Darwin Promotes Responsible Public Drinking

Restrictions on drinking alcohol in two areas of Darwin will come into force from tomorrow.

Public drinking will no longer be allowed along certain parts of the Nightcliff foreshore, Coconut Grove, Rapid Creek and the Esplanade in Darwin city. **

The Member for Nightcliff Jane Aagaard, the Darwin City Council, Nightcliff business owners and residents have supported the restrictions in the Coconut Grove, Rapid Creek and Nightcliff areas.

“The ban is not about prohibition. It’s about stopping the minority of people who drink, loiter and humbug in certain areas,” Mrs Aagaard said.

“We want to target problem areas to allow families to benefit from our green open spaces and not be harassed and subjected to unacceptable behaviour.”

Mrs Aagaard said she had worked with local businesses, residents and aldermen Bob Elix and Kerry Moir to ensure the restrictions were put in place.

“The ban has come about after a long process of consultation. Residents were fed up with the alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in these areas and everyone agreed something needed to be done,” Mrs Aagaard said.

“While the ban will certainly stop those who do the wrong thing, it will not stop those who drink responsibly from enjoying a weekend picnic or evening barbecue.”

Residents can still drink alcohol on the Nightcliff foreshore between Aralia Street and Chapman Road from Monday to Friday between 4pm and 10:30pm, and weekends and public holidays between noon and 10:30pm. Public drinking along the whole of the Esplanade is prohibited.

Special permits to allow alcohol consumption at events, functions and festivals can be obtained from the Darwin City Council or Licensing and Regulation for Nightcliff or the Esplanade.

Penalties for drinking in the restricted areas without a permit include:

• confiscation or tipping out of alcohol by police
• an on the spot fine of $100
• a fine of up to $500 if the matter goes to court
• a possible ban from drinking

Repeat offenders will be sent to the Alcohol Court, which provides the opportunity for rehabilitation. The Territory Government has supported rehabilitation options with an injection of funding of more than $1.5 million over three years.

The restrictions will work in conjunction with the government’s anti-social measures announced earlier this year, which include a First Response Patrol, a Dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Reporting Line, a Darwin Area Night Patrol, CCTV cameras, increased short-term accommodation and a boost to the Return to Country Program.

**See attached maps for areas where drinking is prohibited from tomorrow**

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