

Hot weather and holiday season prompts water safety reminders

As hot weather is upon us, and the school holidays about to commence, Wagga Wagga City Council and Royal Life Saving NSW (RLSNSW) are reminding residents and visitors to remain vigilant and stay safe around water.

It is important that all people, regardless of age, background, abilities and familiarity with the water practise water safety throughout the summer.

All waterways pose a constant risk, including home and public swimming pools, lakes, creeks, dams and rivers.

Council's Manager Recreation & Economic Development Ben Creighton emphasises the need for all community members to take care around water.

"This summer, like every summer, we are reminding the community to be careful around the water," Mr Creighton said.

"We would especially like to remind everyone of the risks when swimming or boating at the Murrumbidgee River.

"The river is unpredictable, with fast currents, cold water and underwater debris, all of which can create dangerous situations within seconds.

"Ensure you check the conditions before entering the water, and if you're using watercraft always wear a life jacket."

RLSNSW Riverina Manager Michael Dasey endorsed the importance of taking care around waterways.

"Be vigilant, be aware and be smart about the decisions you make around the inland waterways this summer," Mr Dasey said.

"Don't go alone, don't underestimate and don't consume alcohol or drugs prior to engaging in aquatic activities.

"Aquatic tragedies affect everyone in the community because they can be prevented.

"Learning CPR and doing a first aid course can give you the skills that could one day help you save a life."

General water safety tips:

- Learn to swim
- Teach children how to swim
- Never swim alone
- Avoid drugs and alcohol around water

- Learn lifesaving skills
- Adults should actively supervise children around water at all times.

Safety tips around natural waterways, i.e: rivers, dams, creeks:

- Check the conditions before entering the water
- If it's flooded, forget it!
- Always enter the water slowly, feet first
- Take care on uneven or slippery water edges
- Beware of submerged objects such as trees, branches, rocks and rubbish
- Remember the river can change hourly
- Wear a lifejacket.

For more information and safety tips, visit www.drowningprevention.org.au and Council's website at www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/riversafety

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

What: hear from Council and Royal Life Saving NSW about water safety this summer

Who: Wagga Wagga City Council Recreation Coordinator Josh Walsh, Strategic Recreation Officer Kadison Hofert and RLSNSW Riverina Manager Michael Dasey.

When: Monday 11 December **9:30am**

Where: Wagga Beach.

Contact 6926 9190 or media@wagga.nsw.gov.au

About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of more than \$236M.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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