

## **DPS environmental myth buster –#9**

### **“Eew, the pond is full of recycled water and it is going to smell!”**

- 1 The reality is that we should judge water by its quality, not its history.
- 2 The forecourt pond has been filled with recycled water trucked in from the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (**LMWQCC**).
- 3 The LMWQCC treats more than 90 million litres of Canberra waste water each day. The treated waste water is of such high quality that is used on nearby vineyards, a golf course and sports ovals. The remainder is released into the Molonglo River.
- 4 The water undergoes an extensive 7-step treatment process at the LMWQCC. All the solid material, “sewage sludge”, is removed and incinerated in a high temperature furnace. Farmers buy the resulting by-product “agri-ash” to use as a soil conditioner.

### **Does all this treatment mean it is safe to drink?**

- 5 No, it does not meet the standard for drinking water. DPS will place signs around the pond advising that the water is not safe to drink.
- 6 Extensive monitoring is undertaken to check that the quality of the treated water meets the standards set out in the *ACT Environmental Protection Act 1997*, which aim to protect the rivers into which the water is discharged.

### **Isn't it much more expensive to use recycled water?**

- 7 Not only is the water safe but it is free, although we do pay for the cost to truck it from LMWQCC and Parliament House! DPS has entered an agreement with ACTEW to use the water free of charge, provided we commit to use it in a safe way, such as putting up the “Not safe for drinking” signs

### **I thought Parliament House was complying with water restrictions?**

- 8 Using recycled water does not contravene Stage 3 Water Restrictions. Thanks to the availability of recycled water, that the forecourt pond can be restored to its former glory for the 20 Year Anniversary of the opening of Australia's Parliament House.