



 **SITE CONTAMINATION - THEBARTON**
Community information evening #2 – report

Monday 27 November 2017

5–8 pm ‘drop in’ session

Bowling Club, 88 South Road Torrensville



Summary

This report summarises the community information session held on 27 November 2017, which was hosted by the EPA for residents within the Thebarton assessment area. The purpose of the session was to inform residents about the stage 1 results of the work the EPA is undertaking.



27 November 2017 – attendees talk to staff at the Torrensville Bowling Club, 88 South Road Torrensville

Thebarton orphan site under assessment by the EPA

The EPA is undertaking work in Thebarton to assess the extent of groundwater contamination, to better understand the vapour contamination and to identify whether sites identified as potential source locations are sources of the contamination.

Responsibility for site contamination is assigned according to the 'polluter pays' principle – the original polluter is liable for clean-up and associated costs on and off the source site, regardless of when it was caused. The EPA ensures responsible parties undertake this work appropriately and makes information on contaminated sites available to the public.

Sometimes identifying the polluter is difficult as this is often the result of previous industrial activity or activities that may have occurred a long time ago. Understanding the timing of the contamination and identifying the polluter is therefore not always possible, and in some cases companies identified as polluters in the past no longer exist. An 'orphan' site is where the original polluter no longer exists, cannot be determined or is unable to carry out or pay the costs of assessment or remediation.

Work has been undertaken in Thebarton to delineate the extent of the contaminated groundwater and soil vapour plumes and to determine if a risk to residents exists as a result of the soil vapour contamination.

The extent of the groundwater contamination has generally been determined across the Thebarton assessment area. However, further work is required in the north-west. The vapour intrusion risk assessment, predicted by computer modelling, indicates that indoor air concentrations of TCE across the majority of residential properties in the Thebarton assessment area are safe.

The EPA has been in contact with a small number of affected residents separately to undertake testing of indoor air and subfloor. Ventilation systems are being installed in some of these homes to remove the risk. Community engagement approach

The Environment Protection Authority embarked on a community information approach that involved the following:

- A tailored letter to residents in the assessment area (354 residents) advising that the EPA has now completed the first stage of a groundwater and soil vapour assessment in Thebarton. The letter included contact details for the Principal Adviser, Community Engagement. A map of the groundwater contamination was attached to the letter as well as an invite to the community information session.
- A tailored letter mailed out to 123 absent landowners which also included the attachments outlined above.
- The community information session was held for residents and interested parties and provided the opportunity for the community to meet with representatives from the Site Contamination team of the EPA. A children's table with colouring in activities and light refreshments were provided to make it convenient for residents to attend. Wheelchair access was available.
- Continued engagement with Renewal SA with regards to Housing SA properties affected by the vapour intrusion has been ongoing.
- Responding to incoming emails and phone calls from stakeholders, which were received directly to the Principal Adviser, Community Engagement, via the engage.epa@sa.gov.au inbox and indirectly via the EPA's main phone line.
- A new fact sheet was prepared on the progress of work – stage one complete ([Community Update #2](#))
- A further fact sheet was provided to those who wanted more information on '[Trichloroethene \(TCE\)](#)' produced by SA Health.
- A [Site contamination overview fact sheet, December 2016](#) was provided, which outlines the extent of groundwater contamination in industrialised nations worldwide, and the South Australian experience.
- Maps were provided that showed the estimated locations of the 37 temporary soil vapour bores, additional 15 soil vapour bores and 20 groundwater monitoring wells.
- The EPA website was updated with a designated page for the [Thebarton assessment area](#), which is a one stop online portal for all previous and current information.

Community engagement objectives

The purpose of the community information session was to:

- Explain to residents that the EPA has now completed work to determine whether soil vapour contamination exists in this area.
- To communicate the results which have now been received, with residents in the EPA assessment area.
- Advise those living within the assessment area boundary not use groundwater (bore water) for any purpose.

- To establish trusting relationships with members of the community that are genuinely interested in finding out more about site contamination in Thebarton. This involves the EPA being a friendly host and welcoming members of the community to make them feel comfortable and reassured, and providing follow up requests for information that continue to establish confidence and trust.

Community Information Session – 27 November 2017

A total of seven people attended the community information session held on Tuesday 27 November 2017 from 5–8 pm at the Torrensville Bowling Club. Attendees talked with EPA staff and spent around 15 minutes at the session on average.

The atmosphere was very positive and there were no aggressive or agitated participants. No media announced their presence or appeared to attend the event.

Attendees from the EPA Site Contamination team were Andrew Pruszinski (Manager Site Contamination) Dale McGill (A/Principal Adviser Site Contamination), Rachel Hudson (Principal Adviser Community Engagement) Shannon Thompson (Adviser, Site Contamination), Mitchell Talbot (Site Contamination Officer) and Sarah Verdonk (Community Engagement Officer).

The people who attended were genuinely interested in hearing about the results and what the residual contamination meant for them living within the EPA assessment area.

Next steps

The EPA will continue assessment work to identify the extent of the groundwater contamination. Work to mitigate homes affected by vapour intrusion into indoor air will also continue and in the first half of 2018. The EPA will continue to keep the community informed as further information is obtained, and will continue to work with residents affected by site contamination.

*For **further information** please contact:*

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