

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Hendon groundwater contamination update

The Environment Protection Authority has been working in recent months to assess the extent of possible groundwater contamination in the suburb of Hendon.

The area of Hendon has a historical association with industrial activities which dates back to a time when chemical and industrial waste disposal practices were very different to current standards. The environmental issues that exist at Hendon occur across the world.

EPA Chief Executive Tony Circelli said that this recent testing is standard practice for areas where industrial activities may have resulted in contamination.

“This latest stage of environmental assessment has included the testing of groundwater and soil vapour on road verges in the Hendon area in order to more fully understand the nature of the issue”, Mr Circelli said.

“We have now received a report from a specialist consultant engaged by the EPA to undertake this testing.

“The report concludes that while the level of contamination does not pose a risk to residents in the area, further testing is advisable to confirm this conclusion and provide further assurance for the community.

“Seasonal variation can affect results in this instance and, for this reason, additional testing is required.”

The report confirms the presence of perchloroethene (PCE), trichloroethene (TCE) and dichloroethene (DCE) in the groundwater within the EPA’s assessment area.

The EPA has today letterbox-dropped approximately 3,000 residential and commercial properties in the Hendon area to provide an update regarding the outcomes of this latest testing and to inform people of the planned further works.

This update follows regular ongoing updates to the Hendon community, with correspondence having been sent in December 2013 advising of this recent testing round.

This latest stage of work included the testing of groundwater and soil vapour at a child care centre building, where TCE was detected in the crawl space underneath the building. The results of the indoor air sampling were below the level warranting further investigation.

For further information please contact Ros Agate: 0434 609 394

Based on these results the EPA and SA Health consider that currently there is no evidence of a risk to health for the continued use of the site as a child care centre.

Testing of groundwater and soil vapour has also been undertaken at a primary school in the area where based on the results of the groundwater and soil vapour wells, the EPA considers that there is not any risk associated with the contamination to users of the school site.

The EPA has convened a series of informative community 'open house' sessions to provide a further opportunity for residents and businesses in the area to discuss the latest test results .

These information sessions are scheduled for 12, 13 and 16 August 2014, and residents interested in finding out more information about these latest test results are encouraged to select a session which suits them best and to contact the EPA on 1800 729 175 (8 am to 6 pm weekdays), or via e-mail on epasitecontam@epa.sa.gov.au, to secure a place.

While the EPA wishes to reaffirm its earlier advice to the local community that groundwater should not be used for any purpose until further notice, the EPA provides reassurance that tap water and rainwater tank contents are not affected by the contamination and therefore this water is safe to drink.

For further information on the use of groundwater or, for clarification on any aspect of this contamination issue, please contact the EPA on 1800 729 175 (8 am to 6 pm weekdays) or via epasitecontam@epa.sa.gov.au.

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