



30 March 2007

Update on testing in Esperance

The vast majority of blood test results from Esperance residents continue to show lead at levels below the recommended guidelines.

Of the 411 results from the community tested so far, 404 have been below the World Health Organization guideline of 10 micrograms per decilitre.

Director of Environmental Health Jim Dodds said the average blood lead level in all age groups was about two micrograms per decilitre.

“We have seen seven results (six adults and one child) which are above the recommended level, however, none of these people require treatment.

“All of these people will be contacted individually to determine how they might have been exposed and the child has been followed up by the family’s general practitioner,” he said.

“In addition, we are following up five children who had a blood lead level over three to help with investigations and to look at measures to reduce further exposure.”

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

Mr Dodds said rainwater tank results continued to show that some samples exceeded the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines for lead and nickel.

“So far we have tested 523 rainwater samples with 86 exceeding the guidelines for lead and 173 have been over the guidelines for nickel,” he said.

“These residents are being contacted immediately to discuss the appropriate action,” he said.

The DOH advises residents not to drink water from rainwater tanks until they have been tested and people should contact the Shire on 9071 0666 to arrange this.

Results from the testing still underway will be available at an information day to be held in Esperance on Saturday 14 April. Details will be advertised closer to the time.

For more information visit www.health.wa.gov.au/envirohealth or call HealthDirect on 1800 022 222.

Media contact: (08) 9489 2888

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