

MEDIA RELEASE



28 July 2020

BEN (BEACH EMERGENCY NUMBERS) SIGNS INSTALLATION IN SHIRE OF CARNAMAH

In December 2017, the Western Australian Government launched a grants program to provide financial assistance to Local Government Authorities (LGAs) who wish to introduce emergency response signs along beaches with public access. Shire of Carnamah's subsequent application was successful in securing a grant for the introduction of the Beach Emergency Numbers (BEN) system. The BEN system – named in honour of fatal shark bite victim Ben Gerring - is a coding system designed to improve emergency response times by installing signs with unique numbers at beach access points. These signs provide specific location information which is vital when emergency services are deployed.

“Beach users should become familiar with the BEN signs” said Vin Fordham Lamont, Chief Executive Officer, “and take note of the unique code on the closest sign to the beach access point they use. This will ensure they can access vital emergency services in the event of a shark sighting/attack or another serious situation/event”. The signs will be installed at Illawong, Gum Tree Bay, Coolimba, Lake Indoon and Dumper Bay in the coming weeks.

How to use the BEN signs

In the event of an emergency, dial 000 and quote the unique code and specific location information. Where possible, the caller should wait at the beach access point until emergency service crews arrive.

What do BEN signs look like?

All BEN signs installed under the State Government's program are reversible with a uniform **red** and **green** sign on the front and a **beach closure alert** on the back.

***ENDS**

Help keep everyone safe.

Report shark sightings to Water Police on 9442 8600.

**For the latest reported sightings and tagged shark detections
check sharksmart.com.au/or follow the Surf Life Saving WA**