



## Accreditation from NATA awarded to laboratory

Mackay Regional Council's Water and Waste Services laboratory recently received accreditation from the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA).

The accreditation means formal recognition of the lab for the capabilities of its facilities to perform specific types of testing, inspection, calibration, and other related activities.

Water and wastewater portfolio councillor Deirdre Comerford said receiving NATA accreditation is of great benefit to the lab, the water and waste services department and the community as it provides a benchmark for performance through an independent technical evaluation.

"The guidelines set in place by NATA will help ensure the continued supply of safe drinking water for our community."

Water and waste services principal scientist Stuart Boyd said the overall process to receive

the formal accreditation has taken about three years.

"The process involved auditors assessing the quality system documentation as well as a number of on site assessments of the facility and the technical competence of staff," he said.

"Having the accreditation now means regular surveillance checks on the facility's operations to ensure consistency and accuracy in the data that is produced."

"It also provides a greater certainty on the data that is used to assess drinking water, as well as the compliance of environmental standards of the disposal of sewage and at landfill sites."

Councillor Comerford said the accreditation

is based on international standards including the qualifications, training and experience of staff, equipment maintenance, adequate quality assurance procedures and appropriate sampling practices.

"It's great to see the facility operating at the high standards required receiving the accreditation and I congratulate staff on achieving this milestone," she said.

3000 volunteer experts assist in NATA's accreditation process by assisting with the assessment of facilities as well as being involved in NATA's various technical committees.

**>> For further details on our Water and Waste Services, call 1300 MACKAY or visit our website.**

## Rebuilding our roads >

Council has decided to put on hold projects that can be delayed to focus on rebuilding our roads.

Our road network is in terrible condition following ongoing wet weather and natural disasters.

Mayor Col Meng said the sheer volume of damage has resulted in a re-prioritisation of limited resources and the re-assignment of resources.

"The community needs to realise we are faced with an enormous rebuilding and restoration program that is unprecedented," he said.

"This is not a six or twelve month process; we are faced with potentially a three year program of repair and reconstruction."

"All available resources, skilled labour, plant and material will be focused on fixing our roads."



The Queensland Government has approved council's \$106 million claim relating to the 2010 Cyclone Ului event and it is estimated that the damage bill for the 2010/11 events could be in the order of another \$100 million.

Council's Civil Operations and maintenance crews will be working closely with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to fulfil its obligations under road maintenance agreements and urges motorists to please be patient while repairs are underway and drive to the conditions of the road.

**>> To keep residents informed a weekly update, detailing the work schedule and projects, will be provided on our website every Friday.**



## Unique Storytime

Gordon White Library will celebrate National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) on Wednesday, May 25 from 11am.

Each year, NSS is celebrated in Australian libraries and schools.

The book for 2011 is Feathers for Pheobe by Rod Clement. A beautifully illustrated story about a little grey bird who wants to stand out and be noticed and the difficulties she encounters.

Parents, grandparents and carers are encouraged to come to the library with their children to celebrate the event.

## Repeal of policy supports market stall holders



Council has adopted that as of July 1, 2011, temporary food premises can now apply for approval to prepare food for sale at local markets in the Mackay region.

This will allow both temporary food permits to be issued for those wishing to sell for short periods of time, as well as food business licences for ongoing week-to-week sales from the same premises.

**>> For more details, contact council's Health and Regulatory department on 1300 MACKAY.**

## Workshops to assist youth entering the book trailer competition



Mackay Regional Council is looking for the next Steven Spielberg or James Cameron as part of their LitVids Book Trailer Competition 2.011.

12 to 19 year olds are being assigned the task to bring books to life by creating a short film or animation.

Simply create a short two-minute video that sells one of your favourite books, and you not only have the chance to do something creative and learn new exciting skills but you also have the chance to pick up some great prizes including cash and equipment (winner of 12-15 year age group and the 16-19 year age group).

To learn new techniques and gain assistance with your masterpiece attend either of the following workshops:

- Thursday, May 26 at Gordon White Library from 5pm to 7pm
- Saturday, May 28 at Central Queensland University Tech Lab from 10am to 3pm

LitVids is funded by Mackay Regional Council along with Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal and offered in partnership with Whitsunday Voices Youth Literature Festival and Central Queensland University.

**>> To save your seat at a session, pick up a registration form from your nearest library – bookings are essential. Entries into the competition close Mon, June 27.**



## Good old fashioned fun

The Greenmount Homestead will be a buzz of activity and excitement next weekend on Sunday, May 29 for the annual Heritage Fair.

