

Tuesday, 13 October 2020

Groundwater Prohibition Area to be established for Keswick and surrounding areas

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will establish a Groundwater Prohibition Area for Keswick and surrounding areas from 29 October 2020.

The prohibition will restrict the taking of groundwater via bores in shallow aquifers less than 18 metres deep. Deeper uncontaminated aquifers will be exempt from this prohibition.

Groundwater in shallow aquifers in portions of Keswick, Forestville, Ashford, Everard Park, Wayville and Mile End South has been significantly contaminated from historical industrial chemical use when past chemical handling instructions advised to tip used chemicals onto the ground.

Historically the area has hosted manufacturing and industrial activities, including white goods and vehicle manufacturing, electroplating, concrete and asphalt production, and printing.

As a result harmful chemicals have seeped into groundwater aquifers in the area, including petroleum and chlorinated hydrocarbons, such as tetrachloroethene (PCE), trichloroethene (TCE), metals and nitrates.

The EPA has undertaken a 90 day consultation in relation to the proposed Groundwater Prohibition Area, and has now written to affected residents and landholders to advise that the prohibition area will be established.

EPA Director Regulation, Peter Dolan said the prohibition area will protect current and future residents.

“Groundwater from shallow aquifers in the area is not safe for drinking, washing, watering edible produce and lawns, or for use in swimming pools,” Mr Dolan said.

“From 29 October anyone found pumping water from bores in shallow aquifers less than 18 metres deep could face prosecution and fines of up to \$8,000 apply.

“Residents in this area should only use rainwater or mains water for irrigation.”

The prohibition does not apply to bores accessing water in deeper aquifers in the area.

Residents who are unsure about the depth of their bores or who require further information may phone 8463 4799, email engage.epa@sa.gov.au or visit engage.epa.sa.gov.au/Keswick.