

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Groundwater contamination, Birkenhead

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The EPA was recently notified of groundwater contamination in the suburb of Birkenhead. The sampling that identified the contamination was undertaken as part of a site contamination audit.

“Both cyanide and arsenic concentrations were detected in groundwater. The cyanide concentration was at a level greater than that recommended for drinking water, while the arsenic concentration was equal to the recommended level,” EPA Chief Executive Helen Fulcher said.

“As a precautionary measure, the EPA is doorknocking approximately 59 properties in the vicinity of the site to determine properties that have bores or wells.”

The EPA is offering to sample and test groundwater to help determine the extent of contamination and to rule out any risk to the health of people who may be using the water. There will be no cost to owners/ residents/ occupants for this work.

Analysis of the results will take several weeks. Once results are received, the EPA will provide advice to those persons whose bores/wells were sampled. The advice will be prepared in conjunction with experts at the Department of Health.

There is no reason for immediate concern.

The Department of Health consistently advises South Australians not to consume bore water, unless they have had the water tested by a specialist laboratory and it is shown to be safe.

Residents with any health-related queries in relation to the groundwater contamination should contact Public Health, SA Health 8226 7100.

The EPA is continuing to conduct investigations into the source of the polluted groundwater.

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