

## MEDIA ALERT

### 15<sup>th</sup> National Water Week, 19-25 October 2008

#### *CLEAN WATER: Essential for life!*

Hundreds of events take place on a local, regional and national scale every year during *National Water Week* – and this year aims to be bigger than ever!

Being held from 19-25 October, National Water Week 2008 will unite community, school, environmental and industry groups holding events that encourage community participation in water protection and conservation. This year's National Water Week theme – *Clean Water: Essential for Life* - draws community attention to the importance of clean water to our health and quality of life. While scarce water is usually uppermost in people's minds these days, protecting water quality is also a priority we cannot afford to forget.

The theme also draws attention to the 2008 United Nations International Year of Sanitation. "We are fortunate to have one of the highest standards of sanitation in the world, with readily available clean water at our fingertips. National Water Week reminds us of how precious clean water is, and recognises that 40% of the world's population still does not have access to the most basic sanitation," said Tom Mollenkopf, Chief Executive of the Australian Water Association. "According to United Nations statistics, one child dies every 20 seconds as a result of lack of sanitation, or 1.5 million children a year; a staggering statistic."

"Our urban and rural water utilities do a fantastic job of ensuring that Australia's drinking water is of a high quality, and that wastewater is dealt with and treated effectively. The industry is also committed to the environmental challenges posed by the effects of climate change, ensuring clean water availability well into the future," said Mr Mollenkopf. "But the water industry can't do this alone. Communities and the water sector need to work together to ensure a clean water future. National Water Week is about providing those avenues for learning and participation."

The Australian Water Association has just launched a brand **new website** for National Water Week, which features a fully searchable calendar, educational resources, free games and downloads, and is



inviting groups and individuals to start planning their events now.

For more information visit the brand new web site at [www.nationalwaterweek.org.au](http://www.nationalwaterweek.org.au)

ENDS.

**For further information, interviews or photos contact:**

Eddie Nyers

Communications Manager, Australian Water Association

Tel: (02) 9467 8416

[media@nationalwaterweek.org.au](mailto:media@nationalwaterweek.org.au)

