LeFevre Peninsula Primary School dust test results
26/9/2008

School and community groups have been briefed today about the results of tests on dust found at LeFevre Peninsula Primary School.

Environment and Conservation Minister Jay Weatherill said that the tests followed consultation with the community and the school over concerns about levels of dust at the school first raised in June.

The Environment Protection Authority has completed an analysis of the dust and concluded that it probably came from the Port Adelaide Waterfront Redevelopment project to the south-west of the school and also from the industrialised area of the LeFevre Peninsula to the north/north-east of the school.

That analysis found that a higher than average amount of dust particles has been found at the school, occasionally exceeding the National Environment Protection Measure for Ambient Air Quality Standard.

The EPA commissioned testing of the dust by the Department of Health.

The test results show that the dust contains several contaminants, including benzo(a)pyrene.

However, the concentration of benzo(a)pyrene in the dust was low and the Department of Health concluded that exposure can be reduced to minimal levels through a clean-up of the school and monitoring and dust reduction.

The dust in the school contains levels above what one would ordinarily find in the general community. This may contribute to a very small increase in the risk of developing cancer (on top of background risk) if a person were exposed to the dust continually over a long period (20-40 years).

The Department of Health however advises that the level and duration of exposure is insufficient to have caused any harm.

“While the report’s conclusions are obviously concerning, we have identified the problems early and actions already have been taken to minimise the dust,” Mr Weatherill said.

“The findings have been discussed with the school, Land Management Corporation, Department of Health and Department of Education and Children’s Services.

“The LMC has been working with the local community and keeping them informed on this issue since reports of increased dust were raised in June.

“It heightened its dust control measures as a result of contact from the EPA at that time.”

Historically, Le Fevre Peninsula has been a dusty area. The report relates to elevated dust levels detected at the school site.

“The Government will respond immediately to the recommendations in the report,” Mr Weatherill said.

“A thorough clean-up of the school will commence on Monday.

“The EPA will ramp up its monitoring regime at the Port Adelaide Waterfront Redevelopment site, the school and surrounding area.
“LMC will continue its actions to minimise generation of dust, including clearing dust from access roads and wetting down dust.

“A 24-hour information line is available for people to call with any concerns and information leaflets will be distributed in the area.

“Parents of school children and nearby residents will be receiving information about the report and the actions being taken in response to it in coming days.”

Mr Weatherill thanked the school community for bringing the matter to the attention of authorities and working with the agencies during this process.

The Minister advised that anyone with further questions should call the EPA information line on 82042004.