



FIRST REVERSE OSMOSIS CARTRIDGES LOADED AT DESALINATION PLANT

Monday, 21 December 2009

Sydney's \$1.9 billion desalination plant has reached its final stage – and is set to provide clean drinking water for Sydneysiders this summer.

“This is preparing for Sydney's expanding population – and guaranteeing that we have a safe and secure drinking water supply – in the face of climate change and the worst drought in a century,” Premier Kristina Keneally said.

Premier Keneally today announced Sydney's desalination plant is now 95 per cent complete with the first batch of 36,000 reverse osmosis membranes loaded into the plant's main filtration building.

“The desalination project is on budget and on time, and the plant will be ready to provide water this summer,” Ms Keneally said.

“While desalination can provide up to 15 per cent of Sydney's water supply, Sydney Water has designed the plant so it can be quickly upgraded to twice its size, if needed.

“The reverse osmosis membranes are the last, but most important pieces of the plant to be installed.

“These cartridges, the most advanced and efficient in the world, extract fresh water from seawater.

“Each membrane must be individually installed by hand because of their fragility.

“After more than two years of construction, final testing of the plant is underway to provide up to 250 million litres a day, or 15 per cent of Sydney's water needs.

“Around 5,000 people have worked on the desalination project, with 1,500 workers on the plant and pipeline each day at the peak of construction.

“The desalination plant is a powerful demonstration of the benefits of co-operation between the public and private sectors,” Ms Keneally said.

Minister for Water Phil Costa said the power needs of the desalination plant will be fully offset by renewable energy produced at the Capital Wind Farm near Bungendore.

“Construction of the 18 kilometre pipeline from the plant at Kurnell to the city's water supply is complete, with final tests and site restorations underway,” Mr Costa said.

“Along with dams, recycling and water efficiency, desalination is one of four key ways to ensure Sydney has enough water in the future,” said Mr Costa.

“By 2015 we will be recycling up to 12 per cent of Sydney's water, while water efficient devices such as taps, showerheads and washing machines will save up to 24 per cent of the water we currently use,” Mr Costa said.

The desalination plant has been built by the Blue Water Joint Venture, comprising John Holland and Veolia Water Australia.

The desalination pipeline has been built by the Water Delivery Alliance, comprising Bovis Lend Lease, McConnell Dowell, Worley Parsons, Kellogg Brown and Root, Environmental Resources Management and Sydney Water.