

City parks are green with relief

Councils welcome eased irrigation

Water Restrictions | Nic Price

MELBOURNE and Yarra's sportsfields will be greener this summer following the State Government easing water restrictions.

Melbourne was last week placed on Stage 2 water restrictions, down from Stage 3.

Yarra Council welcomed the announcement, which will mean all of its sportsgrounds will be watered – up from three-quarters.

Mayor Jane Garrett said the new restrictions would also help establish drought-proof turf at Alfred Crescent Oval in Fitzroy North and Burnley Oval in Richmond.

"Under the new Level 2 restrictions, council can apply for special 28-day watering exemptions which will provide better conditions in spring to bed down the drought-resistant turf," Cr Garrett said.

"As for our parks and gardens, we won't see any changes to what we've already been doing, which is watering garden beds and trees

using drip irrigation only." But Cr Garrett said the council remained committed to reducing water consumption within five years to 40 per cent of its 2000 usage level.

Melbourne councillor Cathy Oke said her municipality had already been operating under exemptions to preserve heritage trees, which she said would continue.

"The City of Melbourne will have greater flexibility to water its garden beds in the parks and gardens with the use of overhead sprays at night and an increase in the number of days that watering can take place," Cr Oke said.

She said Melbourne was reviewing which garden beds would receive overhead spraying.

For full information about changed water restrictions, visit ourwater.vic.gov.au

► Will your sporting club benefit from the easing of Melbourne's water restrictions? Email us at melbourne@leadernewspapers.com.au



Fitzroy premiership heroes (from left) Ahmed, Ala, Muhammed and Mohammed.

Picture: MITCHBEAR N11NL522

Fasting four pave win for team

Football | Nic Price

A FITZROY junior footy team's premiership triumph was made all the more remarkable by its four Muslim players, who played while fasting for Ramadan.

The under-14 side beat Doncaster by 26 points on August 29 to maintain a premiership-winning streak at that age level that stretches back at least 12 years.

Ahmed Saleem, of Fitzroy, and a trio of cousins – North Fitzroy's Mohammed Abou-Eid and

Thornbury's Muhammed Abou-Eid and Ala Abou-Eid – played key roles in the win despite having not eaten or drunk anything since sunrise, in accordance with their religion.

Team manager Pam Roberts said the team brought in special measures to help the boys through the match.

"We had cold wet towels over their necks and we rotated them quite a bit," said Ms Roberts.

"It's pretty amazing for 13-year-old boys who have not eaten any-

thing or drunk anything from sun up to go and play a full and tough match of footy. They were all pretty ecstatic afterward."

The Yarra Junior Football League also played its part by bringing the game – usually held at 2.30pm – forward two hours.

League president Peter Haddad said the organisation encouraged kids from all backgrounds to play and that increasing numbers of Muslims were signing up.

Mohammed said fasting made the win all the more satisfying.



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