



Department of Health  
Government of Western Australia

Public Affairs

## *Media Statement*

---

Tuesday 20 March 2007

### **Blood levels ease health concerns**

The Department of Health has been encouraged by the results of almost 100 blood samples taken from Esperance residents, which reveal lead levels well below the recommended guidelines.

Director of Environmental Health Mr Jim Dodds said 84 port workers tested last week had levels well below the current WA occupational health and safety guidelines of 50 micrograms per decilitre.

“This is also below the proposed new occupational goal of the Esperance Port which is 35 micrograms per decilitre,” he said.

“In fact 75 per cent of these workers had levels below 10 micrograms per decilitre, which is very pleasing.

“In addition, the 13 community members voluntarily tested last week have also come back well under World Health Organization guidelines (for the community) of 10 micrograms per decilitre.”

Mr Dodds said while the investigation was only in its early stages, the results confirmed the view that while it was apparent that lead had found its way into the bird population, the Department of Health had not seen evidence that human health had been affected.

“However, we acknowledge community concern and the Department is running a lead testing clinic at the Esperance Hospital to take blood tests and provide health information for concerned members of the community,” he said.

“This is in addition to the normal blood testing service offered by the Esperance Hospital.

“In particular, we advise all pregnant women and children under five years to seek testing as they are most at risk from lead exposure.”

The clinic is open from 8am to 4pm weekdays and members of the public can call 9071 0891 to make an appointment.

A community health nurse is also available at the clinic to provide general health advice.

Alternatively, people can visit their GP or call HealthDirect on 1800 022 222.

For more information on health issues visit [www.health.wa.gov.au/envirohealth](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/envirohealth)

**Media Contact: (08) 9489 2888**

**Media contact: (08) 9489 2888**