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## Innovative, 'keyhole surgery' technology breathes new life into water mains

Hunter Water is breathing new life into its network by using innovative European technology to provide long-term benefits to customers and the Lower Hunter community.

Crews have been busy restoring water mains throughout the region, with four projects renewing damaged or degraded pipes with an internal lining; essentially creating a 'pipe within a pipe'.

The structural liner, ideal in sensitive and difficult-to-access areas, has been used to extend the life of Hunter Water's mains while minimising disruption to the community.

Hunter Water Managing Director, Darren Cleary, said the organisation is constantly improving how it assesses and manages the condition of infrastructure across its network of more than 10,000 kilometres of water and sewer mains.

"We devote millions of dollars every year to replace or improve the pipes throughout the network as part of the \$685 million we are investing in our capital works program over the four years to 2024.

"There are many factors that can affect the pipes' longevity, including their material, construction method, the weather, ground conditions and movement, not to mention vehicle traffic.

"While condition assessment of any underground assets is not a perfect science, it is evolving with technological advancements, and we are progressively trialling smart sensors and advanced analytical programs to help our ability to prioritise our investment.

"Once we determine the need to restore a pipe, lining technology is a less invasive means of breathing new life into our pipes and it minimises the disruption for the community.

"We can line a specific section of pipe using access pits, instead of digging a trench all the way along the length of the pipe.

"In some ways, it could be likened to keyhole surgery," said Mr Cleary.

Hunter Water has used the technology to complete several projects throughout Lake Macquarie.

In Teralba, a water main under William Street, between the railway bridge and Short Street, is now back online.

Over in Cardiff, crews have completed improvements to a water main under Macquarie Road, near the busy Munibung Road intersection.

Work to remediate and reline a water main that runs adjacent to the railway line between Mary Street and Lake Road, Argenton, has also recently been completed while a water main relining will soon start at Glendale.

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