

# Media Release

## Environment Protection Authority



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**Thursday 10 November 2011**

### **EPA overseeing groundwater contamination found GMH Elizabeth**

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has been provided with new information from General Motors Holden Limited (GMH) identifying groundwater contamination at its Elizabeth site.

The updated notification of their existing on-site groundwater contamination plume, previously notified to the EPA on 21 February 2011, was provided to the EPA pursuant to section 83A of the *Environment Protection Act, 1993*.

The new information, provided to the EPA on 21 October 2011, identified groundwater contamination comprising chlorinated hydrocarbons and noted that the plume had extended off-site. The notification identifies that low concentrations of trichlorethene (TCE), perchlorethylene (PCE) dichloroethene (DCE) and vinyl chloride (VC) are present in groundwater.

The EPA is aware that GMH has historically used TCE and PCE at the site as solvents to remove grease from metal parts and plastics, as well as for dry cleaning.

According to EPA Acting Chief Executive Mr Tony Circelli there are no bores being used for residential purposes within the investigation area.

“There are commercial bores in the area and GMH has today, in accordance with EPA direction, door-knocked those properties immediately adjacent to the site and letterboxed other neighbouring properties to notify them of the new information and to advise against using groundwater, said Mr Circelli.

“This further confirms previous advice from EPA and SA Health that bore owners should regularly test their bore water to ensure it is fit for purpose,” said Mr Circelli.

For further information on testing bore water please refer to the Health SA’s Water Quality Fact Sheet below:

[www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/ph-factsheet-borewater-testing.pdf](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/ph-factsheet-borewater-testing.pdf)

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**For further information please contact the EPA Senior Media Officer: 0434 609 394**

Residents and adjacent commercial/industrial property owners should be assured that GMH is fully cooperating and undertaking all necessary steps to deal with the situation.

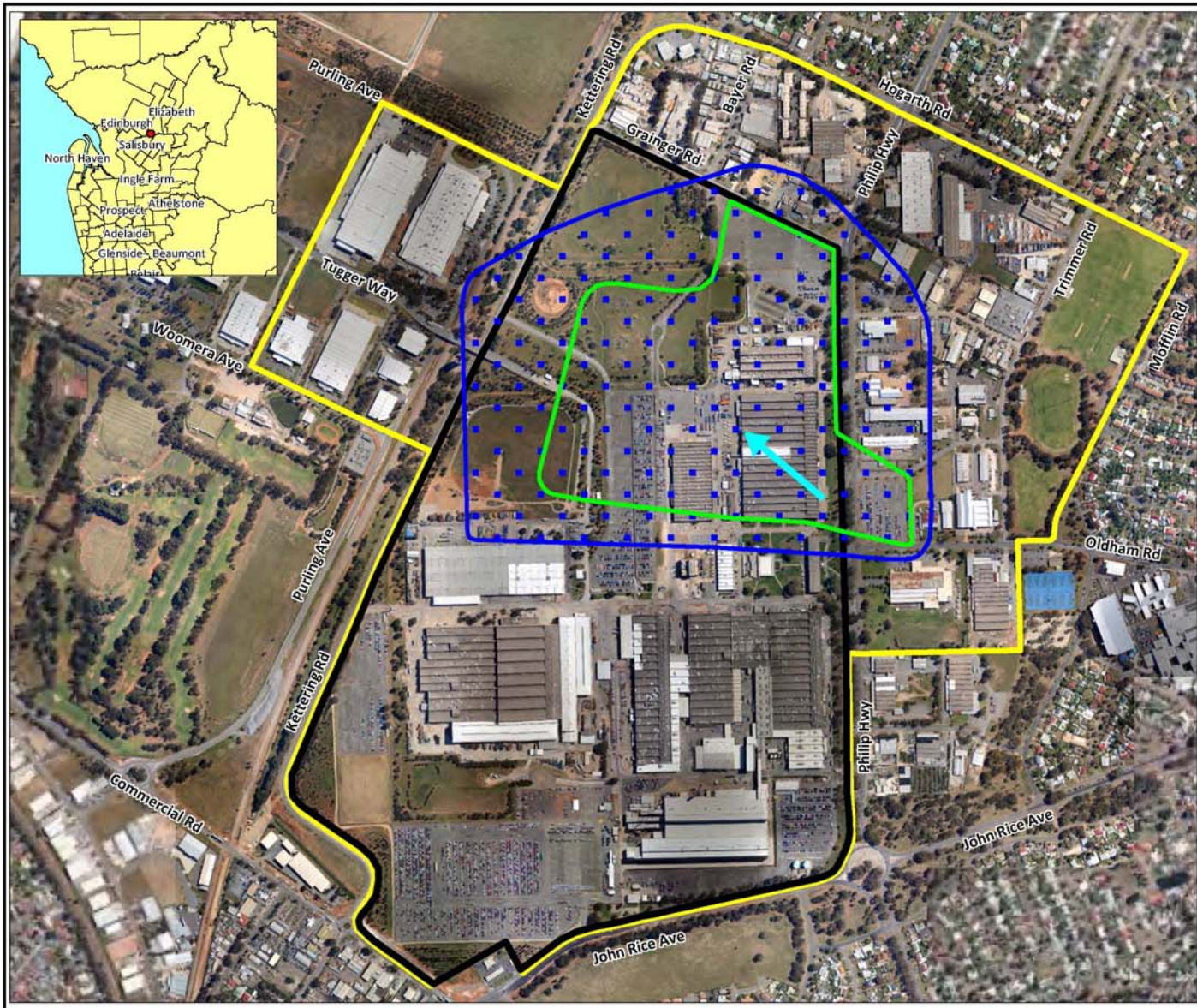
The attached map shows the current known extent of the groundwater contamination and the area currently being investigated by GMH. The map also shows the consultation area where GMH is discussing this matter with nearby property owners.

GMH has engaged occupational hygienists from the University of Adelaide to assess indoor air quality for workers at its Elizabeth plant. This work was undertaken in buildings above the known plume area and the results show that there is no unacceptable risk to human health.

The EPA will continue to oversee all the assessment and remediation that is undertaken at the site and engage with GMH to ensure on-site and off-site risks are managed.

The EPA has published information as 'Frequently Asked Questions and Answers' on TCE and PCE available on the EPA website ([www.epa.sa.gov.au](http://www.epa.sa.gov.au) via What's New on the home page). Information on the notification is also available on the EPA website under the Public Register Directory.

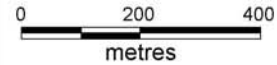
For further information on the use of groundwater and any contamination related enquiries, please contact the EPA on 1800 729 175 during weekdays between the hours of 8 am to 8 pm.



**Legend**

-  Boundary of area in which TCE/PCE detected in groundwater monitoring wells
-  Area of GMH investigation
-  Consultation boundary
-  GMH site boundary
-  Regional groundwater direction of flow

Scale: 1 : 10,000 at A4



Data Source: Nearmaps and ABS

Coord. Sys.: MGA Zone 54 (GDA 94)

**GM Holden Limited, Philip Highway, Elizabeth, South Australia**