

Email newsletter produced by THE Irrigation Association OF Australia LTD

BACKWASH



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Online Poll Results

Results of July Online Poll: does your company provide safe work method statements?
In the last edition of Backwash we did an online survey on use of Safe Work Method Statements

(SWMS) in the irrigation industry. The answers are in and, as a result, the IAA has decided to develop an irrigation-industry-specific SWMS tool available only to members and accessible online by the end of 2007.

How did you respond?

Sixty-five per cent of members are using SWMS and, of those who do not, 65% would be interested in using an industry-based form. Responses were received from all states and territories with the exception of Tasmania.

Of concern is the fact that 35% of members are not using this type of form. Workers' compensation legislation in all states and territories require employers to ensure a safe workplace, and a SWMS provides documented evidence of adherence to that requirement.

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BOARD NEWS

Irrigation Australia branding. The development of a new logo and association branding is underway and will be launched shortly after the ANCID conference and AGM in late August. Look out for the new logo as well as a new design for the journal, Backwash, website and other material over the coming months. As part of this process the Irrigation Australia website is being completely redesigned and the board welcomes suggestions from members on what features and information they would like to see on the site.

Board meeting. The Board is meeting in Caloundra this week to coincide with the graduation dinner for the second Irrigation Training Australia Retail Sales Course. Among other issues the board will be discussing are the merger with ANCID and further developments on the Prime Ministers' National Plan for Water Security.

New IDO positions. The IAA has been successful in seeking funding for 3 additional Industry Development Officer positions. If the necessary industry funds can be found, this will build the IDO network from 4 to 7 and provide further support and services to members and the industry. There is a position in South Australia, one probably in Victoria and a national role for the urban industry. The positions are due to start later this year and anyone interested should contact Jolyon Burnett.

Irrigation Australia journal. The spring edition of the journal will be mailed out mid August. As well as the usual comprehensive roundup of industry news and information, this edition features micro irrigation.

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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

News on activities from regional committees around Australia. You can keep up with IAA and industry news in your area and have your say about the future of your industry by attending local events and meetings. Brief reports of regional are given below. Contact your region to see how you can get involved or contact the IAA head office to find your local IAA regional representative.

NT. For information on activities in NT or to get involved with the local committee, contact Peter Giles at Oasis Irrigation, phone 08 8932 4141, email petergiles@oasisirrigation.com.au

South Australia. Next meeting is 3.30pm, 14 August at Urrbrae Hort centre, room R.01 (Irrigation training room).

A reminder to add to your diaries the Riverland field days 19 & 20 September, at Barmera. A feature is the Improving Irrigation Efficiency project, Irrigation Efficiency Avenue, which consists of irrigation related businesses dedicated to irrigation technology and efficiency.

South East Queensland. Next meeting is Tuesday 14 August at Landcentre, Woolloongabba starting at 5.15 pm. Please come along and have your say. For information contact the secretariat, phone 0413 334 679, email secy.seq@irrigation.org.au.

Darling Downs. Date of next meeting to be advised. For information contact David Wigginton, phone 07 48311711, mobile 0427 789 498, email: wiggind@usq.edu.au.

North Queensland. Date of next meeting to be advised. For information about the committee's activities contact Barbara Moloney, phone 07 4721 5811, email barbara.moloney@irrigation.org.au

Northwest NSW. Next meeting Thursday 23 August. The committee's last meeting included a discussion with the local CMA about potential funding for a water use efficiency project in the Namoi Valley. Chairman, Peter Taylor, says that things are otherwise pretty quiet with surface water allocations at zero until a flood event occurs to run water to Broken Hill through the Darling River system.

Melbourne. For information about the region's next meeting contact Des Horton, phone 03 9313 8508, email dhorton@citywestwater.com.au

Western Australia. Next executive meeting is 7:30 am Tuesday 21 August at the Metro Inn, South Perth. The region is busy putting final touches to the Biennial Irrigation Expo, being held 8 August at Burswood on Swan. For more information on WA activities contact Doug Hall, the WA Region's Industry Development Officer (ph: 08 9474 9089; mobile 0407 701 513; or email doug.hall@irrigation.org.au).

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MEMBERSHIP

With Australia in the grip of the worst drought on record, irrigators in many areas facing zero allocations and all capital cities except Darwin on water restrictions, these are challenging times for the irrigation industry. At times like these a strong industry association is vital to ensure that policies and programs that provide a sustainable future for your business is supported.

