



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
General Manager’s Desk”
27 October 2022”

Single-Use Plastics Ban

Next Tuesday is 1 November 2022 and apart from being Melbourne Day, it is the day that the NSW Government has decreed to commence a ban on single-use plastic items, including:

- straws, stirrers, cutlery, plates, bowls and cotton buds
- expanded polystyrene food ware and cups
- rinse-off personal care products containing plastic microbeads.

This follows a ban on lightweight plastic bags which commenced in June this year. Single-use plastic items and packaging make up 60% of all litter in NSW. By ending the use of many single-use items an estimated 2.7 billion plastic items will be stopped from polluting our lands and waterways over the next 20 years. For ideas, resources and tips on how to prepare for the ban visit the website:

<https://dpe.mysocialpipoint.com.au/plastics-ban-nsw>

Draft Far West Regional Plan 2041

The draft Far West Regional Plan 2041 is a 20-year strategic blueprint to guide and support communities in the Far West Region as they adapt to meet future challenges. This Region includes the Bourke Local Government Area. The Plan is now on exhibition until 21 November 2022, with the draft Plan seeking to ensure the ongoing liveability and sustainability of local communities. It will help the Region become more prosperous and plan for housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment and connected communities. The first Far West Regional Plan – which looked forward to 2036– was released in 2017. The Department of Planning and Environment reviews and updates regional plans every 5 years to make sure they are relevant for the next 20 years. You can download the draft plan and make a submission via an online form at the following website:

<https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/draftplans/exhibition/draft-far-west-regional-plan-2041>

Scammers

With the Optus data breach occupying many media headlines of late, I was interested to learn from NSW Farmers that Aussie farmers lost more than \$1.2 million to tractor scammers between January and August this year with almost 300 reports of fraudulent sales of tractors and farm machinery reported to the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission’s (ACCC) Scamwatch. Naturally, such losses have prompted fresh warnings about online safety and according to the ACCC, farmers should be extra cautious when purchasing farm machinery online, saying scammers are being "ruthless" in their targeted behaviour. The ACCC have advised that scammers were either sending fake invoices to businesses or selling fake machinery for a discounted price and requesting a 10 to 20 per cent deposit. Whilst fake invoicing has, unfortunately, been around for some time now, it is considered that when purchasing goods, whether online or not, the old adage “If it sounds too good to be true it probably is” should be front of mind, regardless of whether it’s a tractor, a car, a bike.....any purchase.

Asbestos Awareness

November is National Asbestos Awareness Month which aims to increase essential awareness of the ever-present danger of asbestos when renovating or maintaining homes. Asbestos, which is deadly, remains hidden in one third of Australian homes. With the popularity of renovating continuing to grow concerns are growing that homeowners are taking avoidable risks with asbestos by doing DIY renovations. Whilst many people continue to think that deaths caused from asbestos are a thing of the past, nothing could be further from the truth with over 4,000 Australians dying every year from asbestos-related diseases. That's 265% more than the annual national road toll. These are staggering statistics. It's vital that DIYers, homeowners, renovators and tradies heed the warnings and learn to respect the serious dangers of asbestos to help save lives. Asbestos can be in any brick, weatherboard, fibro or clad home built or renovated before 1990. Back in the day, it was used everywhere - lurking under floor coverings including carpets, linoleum and vinyl tiles, behind wall and floor tiles, in cement floors, internal and external walls, ceilings and ceiling space (insulation), eaves, garages, roofs, around hot water pipes, fences, home extensions, garages, outdoor toilets, backyard and farm structures, chook sheds and even dog kennels.

Renovators and tradies alike are urged to visit asbestosawareness.com.au to source user-friendly, and potentially life-saving information which includes a video "Asbestos in Your Home – The Ultimate Renovators Guide" along with a 20 Point Safety Check. Also available at this site is detailed information on asbestos and natural disasters, which is most topical given the current flooding occurring throughout the eastern states of Australia. We all need to respect asbestos and whilst many in the community have possibly worked with asbestos in the past and, in doing so, ignored the warnings, we all need to learn where asbestos might be, how to manage it safely and when to engage trained experts to conduct asbestos-related work or remove asbestos-containing materials safely.

Bali Bombings

At about 11pm on 12 October 2002 three bombs were detonated in Bali, two in busy nightspots – the Sari Club and Paddy's Bar – and one in front of the American consulate. The explosions killed 202 people, 88 of whom were Australian. Hundreds more were wounded with the attacks being the single largest loss of Australian life due to an act of terror. Recently, the 20th anniversary of these terrorist bomb attacks was marked. Whilst there were many memorial services held throughout the nation to mark the occasion, I saw on the TV News a portion of the Memorial Service held at Coogee Beach in Sydney which held a special significance to the beachside suburb, with 20 local residents having lost their lives in the terrible blasts back in 2002. Following the bombings, and to their credit, Randwick City Council erected a substantial monument on the northern headland of Coogee Beach, known as Dolphins Point, and named in honour of the six members of the local Coogee Dolphins football team who were killed along with friends and family members in the bombing attack at the Sari Club in Kuta, Bali.

On 12 October each year since 2003, family, friends and the local community have come together at the Memorial to remember those lost in the 2002 Bali Bombings. Whilst we possibly all had some form of a linkage to family or friends who were affected by the tragedy, the reflection provided this year to the large crowd by Paul Yeo of Dubbo, stood out for me. Paul works at Dubbo Regional Council and apparently has done so for many years. I don't know him but I understand that he hails from a family of ten (10) with his Brother, Gerard, killed in the bomb attack. I have been told that the Yeo's and their cousins from the Wilson family, have been strongly associated with Rugby League in Western NSW for many year's. His reflections on the event were very powerful with Paul and two of his Sisters having flown to Bali the day after the bombing to search for their brother. Paul said as part of his talk that he "recalled telling dad to brace himself for the worst. Silence followed, he was broken." Life at times can throw some curved balls that simply aren't fair. Paul's reflections on the events of 20 year's ago and since, can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKb9pu3i-VM>

Migration Agreement

With the current skills shortages confronting not only Bourke, but the Nation, I was pleased to receive advice from Regional Development Australia (RDA) Orana that it had entered into a five-year labour Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) with the Australian Government. The Orana DAMA has been negotiated to provide employers with a specific tool to sponsor skilled overseas workers in specified industries in our region that are currently experiencing critical skill and labour shortages. Orana DAMA utilises the labour agreement stream of the Temporary Skills Shortage visa (TSS subclass 482) and the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS subclass 186). Following endorsement from RDA Orana, businesses apply for and enter into a labour agreement with the Department of Home Affairs. Endorsed employers then lodge a nomination for the position required, and workers then apply for and may be granted a TSS Subclass 482 or ENS Subclass 186 visa. RDA Orana has negotiated an agreement for the Orana region that includes specific occupations and conditions that will assist our region in addressing our most acute labour shortages. For specific details on the DAMA Skills List, contact RDA Orana on 02 6885 1488.

Quote: “What about the estimated 42.8million kangaroos that American scientists found in 2015 to emit about a third of cattle produced methane. Who pays a Skippy tax?” Journalist Vicky Campion commenting on methane emissions and a potential tax.