

Ms Lisa Neville,
Minister for Water,
Parliament House,
Melbourne 3000.
25 April 2019

Dear Minister,

**RE FIXING WATER WASTAGE FROM LEAKING FIRE SERVICES -
PROCESS REFORM NEEDED**

I believe the process for fixing leaking fire services should be changed. Water retailers should be required to fix leaks outside a property boundary, and charge all properties with fire services a little extra on their connection fee to pay for those repairs.

Currently owners of leaking fire services (piping to supply fire hydrants and fire sprinklers within a property) are required to fix them themselves, even if the leak is under the road outside their premises. They are responsible for the pipe all the way to the main. But they have no incentive to fix a leak outside their property because the wasted water cannot be metered. And organising traffic management and road opening permits etc is beyond the average landowner. Furthermore they likely have not caused damage to the fire service themselves, and would find it extraordinary that they are nonetheless required to fix it.

Yarra Valley Water, who has been trying to get a property owner to repair a leak I identified in January, have so far failed. I heard yesterday that negotiations with the owner have broken down, and that finally Yarra Valley Water has itself engaged a contractor to do the work, hopefully in the next few weeks. I have detailed my frustrating experience (and it must be frustrating for the Yarra Valley Water officers too) on my website at <https://www.faithfull.id.au/index.php/yarra-valley-water/1-fire-service-leakages-the-system-is-broken>, so I won't detail them here.

But in the meantime, since I first reported the leak I estimate 16 million litres of water have gone down the drain. And these 16 million litres will be replaced at considerable cost from desalinated water - I estimate \$13,000.

At a time when dam levels are dropping and we are paying millions for replacement water, surely Government should do all it can to ensure that leaks are fixed promptly, and wastage is minimized.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Faithfull

ps I will be attaching a copy of this letter to the web page I have listed above, along with a copy of your reply when it comes.
cc Yarra Valley Water