Do you know someone in the industry in Australia who isn't a member? Why not approach them and give them an application form. Regional committees are encouraged to contact new members and make sure they are invited to the next regional event. New members can find the contact details of all regional committees on the IAA website www.irrigation.org.au. Do your bit to encourage membership from businesses you deal with.

Welcome to new members for July:

- Stephen Attard, Farm Management Solutions, Giru Qld
- Tracey Barzlay, RB Irrigation Technology Pty Ltd, Mudgee NSW
- Nigel Bourn, Total Eden Rockingham, Warnbro WA
- Stephen Buckland, Hydro Tasmania Consulting, Melbourne Vic
- Mark Curtis, Curtis Barrier Pty Ltd, Epping NSW
- Shaun Hoffmann, Addwater Reticulation, Atwell WA
- John Oneile, Plastic Engineering Pty Ltd, Mackay Qld
- Craig Picklum, Mudgee Landscaping & Horticultural Services, Mudgee NSW
- Nic Russell, Landscapes WA Pty Ltd, Malaga WA
- Justin Schultz, EA Systems Pty Ltd, Toowoomba Qld
- Jerrod Shields, Tamworth NSW

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Numbers certified. Since the middle of March this year the IAA's new certification program has really taken off. From having no-one through certification in just four months there are:

8 Certified Irrigation Agronomists (and at least another 8 organising the paperwork)
33 Certified Irrigation Managers (congratulations to Sunraysia TAFE and Select Harvest for the biggest group yet)
3 Certified Irrigation Operators (and lots more currently undergoing training in SEQ)
2 Certified Irrigation Contractors (and we aren't even promoting this one yet)
14 Certified Irrigation Installers (and the same number again in the process)
53 Certified Irrigation Retailers (and another 30 or so undergoing training on the Sunshine Coast)
That's a total of 113 irrigation professionals who have taken advantage of the IAA's new certification program in just four months. Congratulations to you all and those who have helped you to cover the necessary skills. The program is now being noticed in the most unexpected places. We have lift-off!

Another Irrigation Operator Certification course for the Gold Coast. Certified Irrigation Operator workshops are proving a big hit on the Gold Coast with a second workshop series being held in August. The Gold Coast Council has recognised the value of certification and is a major supporter. When participants finish the program they receive their certification to show that they have completed all the requirements of the Certified Irrigation Operator program. For information about becoming a certified irrigation operator, contact the IAA SEQ regional secretary, phone 0413 334

New CIDs. Congratulations to: David Bedingfeld, Philip Darragh; Gregory Collins; Scott Johnstone; James Curran; Marty Napier; Damian Cullen, and Matthew Delbecque, all of whom successfully completed their CID exams.
679 email secy.seq@irrigation.org.au

Last chance for CIDs to renew membership. If you haven't submitted your 2007 CID renewal form and payment by 6 August 2007 your details will be removed from the IAA website. You will remain INACTIVE in our database until you send your renewal form and payment in. A letter will be sent to all CIDs informing them of their status.

2007 course dates Certified Irrigation Auditor Landscape. The Certified Auditor program is aimed at anyone responsible for or operating a commercial or public irrigation system. The

program provides training in basic irrigation system operation and scheduling and the process for determining the uniformity and efficiency of the system. With increasing scrutiny of system operation and often regulatory requirements to meet water saving targets, this course is a must for sporting bodies, local councils and irrigation contractors. Dates for 2007 Certified Irrigation Auditor Landscape courses are:

Adelaide. 9 & 10 October
Brisbane. 22 & 23 August
Sydney. 19 & 20 September
Perth. 22 & 23 August
Melbourne. 5 & 6 September

Extra courses run on demand. For information and to register contact Catherine Parbery, IAA head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email certification@irrigation.org.au

Urban Best Management Practice Guidelines. The essential guide for the commercial irrigation sector. Your concise guide to best management practice for designing, installing, maintaining, and operating irrigation systems in an urban setting. The Guidelines now include a handy checklist for assessing system compliance. Get your copy now from the IAA: \$22.00 inc. GST for members and \$33.00 inc. GST for non members. Call 02 9476 0142 to order your copy.

