



**Government of South Australia**

Department of Health

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# MEDIA RELEASE

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Tuesday, 1 July 2008

## **GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION INVESTIGATION COMPLETE**

SA Health and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) have completed their joint investigation into groundwater contamination in Adelaide's western suburbs.

Groundwater testing at various sites within the suburbs of Allenby Gardens, Beverley, Woodville South, Woodville West and Findon has identified the presence of trichloroethene (TCE) - an industrial chemical used widely as a metal cleaner and degreaser.

SA Health's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Paddy Phillips, explained that despite a thorough investigation by SA Health and the EPA the exact source of the contamination had not yet been determined.

"SA Health and the EPA have written to all of the residents in the affected area to notify them of our investigation's outcomes and to advise them not to extract groundwater for any purpose," he said.

"The concentrations of TCE found in residential bores are below the levels that could trigger acute poisoning.

"However, long-term contact with the contaminated water is a concern, which is why we're recommending that owners of private bores do not use the groundwater for any purpose."

"In addition to putting themselves and their neighbours at risk of exposure to TCE, people who continue to extract groundwater in the affected area could contribute towards further spread of contamination," said Professor Phillips.

**Enquiries: SA Health Media Line: (08) 822-66-488**

The groundwater in the area of contamination will not be suitable for human consumption including drinking, irrigation, swimming pools and other domestic uses for the foreseeable future.

EPA is continuing to conduct investigations into the source of the polluted groundwater and will oversee the ongoing management of the pollution

Management of the use of the affected water is considered to be the only practical course of action at this time.

Residents with any health-related queries in relation to the groundwater contamination should contact the SA Health's Scientific Services on 8226 7100.