

A decorative header featuring a red ribbon with a bow and candy canes, set against a dark blue background with colorful bokeh lights and stylized Christmas trees.

Lolly Run 2020

FAQs for 1 October 2020

Why do you need to change the lolly run event?

The COVID19 Pandemic forced us to critically assess all events for risk. The risk assessment of the Lolly Run revealed vulnerabilities in terms of safety of volunteers, City staff and community members. Proposed occupational health and safety laws also put City staff at risk of criminal prosecution should an incident occur.

The format of the Lolly Run event has changed several times over its 65 year history to ensure it complied with relevant health and safety standards of the time. The City has a responsibility to ensure that it continues to be delivered safely.

There is no COVID in WA - why should that have an effect on the event?

Unfortunately, COVID has meant the City has needed to make the decision to purchase pre-packaged lolly bags. By purchasing pre-bagged lollies, all handling of the lollies and lolly bags prior to distribution to local families is removed (as the packaging is done via machine).

Is the City just trying to save money by cutting the event?

No. In fact, the City will need to spend more money to ensure that the event is conducted safely. However, the City is seeking private sponsorship to offset this spend.

What is the new format?

The new format is a multi-day event. Two trucks will be travelling through the different residential suburbs of Kwinana each night for approximately one week before Christmas.

The trucks are provided by a company that provides qualified drivers who will drive the vehicles slowly and safely through the streets.

Volunteers will be welcome to join in and stand at the back of the trucks, that are purpose built for performers to stand behind safety barriers, and distribute lollies to community members.

Trucks will have sound systems and lighting. Music playlists can be determined by community members in the lead up to the event.

Residents will be encouraged to participate by holding small, local street celebrations on the night that the trucks are due to visit their neighbourhood.

What about tradition? Doesn't Council care about that?

Council is very mindful of the values of the community and the decision to alter the event was very difficult. However, the alternative - to cancel the event outright- was totally unpalatable. We are sorry for any emotional upset caused, but we are doing our best to keep the tradition as close to the original format as possible.

What's wrong with using the utes we have always used?

The event has evolved over the decades, from a sleigh strapped to a station wagon, to volunteers on the back of utes. The use of these vehicles has become increasingly unsafe and there is no provision for oversight to check roadworthiness of volunteer's personal vehicles in the previous format.

Furthermore, individual utes do not always provide adequate anchoring points for the sleigh/ chair and sufficient space around it for Santa's helpers and lollies. This increases the likelihood for accidents and injuries to occur that are not an acceptable risk for the City as the coordinator of the event.

How is a truck safer than a ute?

The trucks will be provided by a professional company that will be required to undertake a safety inspection at the start of each day. These inspections are documented as a part of health and safety requirements.

The trucks are also supplied with a professional driver; whose livelihood is dependent on safe driving within all permit restrictions.

The trucks will have safety barriers installed all the way around the vehicle tray where volunteers will be sitting/standing. This will reduce the likelihood of volunteers accidentally falling.

Due to the extra space available on the truck, the City will have a staff member on every vehicle/run allowing us to supervise and provide an adequate duty of care to our volunteers.



Why can't the trucks do it on Christmas Morning?

It is impossible to source twenty trucks to be available on the same day, especially on Christmas Day. Further, the budget to hire and fit out twenty trucks does not represent good value for ratepayers. The City would also need to source and engage twenty qualified drivers and twenty supervisory staff on Christmas morning and this would be costly and difficult to arrange.

What about the Volunteers?

The Lolly Run will still require between 50 and 90 volunteers to make this event a reality.

Volunteers will ride on the back of the trucks, dressed as Santa or a helper, and can spread Christmas cheer (and lollies) to children who come out to greet them as they drive past.

I work full time/what if I won't be home?

The events will run in the evenings once school holidays have commenced.

If residents aren't at home on the day Santa is in their area, the event will provide the opportunity for families to perhaps visit friends or have a picnic in a park in a neighbouring suburb on a different night to make sure they don't miss out.

We loved the excitement of hearing the horns and beeping as it came closer and closer to our house. Will this still happen?

Yes! The trucks will be making sure residents know they are in the area.

The trucks will be fitted out with a large sound system that can play Christmas songs/Carols for the community to enjoy. Community members will have the opportunity to suggest their favourite Christmas song to be added to the playlist in the weeks before Christmas.

Why doesn't another organisation or Toc-H take it over/run it?

Unfortunately Toc-H has not existed for over 10 years.

Discussions have been had with other agencies and they are not able to run the event for similar reasons to the City – the risks associated with the event are too high.

What about the Lolly Bagging Day?

Due to the large volume of lollies required to make this event a reality, the lollies must be ordered at least two months before Christmas.

Given the uncertainty around COVID and the potential for a second wave, the need to purchase pre-packaged lolly bags has become a necessity to ensure the event will still be able to proceed if social distancing restrictions are re-introduced and we were unable to facilitate an 'in-person' lolly bagging event.

The lolly bags that will be distributed this year are machine packaged. This means that no hands will touch them prior to them being distributed to children at their homes.

How will I know what day Santa will be coming past my house?

There will be a schedule of what suburbs will be visited and other important information about the new and improved event will be released in coming weeks via the City's Facebook page and through extensive advertising across the City.