A simpler document aimed at the home gardener has also been produced. This would be suitable for IAA members to distribute to the general public and domestic customers and a print ready version can be downloaded from the IAA website at <http://www.irrigation.org.au/download/standards/Home%20Gardener%20FINAL%20web.pdf>

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AROUND INDUSTRY

Another twist in water plan saga. Just when people were thinking that the Federal and Victoria governments were close to agreement on legislation for the National Plan for Water Security, the Prime Minister announced last week that the Commonwealth would be taking over the Murray-Darling Basin system. With Steve Bracks resigning as Premier of Victoria for personal reasons, Victoria challenging the takeover in the High Court, the Queensland Nationals withdrawing support, and claims that the Commonwealth is looking to privatise the water supply it's hard to know whether we are making progress or going back to the drawing board! .

Outdoor restrictions in SA. In July, SA residents who get their water from the River Murray had their first experience of Level 3 water restrictions, which include a ban on household sprinklers, hoses and watering systems. These restrictions are associated with the agreement on water sharing negotiated between the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian governments. For information go to http://www.sawater.com.au/NR/rdonlyres/513F2D2F-4460-4993-BCAA-F77D1B4D8BCC/0/Domestic_watering_hold_july.pdf

How much water do we have to use? Apparently we don't know how much useable water there is in habitable parts of Australia. To find out the Murray Darling Basin Commission is setting up a panel of expert water consultants on call for a National Water Accounting Development Project overseen by a water accounting department committee under the National Water Initiative guidelines.

SA allocations increased. South Australian River Murray water allocations have been increased from 4 to 13% from 2 August for the 2007-08 water year, and carryover will be allocated in full (30 GL). This increase is a result of recent improvements in South Australia's share of the total water available under the sharing arrangements agreed by the Prime Minister and State ministers.

Irrigation water by spring says GMW. Goulburn-Murray Water has told its irrigators on the Goulburn and Murray systems that they will have irrigation water by the early spring if current inflows continue. Although GMW's opening allocations for the 2007/08 irrigation season were zero across all northern systems, with essential needs and carryover on the two systems now fully covered and inflows into storages as a result of rain in July, the outlook is more optimistic.

Victoria's irrigators unhappy with pipeline. Irrigators in Victoria aren't impressed the State Government's plan to build a pipeline to take water from the Goulburn Valley to Melbourne. The pipeline is part of a project that will fund a \$2.2 billion upgrade of Goulburn-Murray Water's infrastructure. In return 75,000 ML of the annual water savings made are to go to Melbourne.

River red gums need lifeline. Victoria's Environmental Assessment Council has just recommended that without more water and attention to their health, the continued existence of Murray River's river red gum forests will be threatened. Council chairman Duncan Malcolm, former IAA national board chair, said the health of vegetation along the Murray, including the world's two largest river red gum forests, was a lot worse than expected and that 75% of the trees were "dangerously stressed". Recommendations made included establishing four new national parks, ensuring adequate water for the gums and cutting the amount of commercial timber allowed to be harvested.

Rain Bird announces Intelligent Use of Water Award. Rain Bird Corporation has announced its The Intelligent Use of Water Award to bring greater recognition to outstanding contributions by individuals and/or organisations towards the advancement of landscape water conservation. The award seeks to bring about a greater knowledge and awareness of the need for water conservation by honouring people or organisations whose innovation, leadership, ingenuity and overall commitment to improved landscape water efficiency has raised the standard for outdoor water conservation. The winner will receive US\$10,000 and a trip to the 2008 Tournament of Roses Parade in Los Angeles. They will be required to present their award-winning water conservation case study as a featured panellist during Rain Bird's year-end Intelligent Use of Water Summit held in Pasadena, California. For information go to www.rainbird.com/awards

Alesco pays \$250m for water business. In a show of confidence in the water and irrigation sectors, industrial products supplier, Alesco Corporation Ltd, has announced that it is expanding by buying the Total Eden McCracken's water management business from AMP Capital Investors. Alesco is a supplier of garage doors and kitchen sinks and said that it expects to generate about 20% of future revenue from its new water business.

John Deere takeover of Plastro? It's been reported that US agricultural equipment giant John Deere is talking with Gvat Agriculture and Business Ltd, which owns a controlling share of Plastro, about taking over the company. According to an item in the latest New Ag International, the buyout will happen in two stages. Kibbutz Gvat, which holds Plastro through Gvat Agriculture and Business, will acquire the public's stake giving it 100% ownership, and then John Deere will acquire Gvat Agriculture. The offer is contingent on approval by Kibbutz Gvat's members.

