

# BACKWASH

Irrigation Australia  
National Office  
PO Box 1804  
Hornsby NSW 1635 Australia  
P: 02 94760142  
E: [info@irrigationaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@irrigationaustralia.org.au)

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No. 11, November 2007 < [www.irrigation.org.au](http://www.irrigation.org.au) >

IA national office, PO Box 1804, Hornsby NSW 1635

Phone: 02 9476 0142 Email: [info@irrigation.org.au](mailto:info@irrigation.org.au)

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Want to print this newsletter? A printer-friendly version is on the IAL website,  
<http://www.irrigation.org.au/backwash/Backwashnovember-1107.pdf>

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## BOARD NEWS

**Board teleconference.** The Irrigation Australia interim board met by teleconference last week. A draft of a new constitution, including a restructuring of membership classes, was progressed.

The board is aiming to have a draft for comment by the membership by the end of the year. Members will vote on the new constitution at the 2008 AGM.

**New members take the record.** A record number of 41 new members were accepted by at the board meeting, bringing the total for the year to 97. There has been strong growth in WA due to the Waterwise program, and the increased profile of the new organisation appears to be encouraging renewed interest.

**Special interest groups.** The board approved the establishment of Special Interest Groups within the membership aimed at providing a focus for discussion, networking and activity on areas of particular interest to sections of the membership. Groups around groundwater and drip irrigation are already being discussed. Guidelines for the groups will be developed in the near future.

**ICID conference.** IAL Chair, Stephen Mills; CEO, Jolyon Burnett; and Project Officer, Kim Russell, were among a delegation of more than 25 Australians who attended the International Committee on Irrigation & Drainage Conference and Executive Council meeting in San Diego last month. The conference ran over three days and involved over 50 presentations across a variety of themes including: modernising irrigation system operation; technical advances in on-farm irrigation; justifying continued investment in irrigation; and management of on-farm systems. The level of presentations varied and the Australian presentations were consistently high quality.

**New IAL projects.** IAL continues to strengthen its relationship with government and has been awarded contracts to: investigate the capacity of rural water service providers to report against the National Water Commission developed performance reporting guidelines; develop training and certification to support the NWI roll out of water metering; and help Australia's irrigation sector to undertake an overarching project that will help to develop strategies to better position the industry as part of the solution to Australia's water crisis and for sustainable food and fibre production.

**IAL info.** Contact the IAL national office for information about Irrigation Australia. Your IAL interim board members are:

Stephen Mills □ chair Peter Toome □ vice chair Peter Boettcher  
Colin Campbell Russell Cooper Matthew Durack  
Stewart Ellis Elaine Gardiner Trevor Guest  
Karen Murday

Rod Carr from the Department of Environment and Water Resources is the government observer and Des Horton and Tony Oaks have been co-opted until the new constitution is finalised.

**San Diego bound for IA show?** If you are a member of IAL and are going to the Irrigation Association (USA) show in San Diego in December you are eligible for IA member rates if you let the IAL office know. To obtain your member discount please contact Catherine Parbery, email [catherine.parbery@irrigation.org.au](mailto:catherine.parbery@irrigation.org.au) asap. The IA has asked for information on Australians who are attending.

**New website for IAL.** Have you checked out the IAL's new website? Your one-stop reference for information on IAL activities, news, what's happening and who's who in irrigation [www.irrigation.org.au](http://www.irrigation.org.au)

**Irrigation Australia journal.** The journal will be mailed out mid November so keep an eye out for it in your post box. Feature this issue is automatic control.

**Photo competition.** For those of you who can't resist taking irrigation photos, here's your opportunity for fame (and a bit of fortune). Entries will opening 1 December for the IAL's 2008 photo competition, sponsored by Irrigear. Four categories: irrigation and people, irrigation and the environment, irrigation efficiency □ rural, and irrigation efficiency □ urban. Check out the IAL's website for entry form next month.

