



Department of Health
Government of Western Australia

Public Affairs

Media Statement

15 March 2007

Update on health response to lead issue in Esperance

The Department of Health will review more than 100 blood results and is providing free rainwater testing for Esperance residents.

Director of Environmental Health Jim Dodds said 30 community members had gone to their GPs to have blood tests for lead levels and a further 70 workers at the Esperance Port Authority were tested yesterday as part of their occupational health and safety program.

“The results will be reviewed as they become available next week and will enable us to better assess any possible health risk,” he said.

“If anyone has concerns about their health, the Department recommends that they visit their GP.”

The Shire of Esperance has begun a planned rainwater sampling program throughout the town and it is hoped the results will be ready early next week

Mr Dodds said the Department would pay for the testing and people should contact the Shire on 9071 0666 to make arrangements.

“As a general rule, the Department of Health recommends that anyone using their rainwater for drinking have it tested to ensure it meets the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines,” he said.

Mr Dodds said that the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) was continuing to conduct lead dust monitoring in Esperance and that these results would also help to determine if there was any public health risk.

“The Department of Health is working closely with DEC to ensure that any possible source of lead in the community is identified,” he said.

- ENDS -

MEDIA CONTACT: 9489 2888