Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort Chooses UV Disinfection for Safe Drinking Water

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Mount Baw Baw is the closest alpine resort to Melbourne, and tends to be a visitor’s first snow and alpine experience. Located in the southern part of the Great Dividing Range, the resort tends to pick up the earlier snowfalls coming in from the south with the Antarctic winds. In the peak winter season over 3000 visitors a day are attracted to the resort, which prides itself on maintaining the natural experience, with no high rise and without large lift infrastructure to impede the experience. Even in summer large numbers of visitors are attracted to the resort to take advantage of the areas excellent trails for hiking and mountain biking.

The Victorian State Government obligates statutory authorities, parks and alpine resort management boards to provide safe, good quality drinking water to the public through the State Drinking Water Act and the State Drinking Water Regulations. For the Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort, these regulations introduced in late 2005, required them to take responsibility for treating the drinking water used in the resort.

To comply with the Act - legislation that was the first of its kind in the country, Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort sought advice from their local water authority, Gippsland Water. “Being in a pristine alpine environment we needed an environmentally friendly solution (for treating the drinking water). The UV disinfection was the simplest and most environmentally sensitive method to address all of our needs. The ecosystem in the alpine region is extremely fragile, if we were to introduce chemicals and chlorine into our environment that would threaten this fragile ecosystem. UV was the simplest and most environmentally friendly way to balance the needs of the regulators, the needs of our guests and the needs of the environment” says Scott Goss, Deputy Group Manager of Outdoor Operations, Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort.

The resort’s water source is a tributary of the east Tanjil River, which is an open catchment, high at the top of the catchment area. This natural creek flows into two storage tanks, then through 2 x 150mm pipes, then passes through the Hanovia 200F UV treatment plant before entering the distribution system for the village. The Hanovia UV is the resort’s primary mechanism against parasites or viruses in the water supply system. The UV systems flow rates vary depending on the time of year, with usage peaking in winter.

The Hanovia UV has been in place since 2007 and has proven to be extremely user friendly, with a control panel displaying
exactly what’s happening in the treatment, showing the UV dosage being administered and whether the plant is operating efficiently. “We have set parameters that we’re working within and if it falls below those parameters we can take measures to adjust the plant to make sure it’s treating our guest’s water effectively”. “The UV is relatively maintenance free, we have it serviced once a year, which involves a lamp change and a wiper replacement. It’s reasonably cost effective, even considering electricity is expensive here, but it’s a small overhead to incur for providing very high quality water to our guests” says Scott.