

Media release

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Murray Irrigation supports water safety

Murray Irrigation's 2013-14 Learn to Swim program has seen more than \$12,000 donated to local schools and swimming clubs as part of the company's pro-active approach to water safety.

A total of 1,245 children participated in the 2013-14 Learn to Swim program. Sponsorship of \$10 per participant is provided for accredited learn to swim programs, bringing this year's total to \$12,450.

Murray Irrigation General Manager Anthony Couroupis said the annual Learn to Swim program is always well supported.

"Murray Irrigation is committed to our community, particularly reinforcing the water safety message to children in our area," Mr Couroupis said.

"Living in an area where rivers, dams and irrigation channels are part of our everyday lives, water safety is a necessary skill for our children.

"As part of Murray Irrigation's proactive approach to water safety, we provide annual sponsorship of learn to swim programs for schools and swimming clubs in our area of operation.

"Our 2013-14 Learn to Swim Sponsorship Program attracted 1,017 primary school age children, 36 high school age children, and 192 local swimming club members."

Sponsorship funds were used to cover travel cost, pool entry fees, equipment, as well as instructor and life guard wages.

Lessons focussed on teaching children about water safety, swimming, rescue, CPR and survival techniques, focussing on water confidence and increasing awareness. Individual programs differed from school to school, as did the age of students participating and range of skills needed.

Annual sponsorship of the 'Learn to Swim' program began in 2003/04.

"Participation has actually increased from previous years, with 50 more students taking part this year compared to the 2012-13 season," Mr Couroupis said.

In addition, Murray Irrigation provides a \$2,000 school grant to secondary schools each year. Local high schools are able to spend this money on any worthwhile initiative which benefits both the school and students.

Examples of how this funding has been used in the past include purchasing resources to support students, water systems for agriculture plots and materials for outdoor learning centres.

Ends.

For more information contact Murray Irrigation Communications Supervisor Catharine Heffernan on T. 1300 138 265.

Photo 1: Mayrung Public School students Lara Macdonald (left) and Atticus Salusalu enjoying school swimming lessons as part of Murray Irrigation's 2013-14 Learn to Swim program.

Photo 2: Students from Tocumwal Public School participating in a water safety program.