

ACT Budget 2011-12

Rates hit Tuggeranong hard

By Peter Reynolds

TUGGERANONG Community Council president Darryl Johnston has claimed the increase in rates in the ACT Budget will see a large increase in residents facing financial hardship.

Tuggeranong residents have been hit with an average rate rise of 5.55 per cent, well above the majority of residents in other areas of Canberra.

In North Canberra, rates are going up by an average 2.82 per cent, in South Canberra 0.16 per cent, Woden Valley 2.81 per cent, Weston Creek 4.79 per cent, Belconnen 3.98 per cent, and Gungahlin 3.68 per cent.

This is the second year in a row that Tuggeranong has had the highest average rate increase, as rates went up by an average of 6.57 per cent last year.

Mr Johnston said many families were already doing it tough financially, and the rate increase could stretch them to the limit.

“Tuggeranong will benefit from many of the Canberra-wide initiatives announced in the budget and we’ve also got a number of Tuggeranong-focused initiatives, such as the multi-use indoor sporting facility, restoration of sporting grounds at Isabella Plains, a pedestrian bridge to the new Namadgi P-10 School and design works for the new CIT at Tuggeranong,” he said. “While these are welcome, the increases in average rates over the last two budgets are really concerning.



President of Tuggeranong Community Council Darryl Johnston is concerned the impact the increase in rates will have on resident in the valley.

Picture: Stefan Postles

“Tuggeranong residents are being hit hard, harder than anywhere else in Canberra.

“There needs to be recognition that people are really hurting financially and this rate increase is certainly not going to help.

“Tuggeranong residents must be asking themselves if they are paying to fund developments in Gungahlin and Molonglo.”

Mr Johnston said he had spoken to a number of welfare agencies in Tuggeranong who all indicated they had seen a dramatic rise in people seeking assistance.

A spokesman from Communities@Work said over the 12 months ending March 31, 2011, his organisation provided emergency relief to people in the Tuggeranong and Weston Creek

communities on 1891 occasions, compared with 1604 occasions in the previous year, an increase of 18 per cent. And statistics provided by St Vincent de Paul show it has seen a 9.3 per cent increase in the level of interviews with Tuggeranong residents seeking hardship assistance and a 22 per cent increase in the number of employed people seeking hardship assistance.