

BALGO COMMUNITY — CONTAMINATION

710. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Housing and Works:

- (1) Is the minister aware that the leaking oil drums and coolants stored at the Balgo community that were to have been removed have simply been put back inside the power station compound?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the oil-contaminated soil at the community has not been removed?
- (3) Is the minister aware that the power station batteries were taken away from the area and burned outside the compound at the community's local rubbish dump?
- (4) What steps will the minister take to ensure that the health of the Balgo community is not at risk as a result of these contaminations and actions?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Department of Housing advises —

- (1) No. All drums that had accumulated at the power station compound have been removed. Removal of the drums is cyclical and is done periodically.
- (2) No. All contaminated soil has been removed.
- (3) No. The minister is advised that used batteries are stored in the power station compound for removal from the community and are not disposed of at the local rubbish tip.
- (4) The department, through its contractor, Kimberley Regional Service Provider, has an essential services technician employed at Balgo. The duties of the position include maintaining the security of the perimeter fencing to all essential services infrastructure compounds, including the repair of fencing if vandalised. The department also has a program to remove empty drums and drums containing used oil, coolant and batteries on a cyclical basis.