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## REGIONAL ROUNDUP

**News on activities from regional committees around Australia.** You can keep up with IAL 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 IAL head office to find your local IAL 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](mailto:petergiles@oasisirrigation.com.au)

**South Australia.** For information about the next meeting, contact Noel Johnston, email [noel.johnston@samdnrmb.sa.gov.au](mailto:noel.johnston@samdnrmb.sa.gov.au)

**South East Queensland.** Next meeting is Tuesday 13 November 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](mailto:secy.seq@irrigation.org.au).

b For information about the next meeting and regional activities, contact David Wigginton, phone 07 48311711, mobile 0427 789 498, email: [wiggind@usq.edu.au](mailto: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](mailto:barbara.moloney@irrigation.org.au)

**Northwest NSW.** For information about the next meeting contact Peter Taylor, email [ptaylor@smk.com.au](mailto:ptaylor@smk.com.au)

**Melbourne.** For information about the region's next meeting contact Des Horton, phone 03 9313 8508, email [dhorton@citywestwater.com.au](mailto:dhorton@citywestwater.com.au)

**Western Australia.** The next State Executive meeting will be held at 7:30am Tuesday 20 November 2007 at the Metro Inn, South Perth. For more information on WA activities contact Doug Hall, phone 08 9474 9089, mobile 0407 701 513, or email [doug.hall@irrigation.org.au](mailto:doug.hall@irrigation.org.au).

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## MEMBERSHIP

The formation of irrigation Australia Limited is an exciting development for members of the IAA and ANCID. Your membership will be automatically transferred to the new organisation.

Membership renewals will be sent out in June 2008 for a new financial year membership cycle. We hope that you will continue to show IAL the support you have shown to IAA and/or ANCID in the past.

It is also an ideal time to encourage colleagues, customers, suppliers and even competitors to join the new body and support the Australian irrigation industry in these challenging times. For a membership application form go to [www.irrigation.org.au](http://www.irrigation.org.au).

Welcome to new members for October:

Peter Brueck, CTS, Menai NSW  
Mitchell Carter, AIM Consultants Pty Ltd, Wee Waa NSW  
Simon Foord, Belair Turf Landscape & Irrigation, Blackwood SA  
Ken Johnston, Sports Turf Technology Pty Ltd, Como WA  
Brenden Lennon, Lennon's Grass Courts Pty Ltd, Teringie SA  
David McKinley, Brooks Irrigation, Silverwater NSW  
Ross Mars, Greywater Reuse Systems, Midland DC WA  
Simon Pawley, Sustainable Outdoors, Beaconsfield WA  
Rob Schumann, Biocentral Laboratories Pty Ltd, Mile End SA  
Robert Sundblom, City of Monash, Notting Hill VIC  
Ian Tayles, Echuca VIC

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Irrigation Efficiency course.** The Irrigation Efficiency Course 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, the course is a must for sporting bodies, local councils and irrigation contractors.

Brisbane: 21 and 22 November 2007

Perth: 5 and 6 November 2007

**Other courses run on demand.** For information contact Catherine Parbery, IAL head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email [certification@irrigation.org.au](mailto:certification@irrigation.org.au)

**Sydney training, skills recognition and certification info session.** Do you run an irrigation system for a golf course, school grounds or public open space? Do you install irrigation systems? Do you want to improve your knowledge and skills, or those of your staff members, in irrigation installation and operation? Come along to an info session Wednesday 14 November, 3.00 pm, Oatlands House, 42 Bettington Rd, Oatlands. Staff from both Irrigation Australia and Ryde TAFE will be on hand to answer all your questions. RSVP by 12 November to Catherine Parbery, phone 02 9476 0142.

**CID exams advance notice.** The next round of CID exams will be held 20 February 2008 in each capital city around Australia. For information contact Catherine Parbery, IAL head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email [certification@irrigation.org.au](mailto:certification@irrigation.org.au)

**National industry recognition; something for everyone.** In 2006 your association expanded its certification program for irrigation practitioners who are dedicated to best practice and supporting sustainable water use. Certification is now offered to irrigation managers, operators, contractors,

installers, retailers and agronomists. Take advantage of \$100 application fee until 30 March 2008. Certification applications received before 30 March will need to be accompanied by \$100; after that the fee of \$200 will apply. For information go to [http://www.irrigation.org.au/ci\\_moci.html](http://www.irrigation.org.au/ci_moci.html)

**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 IAL: \$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 IAL members to distribute to the general public and domestic customers and a print ready version can be downloaded from the IAL website at <http://www.irrigation.org.au/download/standards/Home%20Gardener%20FINAL%20web.pdf>

**Course supported by FarmBi\$.** Irrigation Skills Recognition, offered by Virginia Horticulture Centre Inc., is one of several courses to be recognised recently by FarmBi\$ SA. For information go to website [http://www.farmbis.sa.gov.au/pages/news/newcourses\\_julaug07.htm:sectID=13&tempID=2](http://www.farmbis.sa.gov.au/pages/news/newcourses_julaug07.htm:sectID=13&tempID=2)

**CGS Groundwater short courses.** For information on courses go to [www.groundwater.com.au](http://www.groundwater.com.au)

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## AWARDS

**McKell Medal nominations open.** Members of IAL are urged to nominate for the McKell Medal, Australia's highest award for individual excellence and achievement in natural resource management. Winners receive funding to undertake public speaking engagements to promote their work and sustainable practices as well as a commemorative medal. Applications close 16 November 2007. The nomination package is available online by clicking here.