From 9am till 4pm the historic venue in Walkerston will be transformed offering all day entertainment for the whole family including markets, food and local talent.

Entry into the Homestead is free and you can tuck into some yummy treats, devonshire tea, Bushman's Pies, view the vintage car displays and plant stalls and listen to the Bush Poet and life stories of retired homestead caretaker Gloria Arrow during her sessions 'Through her eyes'.

**>> To find out more about the 2011 Heritage Fair, contact Greenmount Homestead on 4959 2250.**

## Did you know?

Council has funding available all year round for talented young athletes who have been selected to represent their State or Country in their chosen sport.

If this is you and you are under 21 years of age, please contact council's Community Development department to complete an application form.



## Take the time and celebrate International Museum Day

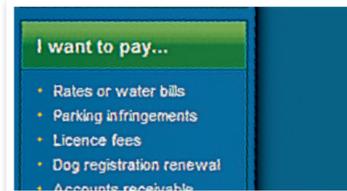
Today (Wednesday, May 18) is International Museum Day so if you can, take the time today or whenever possible to visit one of the regions local museums. The Mackay region has three museums: Pioneer Valley, Sarina and Mackay.

- Mackay Historical Society and Museum** – located at 3 Casey Avenue, South Mackay. Open from 10am to 2pm on Thursdays and on the first Sunday of each month. Admission is \$2 adults and \$1 child.
- Sarina Historical Centre** – located at Field of Dreams Parkland, Sarina. Open from 9.30am to 2pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and on the last Sunday of each month from 9.30am to 12.30pm.
- Pioneer Valley Museum** – located at Victoria Street, Mirani. Open from 9.30am to 2.30pm on Tuesday to Friday.

International Museum Day was established in 1977 by the International Council of Museums – each museum has its own important place in making Australian heritage come alive, and preserving our past for future generations.

**>> For details about the region's historical centres, visit our website.**

## Contact us... online!



Wanting to contact council at a time and place that is convenient to you? Our website enables residents to conduct and complete a diverse range of online services from reporting a pothole to paying rates, changing your details or making complaints.

General feedback and complaints can be lodged online by completing a customer request on topics such as rubbish, roads, animals, water, sewerage and more.

If convenience is what you're looking for to pay bills such as rates, water, parking infringements, licence fees and dog registration, visit the website today under "I want to pay...".

**>> Go online today and visit our website, [www.mackay.qld.gov.au](http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au).**

## Mackay Region Festival of Arts

The 2011 Mackay Region Festival of Arts will be a splashing good time from July 9 to 24 with free fun and entertainment for everyone.

Now in its 24th year, the 16 day festival themed Light and Water, will offer audiences the chance to awaken their senses and experience never before seen talent local, national and international acts in Mackay.

Mayor Col Meng said the celebration of arts will spread throughout Mackay, Sarina and the Pioneer Valley and I encourage everyone to be involved in and enjoy one of the largest and most exciting regional arts festivals in Queensland.

This year's program is available to view and download from the Mackay Festival website [www.festivalmackay.org.au](http://www.festivalmackay.org.au) and tickets are available at the MECC box office or online at [www.mackaytix.com.au](http://www.mackaytix.com.au).

**Special Offer!**  
Pre-book your tickets by July 1 for your \$5 per ticket discount as well as the chance to go into the draw for a four night Fiji holiday for a family of four \*conditions apply.

## Residents urged to check overflow relief gullies

Following the big wet, residents are being asked to check their properties to ensure that their overflow relief gullies (ORGs) have been installed correctly.

The call comes from the high number of reported sewage overflows into private properties over the past months of wet weather.

Water and wastewater portfolio councillor Deirdre Comerford said that ORGs play a vital role in the operation of the sewerage system and should be checked regularly.

"Now that the sun is shining, it's time to get out into your backyard and check your ORGs, as these are the things that will save you from sewage spills inside your home."

"If the sewerage system gets blocked or overloaded, it will overflow from the ORG outside your house, rather than from another point inside your house."

"If you have altered or covered your ORG with concrete pathways, gardens or pot plants, you could be risking an overflow in your home."

Councillor Comerford said that it is also important to check the height of your ORG.

"Your ORG should be 100 mm above ground level."

"You should also check that stormwater runoff from roofs, paved areas and yards isn't connected or directed to your ORGs - this is in fact illegal and greatly impacts on the sewerage system which is not designed to handle stormwater."

Council is continuing to run an inspection program that identifies any unauthorised connections, cracked and leaking pipes, low ORGs and poorly connected pipes.

**>> For more information, contact council on 1300 MACKAY.**

