

# Goldenfields Water App

**COUNCIL NAME**

Goldenfields Water  
County Council

**WEB ADDRESS**

[gwcc.nsw.gov.au](http://gwcc.nsw.gov.au)

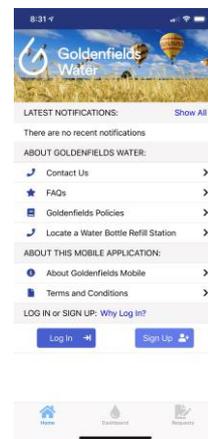
## Overview

In July 2019, Goldenfields Water released a free mobile app available that allows customers to access their real time usage data. Customers have a range of tools available including tracking usage and costs, setting consumption alerts and leak detection. In addition, users can submit service requests to notify Goldenfields Water of any issues such as leaks and can receive location-targeted notifications from Goldenfields Water such as information regarding water outages.

## Background

In 2014, Goldenfields Water installed automatic meter reading devices for all customers to provide real time usage data. Staff realised the benefits of making usage information readily available to customers to assist with managing their usage and consequent bills as well as providing an opportunity for identifying undetected leaks.

As a regional water utility, Council provides essential water supply to rural areas impacted by drought and low water security. The community's access to reliable potable water and the need to make every drop count is critical. Council anticipated the app will provide customers with the ability to successfully manage their water consumption and identify leaks or high usage early with the app's alerts capabilities.



## Implementation

Goldenfields Water formed a working group with staff from across the organisation to provide input for potential features of the app, identify potential hurdles and work together with the app developer to produce positive outcomes. Staff took the initiative and opportunity to expand the app beyond a water tracking app to include features that improved community engagement and collection of data. User Acceptance Testing was undertaken to review and improve the usability of the app prior to finalisation and release. Management of the app has been included in daily operations facilitating information to and from relevant council teams.

Goldenfields Water was successful in obtaining 50% funding for the project under the Australian Government's Smart Cities and Suburbs Program. The program was set up to deliver funding for innovative technology that improves the liveability, productivity and sustainability of towns and communities. The project was successfully delivered 10% under budget.

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The application went live in July 2019. Goldenfields Water used their media presence to promote the app through multiple media platforms. This included engaging with the local member, Hon Michael McCormack MP, to help promote the app by participating in an onsite video. The promotion of the app also included running a 6 month prize draw for members who had signed up.

## Outcomes

Goldenfields Water provides the app for free to customers (and guests) and is available on both iOS and Android platforms. The first 12 months have achieved approximately 15% sign up rate and the app has received considerable positive community feedback from users.

The app works with the automatic meter reading data to readily provide the customer with access to their water usage information. The information can be viewed as a volume or cost and can be displayed as hourly, daily, weekly, monthly or yearly periods. Customer engagement is improved with additional features including customer feedback and service request features as well as providing additional information to customers through notifications, easy access to FAQs, policies and water refill station locations.

The app is being used to full functionality with customers managing their water use, identifying leaks quickly, lodging service requests and receiving notifications. During a recent pump failure, the app was successfully used to quickly notify affected residents of the situation through targeted messaging.

## Key Learnings

The success of this project was largely due to the input of the working group which incorporated staff from across different teams working collaboratively. Given the significant benefits the app has to offer and the positive feedback received from users of the app, Council hoped to achieve a higher uptake of customer sign up at this time. A review of the media coverage shows that the promotion of the app has been adequate. However, Council anticipates customers will continue to join when they encounter an event that triggers their want/need to use the features of the app. Going forward Council will continue to promote the app to customers with the aim of achieving a majority uptake. The app will be monitored for potential improvements and continue to provide the benefits free of charge to the community.

## Contact

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**This project was the 2020 winner of the Sustainable Infrastructure Award at the LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards**