

CUSTODIAN NEWSLETTER

Welcome to 2023 Edition 3

We trust that being a CMCA RV Park Custodian is a positive and enjoyable experience. Obviously, you are dealing with humans, so not everything will go smoothly all the time. At head office we are here to help you as much as we can.

What are the things that make the role enjoyable?

1. Sharing happy hour stories with like-minded travellers
2. Receiving compliments from guests about how well you are doing your “job”
3. Seeing a park that looks great and runs smoothly
4. Enjoying being in a town or area for an extended period so that you can get to know the “locals” and what there is to see and do and share this with other travellers
5. The great work you do then encourages others to take on the role of Park Custodian



Happy hour at CMCA RV Park Charleville

What are some of the challenges this role might throw at you?

1. Weather extremes that affect the operation of the park, and the comfort level of the custodians
2. Trying to explain to someone what it means to be self-contained, and why a bucket is not acceptable for grey water collection 😊
3. Explaining why the guests should not drop their grey water on the ground, even during a drought
4. Managing people with their pets
5. Equipment failure and breakdowns
6. Peak season in the north of Australia!



Innisfail RV Park after some heavy rain

This edition’s hot topic is *Self-Containment*

This is always a contentious topic of discussion, and a lot of misinformation is spread through social media and word of mouth. Many travellers have years of experience on the road and their perception of self-containment may be different to CMCA’s. There is also confusion in the market, with manufacturers and retailers selling “self-contained” RVs that are not necessarily fully compliant with our CMCA SCV rules.

Our aim is to help travellers become self-contained, not just so they can stay in our parks, but so that they are more responsible when travelling in general. It is a shame that many caravan parks allow the disposal of grey water directly to the ground and local waterways, because this is generally not allowed under their permit to operate.

If you have heard the comments, “what is wrong with a bit of grey water on the ground” or “the grass and trees really need a drink”, it is important to remember that in isolation this may be the case, but when you have a large number of campers dropping grey water in the same area there is a cumulative effect on the environment (and not to mention the park grounds).

Another issue with grey water is that we have no control over what this wastewater contains. For some it may just be some soap or dishwashing liquid, but what about food scraps, bodily fluids, oils, etc? I know that our own home kitchen sink water can contain much more than dirty water, and an RV will be no different.

Our website contains some great information for travellers on how to set up their grey water system on a budget and be compliant. It is worth having this information available at the park to hand out, so let head office know if you need more of these.

<https://rvparks.cmca.net.au/DynamicPages/Index/custod33>



The units we now supply from NHQ to our parks, 40lt tank from Outback Equipment and parts from local plumbing stores

If you have someone arrive who is not compliant, it is always worthwhile having a chat about how it could be achieved based on what their set up is. If you are not sure, call head office.

The portable totes that we supply at each park are **temporary use** totes, they are not meant to be hooked up to an RV for extended periods of time. Local hardware or plumbing stores carry most elements of a compliant system, so suggest they have a look at upgrading their system so that they can stay in your park, and others in the future. It is common that caravans do not have a tap on their outlet, so if you see this, suggest the purchase of one the next day, the cost can be less than \$15.00.



Image from the CMCA website article

What to do when you or someone else sees a guest “breaking the rules”

- Don’t approach them in a public setting, ask to discuss any issue in private
- Talk about the self-containment rules and make suggestions on how they could improve either their set up or practices

- Offer solutions
- If the guest does not agree with your information, suggest they call NHQ for clarification or provide them with a copy of the park rules

We do receive complaints from RV Park guests about people they believe are not following the rules, which we then need to follow up with the custodians. At several of our parks we have local caravan park operators who are dead against our parks and will continue to monitor the park for those who they believe are not following our self-containment rules. Therefore, all custodians need to be diligent.

We have found situations where some guests will be allowed to get away with being ‘less compliant’ at one RV Park, and then when they arrive at another, the custodians will inform them that they are not compliant, and this can cause tension and arguments because they have already been allowed to stay at another CMCA RV Park.

Showers are not required, but shower tents outside of the RV are not allowed in our parks. Toilets are compulsory, either fitted within the RV or a proprietary portable type, as long as it is used inside the RV, and it has a holding tank. Sinks are compulsory and must be fixed to the RV, with a watertight connection to a grey water collection system.

Unless we get a national self-containment standard and a system of compliance confirmation, the CMCA policy is the only one we can rely upon. If guests do not agree with our rules, they are welcome to cancel their booking and stay elsewhere, although helping them to become compliant is a better outcome for all concerned. As people upgrade their systems to be compliant this will help educate others in accepted practices and set-ups.

You should have SCV stickers on hand to affix to those RVs that then meet our SCV standards. Please let NHQ know when you are running low on stocks of these.

If you are looking to be a custodian, or want to do more of it, please check the **Custodian Calendar** within the RV Parks page of the website. If you are not confident about doing this role on your own, talk to us about the opportunities to be co-custodians at some of our parks.

<https://rvparks.cmca.net.au/Home/CustodiansCalendar>

FUTURE EDITIONS

Please send in your requests for what you want to see in future editions of this newsletter. It is your resource.