

Thursday 21 September 2023

Join the Festival of Lights

Entries are now open for City of Ryde's inaugural Diwali Festival of Lights Competition.

Residents of the local government area from all backgrounds are encouraged to light up and decorate their homes and apartments to celebrate the Festival of Lights, which is the biggest and most important holiday on the Indian calendar.

The competition, which has \$1,000 worth of prizes on offer for the best decorated homes and apartments, is a result of a motion presented at the 27 June 2023 Council Meeting by City of Ryde Deputy Mayor Cllr Shweta Deshpande.

"The Diwali Festival of Lights Competition will invite residents of Ryde to showcase their creativity and illuminate their homes with traditional Indian-inspired decorations during the festive season," said Cllr Deshpande.

"The competition will encourage participants to adorn their households using energy-efficient solar lights which will raise awareness about sustainable practices while enjoying the spirit of the festival.

"And it will provide an opportunity for residents, both Indian and non-Indian, to appreciate and learn about the significance of Diwali, fostering cultural understanding and intercommunity connections."

Diwali is a five-day festival held between 10-15 November 2023 that celebrates the triumph of good versus evil, light over darkness and wisdom over ignorance.

The name is derived from the Sanskrit term dipavali, meaning "row of lights." During the festival, small lamps are placed in rows along the parapets of temples and houses and set adrift on rivers and streams.

Homes are decorated, and floors inside and out are covered with rangoli, consisting of elaborate designs made of coloured rice, sand, or flower petals. The doors and windows of houses are kept open in the hope that Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, will find her way inside and bless the residents with wealth and success.

City of Ryde Mayor Cllr Sarkis Yedelian OAM said the competition was an exciting new addition to the City's calendar.

"This is another initiative that showcases our fantastic cultural diversity," he said.

"I encourage everyone to get involved in the Diwali Festival of Lights Competition – it will not only help to foster our wonderful, inclusive and harmonious community but will also create a magical sight along our streets when the sun goes down."

City of Ryde's Diwali Festival of Lights Competition is open until midnight on Monday 23 October 2023.

Go to ryde.events/DiwaliComp for more details.

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