leaks response time. However, we think customers should keep in mind that there have been only three Priority 1 bursts in the last five years, meaning the average response this year is based on only one incident. We think that is important context for customers to understand when assessing Westernport Water's performance.

We commend Westernport Water for its strong customer focus and quick resolution of service issues. Regarding complaints, we suggest that there is opportunity for Westernport Water to make billing systems more user-friendly.

Overall, Westernport Water is performing well in relation to this outcome, despite missing its target for Priority 1 bursts.

Keep my essential services affordable

How we performed

We continued to help customers in need throughout the year, awarding 269 hardship grants and facilitating 432 utility relief grant payments from the Victorian Government. Overall, we connected customers to over $1M in support, including concessions, rebates, relief grants and high usage leak allowances.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Number of hardship grants approved	289	198	> 75	☺
Number of Utility Relief Grant Scheme payments	432	394	> 53	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

We believe Westernport Water is performing exceptionally well in keeping essential services affordable. We appreciate its proactive and compassionate approach to helping customers facing financial hardship.

Customers who experience payment difficulties can easily access a range of relief options including grants, flexible payment arrangements, and concessions simply by contacting Westernport Water. We also support having someone in a dedicated customer care role, which provides a valuable service to community members in need.

We recommend increasing awareness of the available support options among customers. Strengthening connections with local charities and community organisations could further help people understand what assistance is available and how to access it.

Westernport Water provides thoughtful, proactive customer care, and compassion during challenging times.

Customers cannot choose their water provider, so we are grateful that Westernport Water demonstrates such exceptional care for our community.

Customer Assessment Panel

Westernport Water is committed to transparent and honest engagement with customers and the community to ensure decisions align with customer needs, wants, and values.

As part of our promise, we have pledged to deliver the outcomes and performance sought by customers during the 2023 Price Review process and introduce a Customer Assessment Panel to provide feedback on our performance through our Annual Watermark.

The customer-led assessment of our performance is provided in this brochure and further detail is available on our website.

Scan this QR code using your smart phone to learn more of what the Customer Assessment Panel said about our performance.

Contact us for more information about our performance results for 2024-25.

1300 720 711 and select option 2 and ask to speak with our Customer Care Officer

customercare@westernportwater.com.au

westernportwater.com.au/financialassistance

2 Boys Home Road, Newhaven 3925

WESTERNPORT WATER

CUSTOMER UPDATE

Annual Watermark

Performance summary 2024-25

Take a look at how we performed in the second year of our five year plan for 2023-2028. In this Annual Watermark we provide performance information for each customer commitment, including commentary from customers who helped to assess our performance.

- High-quality drinking water ☺
- Reduce environmental impact & adapt to climate change ☺
- Resolve sewer blockages quickly ☺
- Keep water interruptions to a minimum 😐
- Be there when I need you ☺
- Keep my essential services affordable ☺

WESTERNPORT WATER

High-quality drinking water

How we performed

Customer satisfaction with the quality of drinking water has improved by 2% since 2023-24. We continued our strong performance by meeting all customer commitments relating to the delivery of high-quality drinking water. All water quality samples and audits were compliant with legislation and very few, only 0.18 customers per every 100 customers, raised a complaint about their water quality. Approximately 7 out of every 10 customers stated that they were satisfied with their drinking water.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Customers (%) satisfied with drinking water via annual telephone survey	74	72	> 68	☺
Number of water quality complaints (per 100 customers)	0.18	0.15	< 0.22	☺
Number of *Safe Drinking Water Act* non-compliances (water sampling and audit)	0	0	0	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

We believe that Westernport Water provides safe, reliable drinking water across the region. When Issues do occur, such as changes in taste or colour, staff respond and resolve these issues quickly, showing they take customer concerns seriously. We commend Westernport Water for its improvement in water quality and customer satisfaction with drinking water.

Although satisfaction is high, and growing, we think that the current 68 percent satisfaction target could be more ambitious.

Taste remains an issue for some customers. Though we generally accept and understand the variation in taste, there is an opportunity to improve education about taste variation, particularly for part-time residents and seasonal visitors.

Clearly explaining that water is safe, even if it tastes different, may help customers trust the water more and rely less on bottled water.

Overall, the Panel believes Westernport Water is performing well in this area.

