Rural Health Week Set to Return in 2009

Rural communities throughout Tasmania are invited to participate in the second Rural Health Week, to be held from 9-15 November.

Rural Health Week is a major health promotion initiative that will provide communities with an opportunity to identify important health issues and to address those issues through innovative health promotion activities. It aims to increase awareness about rural health issues and the importance of a preventative approach to health and healthy lifestyle choices.

Rural Health Week was first held in 2007 at a time of considerable change within the Tasmanian health care system. The development of Future Health, Tasmania’s health plan, was underpinned by a primary health care approach which encouraged community participation in the planning of health care services and a greater focus on health promotion and illness prevention. In this respect, Rural Health Week was timely, as it was concerned with both these things.

The evaluation of Rural Health Week 2007 highlighted some unforeseen benefits. Many communities staged events and activities which improved access to social support networks and enhanced the social environment, both of which are critical factors in maintaining good health and wellbeing.

The theme of this year’s Rural Health Week is Health and Wellbeing: Sustaining Rural Tasmania. It aims to link environmental, economic and social sustainability with vibrant and healthy rural communities. Seed funding will again be available, with a maximum amount of $2,500. A key activity of Rural Health Week will be the presentation of the Tasmanian Rural Health Awards on 15 November. Communities will be invited to nominate health professionals and workers, individuals, and groups whose work has made a significant difference to the health and wellbeing of people in their community.

To register your interest, contact Karla Peek at the Department of Rural Health on 6324 4012, or email K.Peek@utas.edu.au.

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In order to minimise health and safety risks, Local Government and works officers are reminded of the general OHS construction induction laws outlined in the 2009 edition of the National Guide to Public Works & Services Safety, distributed in February to all councils across Australia.

The new laws, which took effect 1 July 2008, specify that a person must not do construction work at a workplace unless they are registered, or taken to be registered, to perform that work. The safety guide explores the reasons for the new laws and details what a site induction should include to minimise health and safety risks.

Mark Turner, Executive Manager, Institute of Public Works and Services Safety (NSW), believes the chart to be an excellent method of introducing new staff to safety and for ongoing training for existing staff. “Accident investigations often reveal the common factor is complacency towards safety,” said Mr Turner. “Bright visual cues, like the guide, are a great step towards keeping workplace safety in the front of everyone’s mind. Remember, workplace safety is everyone’s responsibility,” he said. By displaying the chart prominently, employees have a daily reminder and employers are reducing the cost of workplace accidents, illness and injury.

Copies of the guide are available free of charge by calling (02) 8272 2611, or visit www.provisual.com.au.
Tasmania’s Local Government Leaders

Meet Tasmania’s Local Government leaders from councils across the state. If you struggle to recall who’s who at Local Government meetings and events, tear these pages out and keep them as a handy reference.

**Break O’Day Council**
PO Box 21, ST HELENS 7216
Phone: 6376 7900  Fax: 6376 1551

Mayor Robert Legge  GM Tony Walker

**Central Coast Council**
PO Box 220, ULVERSTONE 7315
Phone: 6429 8900  Fax: 6425 1224

Mayor Michael Downie  GM Sandra Ayton

**Central Highlands Council**
PO Box 20, HAMILTON 7140
Phone: 6286 3202  Fax: 6286 3334

Mayor Deirdre Flint  GM Lyn Eyles

**Brighton Council**
1 Tivoli Road, GAGEBROOK 7030
Phone: 6263 0333  Fax: 6263 0313

Mayor Tony Foster  GM Ron Sanderson

**Burnie City Council**
PO Box 973, BURNIE 7320
Phone: 6430 5700  Fax: 6431 3896

Mayor Alvwyn Boyd  GM Paul Arnold

**Circular Head Council**
PO Box 348, SMITHTON 7330
Phone: 6452 4800  Fax: 6452 4861

Mayor Daryl Quilliam  GM Greg Winton
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<td>Mayor Jock Campbell</td>
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<td>Mayor Carol Cox</td>
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<td>Mayor Doug Burt</td>
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<td>Mayor Lynn Laycock</td>
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<td>Mayor Bertrand Cadart</td>
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<td>Mayor Peter Partridge</td>
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Tasmania’s Local Government Leaders

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Phone: 6397 7303  Fax: 6397 7331

