

# SHIRE NEWSLETTER

Wentworth Shire Council  
The Shire Where the Two Great Rivers Meet



## HEALTH WARNING TO AVOID MOSQUITOES



NSW Health is warning residents and visitors in southern and western NSW to take extra precautions and protect themselves against mosquitoes following the detection of the Murray Valley Encephalitis (or MVE) virus in NSW.

Mayor Margaret Thomson said "the advice received from NSW Health, is reproduced to inform as many people as possible of the dangers of mosquitoes."

The MVE virus has been detected in sentinel chickens located near Leeton, Hay and Moama and approximately 100km west of Broken Hill. Sentinel chicken flocks act as a warning system for human infection by being regularly monitored for viruses that mosquitoes can transmit to

people and cause illness.

The current area of risk for MVE extends in regions west of the Great Dividing Range and is likely to be highest around rivers and wetlands, especially along the Murray, Darling, and Paroo rivers and their tributaries and in recently flooded areas in western NSW. "The increased risk of human cases is related to increasing numbers of mosquitoes that carry the virus and can transmit it to birds and occasionally people.

In mild cases, symptoms of MVE include fever, headache, nausea and vomiting and muscle aches. In more severe cases symptoms can include neck stiffness, lethargy, drowsiness, confusion, delirium, tremors, neurological problems and coma in severe cases. People with these symptoms should immediately seek medical assistance. In young children, fever might be the only early sign, so

parents should see their

doctor if concerned, and particularly if their child has convulsions, drowsiness, floppiness, irritability, poor feeding or general distress."

Mosquitoes also carry other human diseases including Ross River virus, Barmah Forest virus and Kunjin viruses that can cause fever, rash and joint pains.

Residents and visitors are cautioned to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes that carry the virus are usually most active in the hours after sunset and again around dawn. Simple steps to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes include:

- When outside cover up as much as possible with light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing and covered footwear.

*(continued on page 3)*

### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Free Help to Save Power Now Available</i>      | 2 |
| <i>Wentworth Shire's Australia Day Ambassador</i> | 2 |
| <i>Gol Gol Buronga Community Christmas Party</i>  | 3 |
| <i>Key Infrastructure Projects Now Complete</i>   | 3 |
| <i>My Thoughts</i>                                | 4 |

### Special points of interest:

- Currently on exhibition is Council's proposed temporary road closure policy, and feedback is welcomed up until 31 January 2012
- The Draft Community Strategic Plan is currently on public exhibition until 31 January 2012
- Draft Economic Development Strategy and Community Development Plans are in public exhibition and comments can be made up until 31 January 2012

## FREE HELP TO SAVE POWER NOW AVAILABLE



Cr Margaret Thomson, Mayor of the Wentworth Shire, is pleased to announce two cost free ways residents can save power and money on bills through Council's partnerships with NSW Government's energy efficiency programs.

"The Home Power Savings Program for pensioners and other low income earners provides a free home energy assessment by an expert assessor, who can show you the running costs of appliances and ways you can save," Mayor Thomson said.

"Originally launched in the Shire early December 2011, a number of local households have already taken advantage of this free service and are on their way to saving around

\$265 a year off their bills. We want as many eligible households as possible to join the program so they can also benefit from the savings," says Mayor Thomson.

"While visiting your home, the energy expert will also install power saving devices worth around \$200 – and give you tips on how you can improve the energy efficiency of your home." says Mayor Thomson.

Wentworth Shire residents who are not eligible for the Home Power Savings Program can now also learn how to save power by borrowing a DIY *Save Power Kit* from any Wentworth Shire Council library. The kits are available without charge to any library member.

The *Save Power Kit* contains tools and instructions that can help borrowers find ways to save power, reduce power bills and most importantly reduce their impact on the environment.

The kits include a Power-Mate, thermometer, compass, stop watch, action plan and guidebook to help you measure power use around the home and

identify opportunities to save.

"The kits are fun to use and the kids can join in your search for power savings by using the compass to determine the north and west facing windows in your home and the stop watch for timing showers and flow rates of shower heads," says Mayor Thomson.

The Home Power Savings Program and the *Save Power Kits*, developed by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) are the latest in a series of education initiatives to help NSW householders save money on bills.

Eligible concession card holders wanting to take part in the Home Power Savings Program can call 1300 662 416.

Visit [www.savepower.nsw.gov.au](http://www.savepower.nsw.gov.au) for more information on these and other Save Power programs.

## WENTWORTH SHIRE ANNOUNCES AUSTRALIA DAY AMBASSADOR 2012

Andrew Heslop, the founder of Neighbour Day has been named the Wentworth Shire's Australia Day Ambassador for 2012.

The slogan for Neighbour Day is 'The Community you want starts at your front door' and it has been celebrated annually since 2003. Andrew founded Neighbour Day, in response to the sense of loss and shock within a Melbourne community following the discovery of an elderly woman's body, some 2 years after her death. The woman died at home and alone. No-one in her extended family or local community were aware of her death nor had they missed her presence in their community.

Professionally, Andrew is an accomplished marketing, communications executive, media spokesman and professional speaker. He has worked extensively for the Australian Red Cross and British Red Cross, developing and launching major fundraising appeals. Andrew has a strong commitment to community, and acknowledges the community's collective ability to create and drive change. Andrew believes we all have a responsibility, as members of a community, to look out for each other in good times and in bad.



