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MEDIA RELEASE

BUSHFIRE SAFETY STRATEGY DEVELOPED FOR WATERFALL GULLY ROAD PROJECT

SA Water has developed a detailed set of *bushfire safety strategies* for a project to be undertaken along Waterfall Gully Road during 2010 and these strategies have been endorsed by the Country Fire Service (CFS) after a recent meeting between the two groups.

SA Water and the CFS met last week to discuss the Waterfall Gully Road Wastewater System Upgrade project with both groups keen to ensure this vital infrastructure upgrade project will be undertaken in the safest possible manner during the upcoming bushfire season.

SA Water Chief Operating Officer John Ringham said SA Water has a strong working relationship with the CFS and collaboration between the two agencies, to ensure local residents' safety during this project, was a key priority.

"The Waterfall Gully Road Wastewater System Upgrade project will address a number of infrastructure safety and system reliability issues which are currently a concern not only for our own system operators, but also for more than 60 residential customers connected to the system," Mr Ringham said.

"We understand the Waterfall Gully Road area is sensitive to the risks associated with bushfire season and I would like to reassure the local community that we will have been working in close consultation with the CFS and have taken on their bushfire safety recommendations in our guidelines.

"Some of the key strategies which have been endorsed by the CFS, which will help ensure community safety and road access during extreme bushfire days, are:

- ensuring bushfire safety protocols are written into the construction contract;
- on days the CFS deems as having a catastrophic fire risk, no work will be undertaken along the road that will impede traffic moving north or south along Waterfall Gully Road;
- on all other days of the fire danger season, strategies will be in place to ensure no more than 100 metres of the road is being excavated at once; and
- in the event of a bushfire activity along the road will cease and maximised roadway access restored; and
- fire risk and access issues will be monitored and documented daily.

"During winter there is a high risk of the existing wastewater system flooding and higher underground water levels which means we cannot undertake construction during this time. It's also important to note that while early construction activity will begin in January 2010, the majority of the work will be undertaken in the cooler autumn months.

"We have consulted with the Burnside Council and Waterfall Gully Road residents on the project and will continue to do this as it progresses.

"Further information on our bushfire safety guidelines will be sent to local residents to ensure they are up-to-date on what we are doing to minimise risks and traffic restrictions during bushfire season."

CFS Region One Commander Chris Martin said he was pleased the two organisations had been able to work together to develop a strategy to address local concerns regarding the project.

“We have been able to join in meaningful consultation with SA Water and have arrived at a solution that ensures public safety and enables SA Water to undertake their important works in a timely fashion,” he said.

“The CFS will continue to liaise with SA Water regarding this project during the Fire Danger Season.”