Mayor Kim Polley  GM Mark Pitt

**Waratah-Wynyard Council**
PO Box 168, WYNYARD 7325
Phone: 6443 8333  Fax: 6443 8383

Mayor Kevin Hyland  GM Greg Winton

**Sorell Council**
PO Box 126, SORELL 7172
Phone: 6269 0000  Fax: 6269 0014

Mayor Carmel Torenius  GM Bill Costin

**West Coast Council**
PO Box 40, ZEEHAN 7469
Phone: 6471 4700  Fax: 6471 4720

Mayor Darryl Gerrity  GM Peter Harder

**Southern Midlands Council**
PO Box 21, OATLANDS 7120
Phone: 6254 5000  Fax: 6254 5014

Mayor Tony Bisdee  GM Tim Kirkwood

**West Tamar Council**
PO Box 59, BEACONSFIELD 7270
Phone: 6383 6350  Fax: 6383 6384

Mayor Barry Easther  GM Ian Pearce

**Tasman Council**
Council Chambers, NUBEENA 7184
Phone: 6251 2400  Fax: 6251 2420

Mayor Jan Barwick  GM Michael Boyd
health and wellbeing

Children’s Park Gets the Green Light

A unique children’s play park that educates our youth about road safety and promotes physical activity was the State Winner of 2008 Heart Foundation Local Government Awards.

Derwent Valley Council was the State Category Winner and the State Overall Winner for the implementation of the Children’s Road Safety Bike Track in Tynwald Park. The track is a scaled down version of road networks complete with a roundabout, traffic lights, road signs, road markings and a novelty petrol bowser. The park is open to the public at all times, providing a physical activity based facility that is educational, family oriented and suitable for children of all ages.

Since 1992, the Heart Foundation has provided an opportunity for councils to celebrate their achievements and seek recognition for their valued contribution to creating healthy communities through the Local Government Awards. Heart Foundation Tasmania Chief Executive Officer, Graeme Lynch, says cardiovascular disease continues to be the leading cause of death in Australia, accounting for 34% of all deaths in 20061.

Outdoor Workers Now Safer at Work

Tasmanian building and construction employees will now be safer from overexposure to the sun’s deadly UV rays in the workplace following the launch of Tasmania’s first industry-wide education program to create sun safe workplaces.

Sun Safe Workplace is a major educational campaign for workers in the building and construction industry to promote protection against harmful effects of solar UV exposure. The initiative was launched by Cancer Council Tasmania in January, in conjunction with the Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board (TBCITB), Work Cover Tasmania and the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

Cancer Council Tasmania CEO Lawson Ride said outdoor workers were at greater risk of developing skin cancer than others due to greater sun exposure. “Workers and their employers must recognise that the sun is potentially as toxic and deadly as chemicals or heavy machinery,” he said. “Outdoor workers can die from skin cancer caused by sun exposure at work.”

Currently, there are 1.2 million outdoor workers nationwide. In Tasmania alone, around 800 workers are diagnosed with skin cancer each year. Skin damage from the sun is permanent and irreversible, and increases with each exposure. About 34,000 skin cancers and 200 melanomas are caused by sun exposure in the Australian workplace every year.

“We know how to prevent skin cancer so there’s no reason why outdoor workers have to be at more risk of developing skin cancer than other workers,” he said.

Sun Safe Workplace incorporates on-line and face-to-face training for management and OH & S personnel to adopt sun protection programs in their workplaces.

For enquiries, contact Kay Gunn at Cancer Council Tasmania on 6233 8470.
Help Your Community Get Active - It’s Easy!

With 69% of Tasmania’s adult population not sufficiently physically active to achieve health benefits, it is becoming more urgent for Local Government to promote physical activity in their communities.

Common barriers to physical activity include lack of time, lack of companions to be active with, and the perception that physical activity is expensive, or that it may require travelling to a venue and/or using special equipment.

Walking can overcome these barriers as it is free, can be done from your own front door; requires no equipment other than a pair of shoes and people can walk with their friends, family, colleagues, the dog...or even as a way of meeting new people.

The Heart Foundation Tasmania is encouraging councils to implement Heart Foundation Walking groups in their local communities. Heart Foundation Walking is a free program used to motivate and provide incentives for people to walk on a regular basis and to build community spirit.

Heart Foundation Walking group in Launceston, the Monday Motley Crew

Area coordinators, who may be from councils, workplaces or health and community centres, work with the Heart Foundation to assist volunteer walk organisers to recruit walkers and establish groups in their communities. Walk organisers then lead groups in their local area. These organisers are provided with resources, training and support to begin and maintain their group. 

If you would like to establish Heart Foundation Walking in your area, contact Sally Bush on 6336 5116, or email Sally.Bush@heartfoundation.org.au.

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