



Pipeline arrived 'just in time'

When the Northern Mallee pipeline arrived at Geoff Vine's Ouyen cereal, sheep and pig farm in June 2001, they were nearly out of water.

"We only had about a week's supply left when we connected to the pipeline," he said.

Mr Vine said he had installed more than 10 kilometres of pipe to connect his 1450-hectare property to the pipeline.

He said they didn't spare any expense when installing pipes, 24 or 25 concrete troughs and tanks and had not had any problems with the system.

His system is pressurized from meter to tank with most tanks within 500 metres of the meter. The water is then gravitated to the troughs through pipes ranging from 'one and a half' down to 'one inch' diameter, delivering a good supply for up to three kilometres.

Mr Vine said he had never seen the sheep drink a trough empty.

"We thought we might have needed a little tank beside the trough but we never have," he said.

The Vines have three houses, a piggery and can run 700 to 800 sheep from the water supply system on their home block.

They installed three 31,000-litre tanks to provide water to this block but only ever use one tank at a time. They have the other two turned off and use them as a reserve supply.

Mr Vine said a big advantage of switching to a piped system was being able to fill in channels that ran through his properties.

A property towards Patchewollock had contained a main channel which had a lot of seepage problems, creating an even larger area that he was unable to crop.

"We now have an extra 10 hectares we can crop where the channel and seepage used to be," he said.

Mr Vine said another block had a channel which weaved around a 640-acre block, creating six to seven different areas to crop.

"Now it is a lot easier because it is one big, square paddock," he said.

After connecting to the pipeline he found he did not have to clean troughs as often as he had thought.

"We might clean them out once a week if they have got algae or bees in summer, it depends how they look," he said. In winter they are cleaned much less.

Mr Vine said water quality was a lot cleaner than what they used to receive via dams, and could be used for spraying.

"We used to pump water from dams to the tank but no longer have this \$2000-a-year expense," he said. "The only pump we have now is to water the garden."

Further information is available by contacting the Horsham Piping It Office on 1300 659 961 or dropping into the office at 42-44 Kalkee Road.

Last updated November 29, 2006

