

JOINT PROJECT

# Dam site more water

By Sarah Garvis

THREE new dams are being built in Willunga and Aldinga to increase reclaimed water use in the Willunga Basin to 70 per cent by 2013.

The two Willunga dams, which are being built off Jay Drv, will be able to store 104ML and 66ML of water annually, while the Aldinga dam, near the Aldinga Aerodrome, will hold 740ML. The dams are being built as part of stage one of the \$116 million Waterproofing the South project, under a public-private partnership between the Willunga Basin Water Company (WBWC), SA Water and Onkaparinga Council.

Waterproofing the South aims to save the southern suburbs from water shortages caused by climate change and to stop waste water being pumped out to sea.

WBWC director **Kym Davey** said the new dams would supplement an existing dam in Willunga, which has a 135ML storage capacity.

Mr Davey said the company already supplied about 50 per cent of water to 110 properties between McLaren Vale and Sellicks but aimed to increase that to 65 or 70 per cent over the next four years.

The rest is supplied through groundwater and mains water. "Demand for water has risen because of the drought," he said. "These projects have been driven by people wanting to supplement groundwater



PROJECT: Willunga Basin Water Company chairman Norman Doole at the dam site. Picture: Helen Orr GUI26747

and those who need to find a mains water substitution. "We've still got a fair few properties using mains water or which are short of water."

When the dams and a \$6.8 million upgrade of the WBWC's infrastructure and pipelines are complete in four years, approximately 100 more properties will be able to connect up to the system. Mr Davey said the

WBWC used 40 per cent of effluent water coming from the Christies Beach wastewater treatment plant each year but that would increase to 60 per cent by 2013, meaning less water would be pumped out to sea.

WBWC chairman **Norman Doole** said without finding new ways to store water, local wineries and vineyards would lose millions of

dollars in revenue each year. "We need more water for premium viticulture land in McLaren Vale because some of it still isn't already serviced by reclaimed water," he said. "In order to expand, we need to have more storage during winter, when demand is lower, so we have enough water during summer. That's where the dams will help."