

MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Angel Rings to improve fishing safety in WA**

**In a West Australian first, two angel rings have been installed at Salmon Holes in Albany as an additional safety precaution for recreational fishers in time for Easter.**

Angel rings are life buoys with satellite trackers embedded in them, installed in popular fishing locations and in the event of an accident will work to keep the person afloat until help arrives.

Recfishwest Chief Executive Officer Dr Andrew Rowland said the program has been developed on the New South Wales coast over a number of years with more than 115 angel rings installed.

“Over 50 recorded rescues have resulted from the angel rings being in place in NSW and it is hoped that the program’s success will be reflected in here in WA. Recfishwest plans to have 18 Angel Rings installed at identified rock fishing safety hotspots around Western Australia by the end of the 2014.”

Dr Rowland said there have been more than 22 rock fishing deaths since 2002 in WA alone.

“Two angel rings have been installed at Salmon Holes to complement the existing safety infrastructure in place which currently includes silent sentries, rock anchor points and safety signage.

Funded through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporations’ National Angel Ring Project, the initiative is a collaboration between the Australian National Sport Fishing Association NSW, Department of Parks and Wildlife and Recfishwest.

Trackers are coded to each individual angel ring and enable land managers to remotely assess their position.

In another move to improve safety and educate the community about the dangers of rock fishing, the Albany Offshore Boating and Fishing Club will have a stand at the entrance to Salmon Holes over the Easter long Weekend (April 18 – 21). People will be offered information about how to tie onto the rock anchor points, life jackets for free loan, and shown the most appropriate footwear to wear when rock fishing.

“It is very pleasing to see the local fishing club actively working to protect and educate their community,” Dr Rowland said.

“Salmon season is already upon us, so fishers are reminded to stay vigilant and use common sense when going fishing. Always fish with a friend, wear appropriate footwear, observe your intended fishing location for at least 20 minutes and wear a life jacket.”

Recfishwest is reminding fishers to stay safe. Here are a few safety tips to follow;

- Tell someone where you are going
- Never fish alone
- Know the area, know the conditions



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- Wear the right clothing
- Wear a life jacket
- Observe first, fish later
- Plan your escape
- Use appropriate public safety equipment
- Stay alert

In 2012 the State Government committed \$300,000 over three years to resource a consolidated, consistent approach for rock fishing safety in WA. Recfishwest is leading a rock fishing safety strategy which is resulting in on-ground works and an education campaign around rock fishing safety.

Recfishwest is working with Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Fisheries, Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Parks and Wildlife as well as Surf Lifesaving WA and Royal Lifesaving WA on this safety strategy.

Recfishwest advocates for sustainable fishing resources and policies that ensure long term benefits to all recreational fishers.

For more information on Recfishwest visit [www.recfishwest.org.au](http://www.recfishwest.org.au) or phone 9246 3366. For more information on new recreational fishing rules visit [www.fish.wa.gov.au](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au).

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