

EPA 05/17652

Dear Local Resident

Update on contamination in Edwardstown, South Plympton

This letter is to update you on progress in the ongoing investigation of groundwater contamination in Edwardstown and South Plympton.

Indoor vapour testing

Indoor air sampling recently conducted by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) was targeted to 20 homes in the Edwardstown area, the majority of which are located where the groundwater contamination is known to be most concentrated. The results of this sampling have been assessed by both the EPA and the Department of Health (SA Health).

We are now in the process of meeting with these residents to explain the results to them in detail.

In summary, testing was conducted for certain solvents and industrial chemicals, including TCE and PCE, BTEX and selected VOCs. These chemicals are commonly used in manufacturing processes and/or in fuels. The results indicate that the concentration of the chemical substances in the indoor air data is typical of environmental chemicals expected to be found in urban homes, with the exception of perchlorethylene (PCE). However, SA Health has advised that the levels of PCE detected are below the appropriate health guideline value and, as such, do not indicate a risk to health.

Ongoing testing and investigation will be required as there is a possibility that the levels of these chemicals could vary over time. The EPA and SA Health will develop a sampling plan to investigate the long term behaviour of the chemicals of concern. This sampling program will look at the frequency, duration and type of further testing that will be needed and will commence over the next few months.

Further groundwater testing

Hills Holdings is continuing its work to determine the source and the extent of the groundwater contamination. Ten new sampling bores have been drilled over the last month and it will be several weeks before the results of this groundwater assessment are available. These results will enable the western and southern boundaries of the plume to be more accurately determined.

Updated information about the extent of the plume will be provided to residents as soon as this is available. It will also be published on the EPA website (at www.epa.sa.gov.au via the *What's New* list on the home page).

As a precaution SA Health and the EPA are advising people to not to use bore water for any purpose until further notice. Mains water and rainwater tanks are not affected.

Remediation of former Hills site

Contaminated soil has been excavated from the former Hills site and transported by truck to a facility licensed by the EPA for treatment and disposal. The site is currently being backfilled with suitable fill material.

Auditor

The independent site contamination auditor will continue to review all assessment and remediation works undertaken in relation to this issue.

Next steps

We will continue to publish updated frequently asked questions and answers on the EPA website (www.epa.sa.gov.au via the *What's New* list on the home page) and you can call the EPA hotline on 1800 729 175 for any other questions you might have. We will also keep you informed via further letters when new information is available.

Yours sincerely



Helen Fulcher

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

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