



**Murrumbidgee  
Irrigation**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

13 February 2017

### **Swimming in irrigation channels can cost you your life**

In light of the tragic drownings in Riverina water ways over the summer, Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) is reminding rural communities in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area not to take the risk of swimming in irrigation channels.

MI Chief Executive Officer, Brett Jones, said that swimming or playing in irrigation channels is discouraged for good reasons.

"They may appear to be a tempting place to cool off on a hot day but it's simply not worth the risk," he said.

"There are many hidden dangers that make irrigation channels a treacherous place to swim including strong undercurrents, varying channel depths, snakes and submerged objects. Regulator gates can open without notice and create a trap, while siphons and pipes can create powerful suction or a water surge."

MIA residents are advised to make use of safer alternatives for swimming such as local public pools and to make sure that children are taught early how to swim. Public pools provide qualified staff members that are on hand to supervise swimmers.

"Australians love the outdoors and swimming but accidents can and do occur," Mr Jones said.

"No matter how experienced a swimmer you are, always be alert around water."

The following general swimming precautions could help save a life: don't swim in irrigation channels; avoid fast flowing water; beware of submerged objects; don't dive into water of unknown depth; know where young children are and never leave them unattended around water; and never swim alone.

**ENDS**

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