**MacLean Iedema Award nominations.** Every two years, coinciding with Irrigation Australia the MacLean Iedema Award is presented to an individual or group making a significant contribution to irrigation in Australia. Nominations are now open for this prestigious award. Nomination forms and further information are on the IAL website.

[www.irrigation.org.au/index.cfm?event=public.page&pageUUID=6DC60AD5-1708-51EB-A6A6DF116990D426](http://www.irrigation.org.au/index.cfm?event=public.page&pageUUID=6DC60AD5-1708-51EB-A6A6DF116990D426)

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## AROUND INDUSTRY

**First assessment of NWI.** The National Water Commission's First Biennial Assessment of Progress in Implementing the National Water Initiative was released in Canberra last month. The assessment also advises COAG on the actions required to better realise national water reform objectives. While much progress has been made the assessment recommends acceleration of progress in the following areas: reducing overallocation of water resources, determining groundwater and surface water interaction, accounting for interception of water from land use change, providing for integrated management of environmental water, and improving water

accounting, measurement and compliance. Highlighted also are deficiencies in urban water management in Australia. For information go to

[http://www.nwc.gov.au/news/media\\_releases/media\\_release\\_22oct07\\_1.cfm](http://www.nwc.gov.au/news/media_releases/media_release_22oct07_1.cfm)

**Water plan funding being rolled out.** Last month the Federal Government launched key programs under the \$5.9 billion Modernising Agriculture component of the National Plan for Water Security. As part of this launch, proposals for the \$1.6 Billion on farm efficiency program have been called for, and for the Irrigation Modernisation Assistance program. The modernisation program is aimed at private irrigation water providers, and up to \$500,000 will be provided for the development of modernisation plans. Two proposals have already been approved; one for the Macquarie Valley and one for a project being managed by Murray Irrigation.

**Moratorium on permanent water trading?** Three hundred irrigators from the Murray-Darling Basin Crisis Management Council protested last month in Canberra about the National Plan for Water Security, particularly the Federal Government plan to use \$3 billion to buy back water rights from non-viable or inefficient irrigators. According to the protestors, the plan will wipe \$28 billion from the economy. Their demands were for: a 3-year moratorium on permanent water trading, a planned emergency weir on the Murray in South Australia to proceed and a ban on environmental flows during drought periods. The EWater CRC responded by saying that environmental flows are required to maintain the health of Australia's river system. Reducing them will lead to a rise in salinity, algal blooms and the possible extinction of native flora and fauna.

**Reports advocate change in urban water planning.** Recent reports released by the Business Council of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (AATSE) advocate changes in the way urban water infrastructure is managed and planning occurs. The BCA says that the ownership and structure of the urban water sector should be changed, including introducing national regulation and competition for bulk users. AATSE has identified serious gaps in Australia's water supply planning and its ability to maintain adequate water supplies into the future, which is becoming more uncertain. The report says that most states and territories lack the institutional support and technical rigour for planning.

**MDBC Irrigation management grants.** Irrigators in the Murray-Darling Basin or those who draw water from the Murray-Darling Basin as their sole source of irrigation can now apply for grants of \$20,000 to help prepare for and manage the risks associated with reduced water allocations, and to improve on-farm practices to maximise irrigated production from the water that is available. The grant is available to eligible farm enterprises until 30 June 2009. Claims must be lodged by 31 March 2009. To download the form go to [http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/filestores/su624\\_0710/\\$file/su624\\_0710en\\_p.pdf](http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/filestores/su624_0710/$file/su624_0710en_p.pdf)

**\$1000 a ML for water in Victoria.** In a reflection of the continuing dry conditions, irrigators on the Goulburn and Murray rivers in Victoria have been prepared to pay over \$1000/ML for water that a few years ago traded at around \$50/ML. Seasonal allocations on the Goulburn are 26%, on the Murray and Broken 18%, on the Campaspe 2% and the Loddon 5%. Goulburn Murray Water says that the outlook for future allocations is very bleak, with the most optimistic outlook for mid February allocations 43% on the Goulburn and 27% on the Murray.

