

Stormwater grant boost for Kulin shire

By JESSICA HAYES

THE eastern Wheatbelt town of Kulin received \$314,738 from the State Government last week as part of a \$2 million stormwater re-use scheme.

Funded by the State Government's Royalties for Regions initiative, the project will allow the town to better harvest and use stormwater and cut the cost of watering local parks and sports grounds by as much as \$200,000 a year.

As part of a State Government \$78.2m regional water and resource management initiative, the stormwater re-use pilot project saw the local government's of Merredin, York, Ningarin, Toodyay, Lake Grace and Northam receive the funding for water capture and storage infrastructure.

Agriculture and Food Minister Ken Baston presented

the Shire of Kulin with the funding during a visit last week.

Mr Baston said a number of rural communities could not afford scheme water for irrigation throughout the summer period which limited their ability to maintain parks and sports grounds.

"This two-year pilot aims to develop a local water supply by converting town run-off often considered a nuisance into quality irrigation water," Mr Baston said.

"Stormwater run-off will be captured and the town's drainage systems and water storage capacity will be upgraded."

He said the scheme would also reduce the demand on standpipe water for emergency purposes such as water for stock and fire-fighting.

According to Mr Baston, the majority of water used in towns



□ Kulin shire vice president Barry West (left), Kulin shire president Jim Sullivan, Wheatbelt NRM CEO Natarsna Woods, Agriculture and Food Minister Ken Baston and Kulin Shire CEO Greg Hadlow, at the presentation of the \$314,738 cheque by the State Government as part of its stormwater re-use scheme.

was for irrigation and not human consumption.

"So to save that precious water and yet still maintain parks and sports grounds with an alternative source, is of great value to the town and wider community," he said.

Regional Development

Minister Brendon Grylls said the projects would benefit Wheatbelt communities by improving water security and reducing scheme water reliance.

"These innovative projects will help to capitalise on water availability in our Wheatbelt towns, providing the water supply required to support town amenity and regional development in WA," he said.

Kulin Shire CEO Brad Hadlow said the shire was extremely pleased to receive the funding which would assist in drought-proofing the town for future years.

He estimated savings

between \$100,000 and \$200,000 a year in water costs in a particularly dry year.

Mr Hadlow said the advantages of maintaining the local sports grounds and parks extended beyond just sports to families and other users.

He said the Water Corporation had allowed water pipes to deteriorate to such an extent that pipes were unable to withstand pressure during dry times, which placed stress on the system.

"By reducing our reliance on scheme water in a place like Kulin, we will then allow water to get to the extremities of the comprehensive system," he said.

"This scheme is saying to other towns, harvest your stormwater and reduce the reliance on scheme water thereby ensuring a more even spread of use throughout the farm land districts."



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