



Media Release

WATERLESS TENNIS COURTS TO LAUNCH AT HEATHERDALE

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Heatherdale Tennis Club in Mitcham will celebrate the completion of eight leading edge 'waterless' tennis courts, developed through funding by the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund, by hosting a community day on Saturday 10 September from 10.30am until 2pm.

Local sports fans should tighten their laces to test their skills against a tennis ball machine on the new courts, where everyone is invited to have a hit.

Other activities will include an invitation-only luncheon and a tennis match between Yarra Valley Water Managing Director, Tony Kelly, and Tony Robinson, local member for Mitcham.

The eight courts feature a revolutionary surface called 'Classic Clay' which look and feel like traditional red porous clay but which require no water. By replacing eight of the club's traditional clay courts with Classic Clay, Heatherdale Tennis Club is expected to save 3.2 million litres of water and up to \$8,000 a year.

Already, the Club's water bill has significantly reduced since the Classic Clay courts were installed in 2004 (see graph).

According to Yarra Valley Water Managing Director, Tony Kelly, the impact of the new surface is positive and far reaching.

"More than 90 per cent of tennis club courts in Melbourne are traditional red porous clay courts. If a third of these tennis courts converted in the next 10 years, we would save more than 500 million litres of water annually. I strongly encourage other tennis clubs to follow the lead set by Heatherdale Tennis Club," Mr Kelly says.

Heatherdale Tennis Club will now act as a demonstration site for tennis clubs from across the state to test the new surface and learn how their club can also save significant volumes of water.

Classic Clay is made up of sand-like particles covering a synthetic binder layer (carpet-like) laid over a porous bed. While it looks and responds like a traditional red porous court, it does not need watering and the particles do not blow away in the wind or wash off during heavy rain into stormwater drains or nearby rivers and creeks.

It has taken one year to officially unveil the eight courts at Heatherdale Tennis Club at a cost of \$320,000; \$180,000 was provided through the Smart Water Fund.

"The possibilities to save water across myriad industries are endless, which is why the Smart Water Fund is so important. It provides an opportunity for businesses like Heatherdale Tennis Club to implement innovative and practical water saving solutions that can inspire other organisations and individuals across the state to take action," says Mr Kelly.

The Smart Water Fund was established in 2002 to encourage innovation in water recycling and conservation. It is funded by Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, City West Water, South East Water and the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

During the first two rounds of funding, the Smart Water Fund allocated \$8 million to 46 projects. Applications for round three funding closed on 18 August, with recipients soon to be announced by the Hon. John Thwaites, Minister for Water.

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1/2



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Water Use at Heatherdale