**Make do with less.** Mike Young has confirmed that with SA becoming drier, people will have to learn to live with much less water. According to Mike, with Australia's water supplies becoming less reliable, South Australians, along with the rest of Australia's inhabitants, are actually borrowing from the future. As a result, he strongly advocates a radical change, soon, in the way we use water a series of permanent policies including providing incentives to reduce consumption and increase the effectiveness of water use and storage.

**Pioneers in Irrigation video.** The Irrigation Association in the US is making a video series for the worldwide irrigation industry on [Pioneers in Irrigation](#). The videos will be filmed December 9 and 10 at the convention in San Diego. They will then be used for educational purposes and to document the history of irrigation around the world. If you are going to be in San Diego this year and are interested in being involved, contact Glenn Bowlin, email [glenn@broussardassoc.com](mailto:glenn@broussardassoc.com)

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## PEOPLE

**New chair for G-MW.** Congratulations to chair of the interim board of IAL, Stephen Mills, who has just been appointed chair of the Goulburn-Murray Water board, Stephen says that there are exciting times ahead for G-MW, which will be involved in a \$2 billion upgrade of infrastructure over the next decade.

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## MARKET PLACE

**George Warne resigns.** George Warne, a very familiar face to many in the irrigation industry, has called it quits at Murray Irrigation and is moving on to take up an executive position in the water industry in the Murray-Darling Basin. Stewart Ellis, Chair of Murray Irrigation, acknowledged George's outstanding contribution as a very important leader of Murray Irrigation and its staff since 1995. Best wishes to George in his new position.

**Elaine Gardiner appointed to National Landcare Council.** Congratulations to IAL interim board member, Elaine Gardiner, on her appointment as a member of the National Landcare Council. Elaine will be WA's representative on this important organisation.

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## JOB SPOT

**Irrigation Services Manager.** This is key role managing an extensive irrigation network delivering high quality water supply and services to shareholder members. Due to internal promotion a key and highly visible role now exists for an experienced services manager to join the organisation. Reporting to the operations manager you will take responsibility for the irrigation system network to deliver high quality supply and drainage services to shareholder members. Your role will be active and varied and will encompass technical leadership, infrastructure performance, water saving strategies, system planning, health and safety, line management, budgetary and fiscal responsibility. The successful candidate will ideally have a background in managing irrigation or significant water delivery systems. You will be tertiary qualified in Business Administration, Engineering or Agriculture. You will have a strong commercial sense, be able to effectively handle multiple projects and be seen as a natural team leader. A highly competitive salary package, and a company vehicle will be provided to attract and retain a person capable of rising to the challenge of this outstanding opportunity. For more details send your resume in confidence to John Woodward, Axis Direct Network Introductions, [jwoodward@axisdirect.com.au](mailto:jwoodward@axisdirect.com.au)

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## FOR THE DIARY

**Irrigation Efficiency course.** The Irrigation Efficiency course 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.

Brisbane: 21 and 22 November 2007

Melbourne: 24 and 25 October 2007

Other courses run on demand. For information contact Catherine Parbery, IAL head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email [certification@irrigation.org.au](mailto: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, IAL 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](mailto:irrigation@eft.com.au) or visit the website [www.irrigationaustralia.com.au](http://www.irrigationaustralia.com.au)

**Sydney training, skills recognition and certification info session.** Do you run an irrigation system for a golf course, school grounds or public open space? Do you install irrigation systems? Do you want to improve your knowledge and skills, or those of your staff members, in irrigation installation and operation? Come along to an info session Wednesday 14 November, 3.00 pm, Oatlands House, 42 Bettington Rd, Oatlands. Staff from both Irrigation Australia and Ryde TAFE will be on hand to answer all your questions. RSVP by 12 November to Catherine Parbery, phone 02 9476 0142.

**Certification for Irrigation Practitioners □ WA Information Workshops.** By becoming a certified irrigation practitioner, you'll be helping to lift the skills, knowledge and standards of the whole industry, which in turn will help the irrigation industry control its own future and become more sustainable. Come and find out more about the IAL certification program from Alison Carmichael, National Industry Development Manager. Jann O' Connor, IAL Training Manager, will also be on hand to discuss general training matters.

