

Water Safety

COVID -19 Restrictions

Restrictions are currently in place please check with <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/> for further information.

The Murray River is a fantastic asset available for Mildura residents and visitors to the region to enjoy. However like any significant body of water, there are dangers that come with enjoying the mighty Murray. The Murray River is identified by the Royal Life Saving Society of Australia as the nation's number one drowning blackspot, accounting for 70 fatal drowning incidents in a 15-year period ending 2017. Between 1 July 2002 and 30 June 2017, 140 people drowned in rivers, creeks and streams in Victoria, with males making up 87 per cent of victims.

Why do drownings occur in inland waterways?

The flat or still surface makes the river's currents seem tranquil and can provide a false sense of security. The Murray is also not regularly patrolled by lifeguards, and should people get in trouble, there may not always be someone there to assist. Deep water, strong currents and deep holes near banks or sandbanks can also pose potential threats.

What safety precautions should I take?

- Never swim alone
- Always swim with your children
- Always enter water slowly, feet first – never dive in.
- Take care when walking, as the riverbed can be unstable and uneven.

Anything else I should consider?

- Submerged objects like rocks and branches are often invisible under the surface, water can be deeper than you think, and has steep drop-offs
- Sandbars are the best places to swim, however they can have deep holes lurking nearby
- Currents can be strong – if you get caught, float on your back and signal to others for help.



The Murray River has been identified as the number one river drowning blackspot in Australia. At 2508km's, the Murray River is Australia's longest river. It forms a majority of the border between Victoria and New South Wales and stretches into South Australia.

47% OF VICTORIANS THAT DROWNED IN THE MURRAY RIVER HAD REPORTEDLY CONSUMED ALCOHOL PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT.



19 DROWNING DEATHS OF VICTORIANS IN THE MURRAY RIVER FROM 2008-2019



79% WERE MALES AND WERE 10 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DROWN THAN FEMALES



26% WERE AGED BETWEEN 25-44 YEARS





Understanding our river

The Murray River is a beautiful place to swim. River Signage is designed to help you become aware of the dangers of swimming in the river. Read it and understand it. Rivers are constantly changing, create currents that alter the river course. What may seem safe may not be. Respect and understand our river.



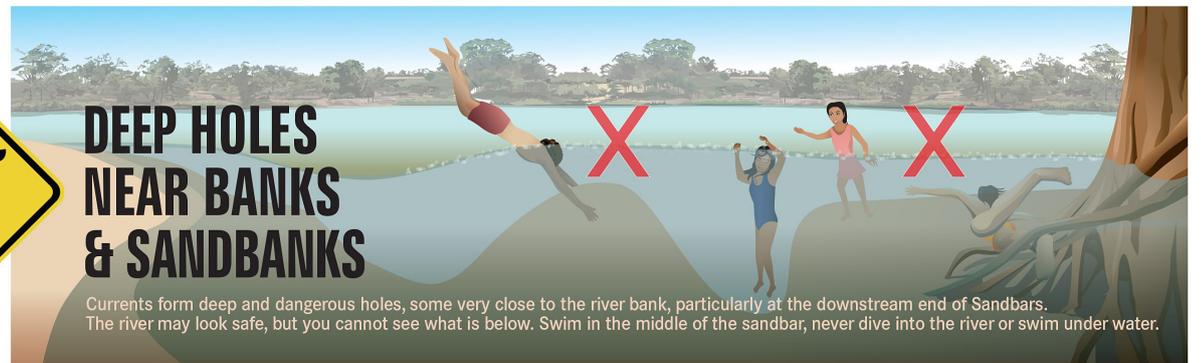
DEEP WATER

Deep water is where the river is darkest. The Murray River is very deep, even close to the river bank. Do not swim out of your depth. Sandbars offer the shallowest and safest places to swim.



CURRENTS MAY EXIST

Currents in the Murray are the strongest around bends in the river where the water flows quickest. If you are caught in a strong current, stay calm, float on your back and signal for help.



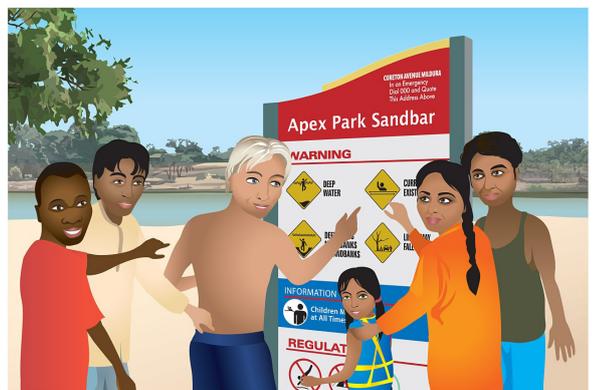
DEEP HOLES NEAR BANKS & SANDBANKS

Currents form deep and dangerous holes, some very close to the river bank, particularly at the downstream end of Sandbars. The river may look safe, but you cannot see what is below. Swim in the middle of the sandbar, never dive into the river or swim under water.



LIMBS MAY FALL

Eucalypt trees can drop large branches at any time without warning. Never camp or park your car directly under gum trees, but do so in a clearing.



READ IT - UNDERSTAND IT

Please read the River Signage provided. Ask for some assistance if you don't understand it. Your safety is relying on it.