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## **SUEZ environnement Community Grant ramps up support for Oakford kids**

More than 100 West Australian children with special needs are set to benefit from a \$5,000 SUEZ environnement Community Grant, which has funded new horse riding infrastructure at Riding for the Disabled in Oakford.

The new undercover purpose built tie-up area and ramp, including provision for a hoist to assist severely disabled riders, will be officially unveiled today.

Riding for the Disabled (RDA) is a voluntary, not for profit organisation that provides opportunities for adults and children with disabilities or special needs to develop their abilities and enrich their lives through an enjoyable form of healthy, outdoor exercise that is exciting, challenging and motivational.

In 2014, the SUEZ environnement Community Grants program provided more than \$96,000 to 21 community groups, including \$5,000 to RDA Oakford.

WA State General Manager Nial Stock said Riding for the Disabled is a worthy recipient because it offers children with disabilities the opportunity to participate in fun horse riding activities while receiving beneficial therapy.

“The SUEZ environnement Community Grants program is one of the ways in which we support our local communities. When we learned about the positive health and social benefits these kids gain from horse riding physiotherapy we were keen to provide support,” he said.

“We have had a long-term presence in the local area and being able to assist RDA Oakford with a community grant is a really exciting community initiative for us.”

President of the Oakford branch of the Association, Michael Hidding, said the facility also offers hippotherapy (from the Greek word ‘hippos’, meaning horse) which is a treatment carried out by, or under the direction of, a specially trained physiotherapist or occupational therapist while the child is riding a horse.

“Riding a horse requires an intricate sequence of muscle movements and for children with a disability it can be a very enjoyable way to undergo muscle strengthening and muscle use awareness. It also improves concentration, promotes independence and promotes overall health –



it's a way of having a physiotherapy session without realising you are having one.

“SUEZ environnement has contributed significantly to our new tie-up area and ramp that enables the children to mount and dismount the horses more easily, which will greatly benefit the work we do with them,” he said.

“The health and safety of not only the riders and horses, but also the volunteers and carers, will be tremendously enhanced by this purpose built infrastructure.”

SUEZ environnement is currently accepting applications for the 2015 round of community grants. Interested community groups can check the eligibility criteria and apply online at [suez-envcommunitygrants.com.au](http://suez-envcommunitygrants.com.au) until 22 May 2015.

- ENDS -

**Fact box:**

- Formerly known as the SITA Australia Community Grants program, over \$96,000 was provided in community grant funding in 2014.
- The only national community grants program in the Australian recycling and waste management sector.
- 2015 SUEZ environnement Community Grants program is now open for applications of between \$500 and \$5,000.
- Grant round closes Friday, 22 May 2015.
- SITA Australia, Degrémont Australia and Process Group are rebranding as SUEZ environnement.

For more information, visit [suez-envcommunitygrants.com.au](http://suez-envcommunitygrants.com.au).

**Contact – SUEZ environnement Media Office on 02 8775 5527**

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