



THE NATIONALS *for Regional NSW*

Austin Evans MP

MEMBER FOR MURRAY



20 November 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

DON'T LET THE WATER WASTE YOUR LIFE OR YOUR MATES

In the lead up to summer, Member for Murray, Austin Evans is urging the community to stay safe in and around the water, as the NSW Government launches its 2018 water safety advertising campaign.

“Last summer, 36 people tragically drowned in NSW waterways, and seven of those were between Christmas and 2 January 2018,” said Mr Evans.

“While this is an improvement on the 2016-17 summer, we want everyone to return home safely from their day at the beach, river or pool.

“Each year, men aged between 18 and 24 are overrepresented in our state’s drowning deaths and I am urging them to swim between the flags, look out for their mates and don’t drink alcohol or take drugs before swimming.”

Based on the findings of a Royal Life Saving NSW (RLSNSW) report, the Be Water Safe, Not Sorry campaign aims to drive home the very real risks associated with water and educate people on what they can do to stay safe, including:

- Swim at patrolled beaches where possible – no flags means no lifesavers
- Stay sober – don’t drink or take drugs and then go swimming
- Always supervise small children in or near water – don’t let phones or household jobs distract you.

Expanding on last year’s campaign, people will be reminded to stay safe as they head to the beach, pool or other waterway via radio, social media, newspapers, billboards and buses, and while listening to summer playlists.

Minister for Police Troy Grant said people are understandably excited for the Christmas break and school holidays, and often flock to our beaches and beautiful waterways to celebrate this period.

“Unfortunately, the festive season is also the peak time when we lose loved ones to drowning, especially on public holidays” said Mr Grant

“While we want everyone to have a good time, mates don’t let mates do stupid things, so we are reminding everyone to take care and step in if you think someone shouldn’t be swimming.

“Just like the NSW road toll, we want zero fatalities at our beaches and waterways, so please remember – where there’s water there’s danger.”



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For more information on the NSW Government's Be Water Safe, Not Sorry campaign and the Royal Life Saving Summer Drowning Report 2017-18, visit: www.watersafety.nsw.gov.au

ENDS

Media Contact: Murray Electorate Office - Anne Lyons (02) 6962 6644

Background

The Royal Life Saving NSW report commissioned by the NSW Government found that:

- beaches and inland waterways were the leading locations for drowning, accounting for nearly 36 per cent and 25 per cent of fatalities respectively;
- a further 11 per cent drowned after being washed off rocks in coastal locations;
- 81 per cent of those who lost their life to drowning were men, with young people aged 18-24 years the most at risk.

The NSW drowning 'blackspots', based on the last 10 years of data, are:

- the Hawkesbury, Murrumbidgee, Nepean and Macquarie Rivers;
- Randwick LGA (Maroubra), Waverly LGA (Bondi), Northern Beaches LGA (Dee Why, Whale Beach), Wollongong LGA (Wollongong City and Port Kembla), Shoalhaven LGA (Mollymook), Port Macquarie Hastings LGA (Shelly Beach) and Coffs Harbour LGA (Park South/North Wall).