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PEOPLE

New appointments at Naandan. Naandan Australia has appointed Chris Lloyd as its new South Australia/Sunraysia Regional Manager and Roy Pinto as the new Western Australia State Manager. Chris has extensive experience in the landscaping industry and several years of experience in the retail industry. Roy has spent the last 20 years in the industry, running his own business in irrigation and landscape. To contact them: Chris Lloyd, phone 0428 395 684, email clloyd@naandan.com.au; and Roy Pinto, phone 0408 371 056, email rpinto@naandan.com.au

IAA member leaves university. Long time IAA member and former national board director, Dr Geoff Connellan, has called it a day at the University of Melbourne's Burnley College, where he has taught and researched for 30 years. Geoff isn't giving up his interest in water, however, and will continue to work in urban water management and have ongoing involvement with the University of Melbourne through the Household Garden Watering project (being conducted at Burnley) funded by the Smart Water Fund. Good luck from the IAA as you move to pastures new, Geoff.

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JOB SPOT

Trainee Irrigation Designer. Netafim is looking for a trainee irrigation designer, to be based in Adelaide. If you have a passion about horticulture and agriculture, then this could be your dream job. Applicants will need a minimum of HSC with good grades in maths and physics; good communication skills; the ability to deal with all levels of people and good computer skills. A relevant degree or studying towards completion of a degree is an added advantage. This is an exciting career opportunity, supported by continuous learning and developmental opportunities. Send your application to: Human Resources Manager, Netafim Australia, PO Box 248, Laverton North Vic 3026; fax: 03 9369 3865; email: recruitment@netafim.com.au

Initial enquiries can be made to Gennaro Vellotti, Design Office Manager, phone 08 8267 4222.

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FOR THE DIARY

Certified Irrigation Auditor Landscape courses. Dates for courses in 2007 are:

Adelaide. 9 & 10 October
Brisbane. 22 & 23 August
Sydney. 19 & 20 September
Perth. 22 & 23 August
Melbourne. 5 & 6 September

Extra courses run on demand. For information and to register contact Catherine Parbery, IAA head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email certification@irrigation.org.au

Irrigation Australia Conference and Exhibition 2008. To be held 20 - 22 May 2008 at Melbourne Exhibition Centre. The biennial event is off to a terrific start with 70% of exhibition

space already booked. Jolyon Burnett, IAA CEO, says that the National Plan for Water Security is a great opportunity for the irrigation industry to demonstrate that it uses smart technology and we have the most efficient systems. For bookings or information, contact Event Manager Robby Clark, phone 02 9556 7992, email irrigation@eft.com.au or visit the website www.irrigationaustralia.com.au

CGS Groundwater short courses. For information on courses go to groundwater.com.au

ANCID Conference. Being held 19 - 22 August at Bundaberg. Theme is Sharing the water: food, fibre, people and environment. Organisers are looking for people to present papers and posters. To find out more or to register go to website www.ancid.org.au

Riverland field days 19 & 20 September. Field day site Barmera. Featuring the Improving Irrigation Efficiency project - Irrigation Efficiency Avenue, consisting of irrigation related businesses dedicated to irrigation technology and efficiency.

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SMART APPROVED WATERMARK UPDATE

Smart WaterMark scheme has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sydney Water and The Water Corporation to ensure effective joint working to promote water conservation. The signing of the MOU coincides with the release of the WA 2007 State Water Plan and roll-out of the new Waterwise Rebate Program, which came into effect in July. The Waterwise Program uses both the Smart WaterMark approval for outdoor products and WELS rating for indoor products as criteria for rebates.

The Smart WaterMark independent Technical Expert Panel next meets in September, and applications for the next round close 24 August.

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HANDY LINKS

Irrigation portal. ANCID has developed a website portal to centralise information on irrigation in Australia. The website includes information on best practice, innovation and technology, case studies, water trading, policy, regulations, research and education. Check it out at <http://www.irrigate.net.au/>

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BOOKSHOP

A wide range of irrigation related books and other publications are available for the IAA On-Line Bookshop. Just visit www.irrigation.org.au.

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

Backwash is a monthly newsletter published by the [Irrigation Association of Australia](#) reporting on developments in the irrigation and related industries. For more information or to contribute article ideas contact: catherine.parbery@irrigation.org.au

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