Image courtesy of John McRae

(continued on page 4)

## GOL GOL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY



The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual non-for-profit Gol Gol Buronga Community Christmas Party was held on December 18 2011 at the Gol Gol Hotel.

Families and friends gathered and enjoyed music by '2ROCKU', jumping castles, piñatas and catching up with what has happened over the past 12 months.

A small but dedicated group of volunteers donated their time, energy and resources in gaining sponsorship from

very generous local business houses who are listed in the full story on the Wentworth Shire Council website ([www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au)).

The highlight of the evening was Santa and his Elves arrival on Harley Davidson motorbikes escorted by the local Golly Hogs.

Surplus funds raised by the non-for-profit committee will be re-invested back into the community.



*Story & photos courtesy of Fiona Riordan*

## HEALTH WARNING TO AVOID MOSQUITOES

*Continued from page 1*

- Use an effective repellent on all exposed skin. Re-apply repellent within a few hours, as protection wears off from perspiration, particularly on hot nights. The best mosquito repellents contain Diethyl Toluamide (DEET) or Picaridin.
- The stronger the concentration of an insect repellent, the less frequently it will need to be applied to stop mosquito bites. Repellents containing low concentrations of DEET or Picaridin provide shorter periods of protection and need to be reapplied more frequently so it's important to read the product information.
- Topical repellents are not recommended for use on children under 3 months. Use of physical barriers such as netting of prams, cots and play areas is preferred. Repellents containing less than 10% DEET or Picaridin are safe for older children if applied according instructions. Parents or carers should apply repellent.

- Light mosquito coils or use vapourising mats indoors. Devices that use light to attract and electrocute insects are not effective.
- Cover all windows, doors, vents and other entrances with insect screens.
- When camping, use flyscreens on caravans and tents or sleep under mosquito nets.

There is no specific treatment for these viruses, so prevention depends on avoiding mosquito bites, especially in the summer and autumn months when infections peak.

For a copy of the NSW Health fact sheet on Murray River Encephalitis (MVE) virus, Ross River Fever or Barmah Forest virus go to:

[http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/murray\\_valley\\_enceph.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/murray_valley_enceph.html)

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/rossriver.html>

[http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/barmah\\_forest\\_virus.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/barmah_forest_virus.html)

## KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS NOW COMPLETE

The Wentworth Shire Council received over \$140,000 in grants from the Australian Government Regional and Local Government Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) in 2010-2011 to undertake power upgrades at three sites within the Shire:

- Buronga Caravan Park
- George Gordon Oval, Dareton
- Wentworth Showgrounds

These key infrastructure projects are now complete and bring important, long term economic benefits to our community and supports local businesses and local employment during the construction phase.

A further two major projects :

- Dareton Town Square
- Wentworth Wharf

valued at over \$400,000, funded under the RLCIP and other state grants will be completed early in 2012.

## Wentworth Shire Council

The Shire Where the Two Great Rivers Meet

### Shire Offices:

26-28 Adelaide Street Wentworth NSW 2648

or

PO Box 81 Wentworth NSW 2648

Phone: 03 5027 5027

Fax: 03 5027 5000

email: council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au

### Libraries:-

Wentworth: (03) 5027 5060

Dareton: (03) 5027 4258

Buronga: (03) 5023 3078

### Shire After Hours Emergency Number:

(03) 5027 5091 (Marshall Security)

For all water, sewerage, rubbish tip hours, emergency dog matters, stray stock and cemetery emergencies.

We're on the Web:

[www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au)

## Next Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 February 2012 at 9am.

## WENTWORTH SHIRE AUSTRALIA DAY AMBASSADOR 2012

*Continued from page 2*

“Wentworth Shire residents are proud of the connected communities in which we live and the way our communities work together in times of need.” says Margaret Thomson, Mayor of the Wentworth Shire. “Andrew Heslop is a highly respected Australian who has an important message to share with us on Australia Day about being an active member of your community.”

The Wentworth Shire Australia Day Celebrations will be held at the following locations and times:

- Buronga Wetlands – Community BBQ Breakfast – from 7.45am
- Junction Park, Wentworth – Wentworth Shire Australia Day Awards – Community Lunch – from 10.30am
- Senior Citizens Rooms, Dareton – Community Afternoon with local entertainment from 3pm

All residents and visitors to the Wentworth Shire are invited to attend any of these Australia Day Celebrations.



# Australia Day

## My Thoughts

Wentworth Shire Council is committed to improve its services and “My Thoughts” is a valuable way of providing feedback to Councillors and staff. Take the opportunity to write your thoughts down in the area below and drop it into one of Council’s libraries in Wentworth, Buronga or Dareton, Visitors Information Centre or the main Council Offices in Wentworth or simply pass it onto a staff member or Councillor.

As a resident/ratepayer of the Wentworth Shire, I would like to offer my thoughts:-

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

If you provide a name and address on the following lines we will write back to you with a response within 10 days. In that time your request may be attended to in full and, if not possible, you will be advised as to the action to be taken.

Name: ..... Phone: .....

Address: .....

Date: .....

“My Thoughts” may be ideas, complaints, requests for information or action, observations, comments or questions. If the space provided is insufficient attach your additional information to the back of this page.

Peter Kozlowski, General Manager