

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



GPO Box 2607 Adelaide SA 5001
250 Victoria Square Adelaide SA
T (08) 8204 2000 F (08) 8204 2020
Country areas 1800 623 445

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Test the quality of your bore water

The Environment Protection Authority is reminding property owners with backyard bores to test the quality of their groundwater if they haven't done so in recent years.

The “**Test Before Use**” bore water summer campaign is an extension of a similar program over the same period last year to increase public awareness of groundwater contamination and not to use this type of water for drinking or gardening unless it has been tested.

The precautionary measure aims to eliminate any uncertainty of the quality of water which is sourced from bores that can vary between areas in Adelaide's suburbs and the Mount Lofty Ranges.

EPA Chief Executive Tony Circelli said the use of untested bore water for watering vegetables, washing, or for children to play in, can pose a health risk.

“This is particularly important for residential bores which tend to be drilled to the shallowest groundwater depth where contamination is more likely to be located compared to commercial or industrial bores which are at greater depths, where contamination is less likely to occur,” Mr Circelli said.

“Our city is no different to most other industrialised cities around Australia and worldwide where groundwater contamination exists in many areas across Adelaide, especially in the suburbs or near former industrial land,” he said.

“Groundwater can have chemical contaminants from past industrial and agricultural activities and anyone in the Adelaide metropolitan area who uses groundwater for drinking, cooking, bathing, watering the garden or filling up a swimming pool, should be aware of the water quality.”

Whilst private users aren't legally required to test their groundwater, the EPA is reminding all bore users of the SA Health advice to do so regularly at least once every two years, to ensure their water is safe for its intended use.

“If contamination is discovered it is a legal requirement under the Environment Protection Act 1993 to notify the EPA which enables residents, industry and government to protect current and future generations from contamination caused by industrial practices of the past,” Mr Circelli said.

Mains water and water from rainwater tanks are not affected by contamination and home grown fruit and vegetables are safe to consume, provided that they are not being watered with contaminated bore water.

The Australian Water Quality Centre test can test bore water for chemicals by phoning 1300 653 366.

A searchable index of identified sites with groundwater contamination is available on the [EPA website](#).

For further information please contact Chris Metevelis: 0439 137 641