



(EMBARGO - UNTIL 14TH NOVEMBER 2010)

MEDIA ADVISORY

CAMPAIGN PROMOTING FENCED HOUSE YARDS TO PREVENT DROWNING OF TODDLERS IN FARM DAMS

WHO: Felicity Urquhart, 2010 CMAA female artist of the year, features in a new rural drowning prevention campaign, promoting securely fenced house yards on farms.

The Australian Government funded campaign is being conducted by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (ACAHS), with the support of Farmsafe Australia, RLSSA, Kidsafe and Kids Alive.

ISSUE: **An average of 5 to 6 children drown in farm dams and water bodies each year in Australia. Most are under five years of age and a third are visitors to the farm.**

The most common situation is that a toddler wanders away from supervision un-noticed, finding their way into a farm dam. They may be noticed missing only after a few minutes.

A securely fenced house yard, supported by active supervision, is one of the best ways to help prevent a toddler drowning. Fenced house yards on farms are a key recommendation of Farmsafe Australia, peak water safety agencies and the 2010 Australian Water Safety Strategy. A securely fenced house yard can also help prevent young children being run over by farm vehicles and machinery.

Research by ACAHS indicates that on average, only one in two farms have a fenced house yard secure enough to prevent a young child under 5 yrs wandering off without the help of an adult - lower in some areas. A regional television campaign will be promoting the following messages with farm families and rural communities over the summer of 2010-2011:

- Young children need close & active supervision – but supervision is not perfect. It only takes a few seconds for a young child to drown
- A securely fenced house yard or safe play area can help prevent a toddler wandering off un-noticed, into a farm dam or waterway
- Go to Farmsafe website for more information about safe play areas on farms

A resource kit with affordable ideas for making a house yard secure and creating a child friendly garden environment, is available from www.farmsafe.org.au.

WHEN: Screening of the 30 second commercial will commence from mid-November 2010

WHERE: The commercial will screen on the Prime TV Network in NSW & Victoria; Golden West Network in WA; Southern Cross Ten in Qld, Tasmania, Remote Eastern & northern SA; and the WINSA network in southern SA.

For further information or resources on Safe Play Areas on Farms, please contact:

- The Farmsafe website at www.farmsafe.org.au
- Contact Dr. Tony Lower, Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety Ph. 02 6752 8210
- Your state or regional RLSSA, Kids Alive or Kidsafe office.