Day	Date	Time	Location*	Venue
Monday	5 Nov	3.00 pm □ 5.00 pm	Perth	TBA
Tuesday	6 Nov	9.00am □ 11.00 pm	Perth	TBA
Wednesday	7 Nov	3.00 pm □ 5.00 pm	Bunbury	Comfort Inn Admiral

Thursday	8 Nov	10.00am □ 12.00 pm	Bunbury	Comfort Inn Admiral
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Send your RSVP to Doug Hall (ph: 08 9474 9089; mobile 0407 701 513; or email [doug.hall@irrigation.org.au](mailto:doug.hall@irrigation.org.au)).

**Irricad Pro demos.** Netafim and Irricad are offering free half day seminars to demonstrate the new and powerful features of □Irricad Pro□. These seminars will be held in Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Townsville in November 2007. For seminar dates and locations, or to register for a seminar in your area, go to [www.netafim.com.au](http://www.netafim.com.au) and download a registration form. Or you can email Gennaro Vellotti, [gvellotti@netafim.com.au](mailto:gvellotti@netafim.com.au) and he will send you a registration form and details.

**CGS Groundwater short courses.** For information on courses go to [www.groundwater.com.au](http://www.groundwater.com.au)

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## SMART APPROVED WATERMARK UPDATE

**SAWM website public launch.** Last month the SAWM website was officially launched in Sydney by Prince Charles (actor Gerry Connolly). The website provides an easy way to choose products which have been proven to save water around the garden. More than 120 products have received the mark. The website not only has a full list of these products and where to get them, it also includes useful information about the many ways to save water and use it more efficiently. The new consumer website launch marked the start of a campaign to promote the Smart WaterMark across Australia.

For a full list of awarded products, where to get them and information about saving water visit the new website [www.smartwatermark.org](http://www.smartwatermark.org)

## HANDY LINKS

For information on the current drought situation in horticultural regions around Australia, on how individual growers can respond to drought on farm and contact details for drought help-lines and resources go to [www.horticulture.com.au/drought](http://www.horticulture.com.au/drought)

For the latest contingency planning report, which assesses the current status of water availability in the Murray-Darling Basin go to <http://www.malcolmtturnbull.com.au/Pages/Article.aspx?ID=97288>

A paper analysing the implementation of COAG groundwater reforms suggests that they have been excessively delayed, to the detriment of both sustainable irrigation and the environment. To read it go to [http://www.ids.org.au/~cneville/FW\\_MDB\\_groundwaterReform.doc](http://www.ids.org.au/~cneville/FW_MDB_groundwaterReform.doc)

A new edition (Edition 15, August 2007) of quarterly newsletter, ReWater: water recycling in Australia, is now available at [www.recycledwater.com.au/index.php?page=newsletter](http://www.recycledwater.com.au/index.php?page=newsletter)

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## BOOKSHOP

A wide range of irrigation related books and other publications are available from the IA On-Line Bookshop. Just visit [www.irrigation.org.au](http://www.irrigation.org.au).

## REGIONAL COMMITTEE CONTACTS

North Queensland

Geoff Chaillon

[gchallion@typac.com.au](mailto:gchallion@typac.com.au)

Central and Far West NSW

Ken Rogers

[ken.rogers@dubbo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ken.rogers@dubbo.nsw.gov.au)

Darling Downs

David Wigginton

[wiggind@usq.edu.au](mailto:wiggind@usq.edu.au)

Melbourne

Des Horton

[dhorton@citywestwater.com.au](mailto:dhorton@citywestwater.com.au)

South East Queensland

Lindsay Peel

[ljpegel@bigpond.com](mailto:ljpegel@bigpond.com)

South Australia

Craig Wright

[craigw@philmac.com.au](mailto:craigw@philmac.com.au)

NSW North West

Peter Taylor

[ptaylor@smk.com.au](mailto:ptaylor@smk.com.au)

Western Australia

Greg Stewart

[greg@totaleden.com.au](mailto:greg@totaleden.com.au)

Sydney

Pat O'Shannessy

[patrick.oshannessy@toro.com](mailto:patrick.oshannessy@toro.com)

Northern Territory

Peter Giles

[petergiles@oasisirrigation.com.au](mailto:petergiles@oasisirrigation.com.au)

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## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

*Backwash* is a monthly newsletter published by the [Irrigation Australia](#) reporting on developments in the irrigation and related industries. For more information or to contribute article ideas contact; [anne@naturallyresourceful.com.au](mailto:anne@naturallyresourceful.com.au)

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