Reduce environmental impact and adapt to climate change

How we performed

We delivered a 14% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions as we continue on our path toward achieving net zero by 2035. Due to drought conditions, more Class A recycled water was used, and irrigation increased at the King Raod Wastewater Treatment Plant than in 2023-24.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Nutrients Discharged to the Ocean	1.04	0.94	< 1.2	☺
Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GGE) (CO2-e tonnes) produced	5,598	5,659	< 5,974	☺
Volume of Effluent Reused	503.2	319.6	> 267	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

We think that Westernport Water is performing extremely well to reduce its environmental impact and adapt to climate change. It clearly understands its environmental responsibilities and is actively working towards ambitious emissions reduction goals.

We appreciate initiatives like installing solar panels, switching its fleet to electric vehicles, using more recycled water, offsetting emissions through revegetation projects and monitoring treated wastewater discharged to the ocean.

However, we believe that Westernport Water could improve how it communicates its positive work to customers. With 58 percent of customers reporting that they don't know whether Westernport Water is doing its bit to manage climate change, it seems the message isn't getting through. We suggest presenting information about environmental initiatives in short, easily digestible formats and promoting through various channels, both digitally and in-person.

We are also concerned that the level of nutrients discharged into the ocean per customer increased by more than 10 percent compared to last year. Although the target has been achieved, we think Westernport Water should explain to customers why the increase occurred and strive to reduce this number each year.

Westernport Water has set and is meeting ambitious targets in this area. We recommend that it continue this good work while increasing communication to raise customer awareness about these results.

Resolve sewer blockages quickly

How we performed

We understand that when something happens to our sewer network, customers expect us to respond promptly and resolve the issue as soon as possible. Over the last 12 months, we were able to cut our response and resolution times in half. From the moment we were notified, we will have a crew arrive in 27 minutes on average and have the problem fixed well within two hours.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Average time (min) to respond to Sewer Blockages	27.14	28.26	<35	☺
Average time (min) to rectify Sewer Blockages	96.30	107.08	<150	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

Westernport Water is doing an excellent job of resolving sewer blockages quickly. We appreciate that the organisation finds and fixes issues before they affect customers or the environment, and we are very impressed it achieved a response time of 27 minutes to clear blockages.

We support Westernport Water's risk-based management initiatives, like installing emergency storage tanks to minimise disruptions and using CCTV to proactively monitor lines with a history of blockages. It is pleasing that performance has improved since last year.

We want to see the organisation strive for continual improvement and maintain its proactive approach. Given the growing impact of extreme weather, staying ahead of potential issues will be important for maintaining strong performance.

Overall, Westernport Water is performing very well on this outcome, proving it is committed to reducing risks and limiting disruptions for customers.

Keep water interruptions to a minimum

How we performed

Water interruptions are a necessary part of maintaining our network. Whether for proactive maintenance reasons, such as flushing the network to ensure our water mains remain clean, or for responding to bursts or leaks. Unfortunately, we were unable to meet our target to limit the average duration of interruptions to 85 minutes. The team at Westernport Water continues to focus on initiatives to minimise the impact of water interruptions on our customers.

Our Performance	2024-25	2023-24	Target 2024-25	
Average duration of unplanned water supply interruptions	95	139	<85	😐
Number of planned & unplanned water supply interruptions (per customer)	0.4	0.4	<0.4	☺

Customer Assessment Panel

We acknowledge that Westernport Water has kept interruptions per customer low, but it hasn't met its target for the average duration of unplanned interruptions. We understand that some disruptions are unavoidable due to extreme weather, ageing infrastructure, and third-party damage.

Westernport Water showed accountability for missing this target by financially penalising itself by making a donation to a community-led cause. It is also working to reduce the number and duration of disruptions through pipe upgrades, pressure reducers, and renewal programs, and by assessing its response approach. We support Westernport Water in carrying out careful repair works and investing in the future, even if doing so has come at the expense of meeting its targets.

We also suggest that more could be done to prevent unplanned disruptions caused by third parties, such as educating contractors and the community, and enforcing stricter penalties.

We want Westernport Water to continue to strive to reduce both the number and duration of unplanned outages while maintaining customer satisfaction and not increasing costs.

Overall, we believe Westernport Water's performance on this target is acceptable given the challenges faced.