

A corporate library's foray into school education

What do corporate libraries, school education, and water have in common? Quite a lot if you work at the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water).

The SA Water Library Service is as a one-person library which traditionally serves a core group of staff in the fields of engineering, water quality research, and analysis. It is accessible to all SA Water and government staff.

A restructure in 2007 saw the library merge with the education team, resulting in a broadened focus to include school education. SA Water's new headquarters at Victoria Square, Adelaide, includes a Learning Centre for water-related school education. The centre opened in February 2009 as a dedicated space for ongoing learning programs on water and sustainability.

To coincide with the opening of the Learning Centre we launched the SA Water Brainwave School Education Program. The program is a partnership between SA Water and The Department of Education and Children's Services with a focus on water education. The 2010 Brainwave program guide is available at <http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Education/LearningProgram/Brainwave.htm>

The Library Services Coordinator is responsible for the following programs and resources:

Teaching Resources

In 2008 the library began developing a collection of primary and high school level teaching resources. The collection is available for loan to South Australian teachers to assist with the delivery of their water-based curriculum units. A PDF list of all teaching resources is available via the SA Water website.

Living Loans

This is a variation of the concept successfully used in public libraries around the world. Instead of the public visiting the library, we lend our staff out to schools. SA Water staff visit a class to discuss a range of water-related topics. The program began in February 2009 and as of June 2010 has reached more than 1000 students.

Educational publications

A gap was identified in water conservation resources for the 4–8 year-old bracket. In response, the Library Services Coordinator wrote *Captain Plop's Water-saving Mission* (2009), an educational picture book to help children understand the importance of water conservation around the home. It was distributed to all schools and libraries in South Australia. A digital version is available at http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Education/LearningProgram/Captain_Plop.htm

A gap in desalination resources for the same age group has also been identified. A second book, *Captain Plop: The Desalination Adventure*, is due for publication in 2010. This book will educate children on what desalination is and how it works.

Toilet History Program

In May 2010 the Library Services Coordinator developed and ran *Toilets Through Time* as part of SA History Week. The program looked at the history of toilets and sewers and included hands-on activities to highlight the importance of sewerage systems in eliminating water-borne disease

outbreaks, materials used prior to the invention of toilet paper, and how the modern s-bend removes sewer odours. Weekday sessions were held for students in years 6–10. These students were introduced to a range of toilet designs and methods of sewage disposal dating from as early as 3500 BCE through to the 21st century. To conclude the week the general public were invited to attend the display.

Also as part of *Toilets Through Time*, a competition to design a toilet of the future was held for year 6–12 students. Prizes included vouchers for students and wastewater book packs for their school libraries. See <http://www.abc.net.au/local/videos/2010/05/27/2911299.htm?site=adelaide> for local ABC media coverage of the event. For further information visit <http://www.sawater.com.au/education>

What's next?

In 2011 the library will continue to provide resources to government staff and teachers will continue to have access to educational resources and living loans. We are always looking at ways to improve our services to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate resources are made available, and that we can meet the needs of our users.

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