Update: Future water source planning - Albany

What is happening?

As part of our water supply planning, we are now investigating new areas for a potential future seawater desalination plant near Albany.

Large parts of the Great Southern are experiencing severe rainfall shortages. According to recent Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) data, some of the region's rainfall has been the lowest ever recorded for two years in a row.

Climate change and the increasing demand for drinking water are serious challenges. That's why we are working hard to find new water sources for the Lower Great Southern region.

Where are the new areas identified for seawater desalination investigation?

The areas are:

- **Nanarup**
- **South Coast – Sandpatch**

Why are these areas looking favourable?

Distance from Albany

The two areas are located close to Albany. Early investigations indicate we should be able to connect into the current water supply network at both locations.

Seawater desalination plants (like most water sources) need long and large water pipelines to carry the water to where it is needed.

We look to find efficient routes for pipelines and install them in areas already clear of vegetation, where possible. However, long and large pipelines usually involve some vegetation clearing and can also impact private landowners.

That's why it's usually better to have seawater desalination plants closer to where the water is needed - to help reduce environmental and social impacts.

Environmental considerations

New water infrastructure must ensure the unique and important environmental value of the South Coast region is protected.

Large areas of Albany's coastline are protected by National Parks and Nature Reserves, and with King George Sound ruled out for seawater desalination infrastructure, limited areas are available.

What happens next?

We're still in the early stages of investigating these areas. We want your feedback to help shape our next steps. Over the coming months, we'll be inviting you to share your thoughts on these areas. We want to understand what matters most to you as we plan new water infrastructure.

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WATER CORPORATION

How can I be involved?

For more information, or to sign up for updates, visit **watercorporation.com.au/LGSnewsource** or scan the QR code.

If you have questions, please contact our team at **Community.Engagement@watercorporation.com.au**

What is seawater desalination?

Seawater desalination is the process of removing salt and impurities from seawater to create fresh water suitable for drinking.

Seawater enters through a long pipeline and is screened and pre-treated to remove large particles like seaweed. The seawater is then fed through special membranes, where water molecules pass through, rejecting other components such as salt. About 40-45% of the seawater becomes fresh water for drinking and the remaining 55-60% is brine. This means brine is nearly twice as salty as the original seawater.

Our desalination plants here in WA meet stringent environmental protection criteria and are designed to have minimal impact on the surrounding environment.

Brine is carefully handled to manage any impacts. We use science and modelling to ensure brine is returned to the ocean in a way that avoids sensitive habitat (like seagrass) and dilutes back to the same salt levels as the ocean within only 10s of metres.

For faults, emergencies and security issues, call 13 13 75 (24 hours)