

SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE — CLEMATIS CRESCENT, GERALDTON

557. Mr D.J. KELLY to the Minister for Water:

I refer the minister to the numerous complaints that she is aware of from residents who live around sewerage infrastructure in Clematis Crescent, Geraldton, concerning intolerable levels of sewer gas.

- (1) Does the minister acknowledge that the problem has not been fixed, despite assurances she gave that work done in June 2014 would fix the problem?
- (2) Will the minister take urgent action to resolve the issue; and, if yes, what action will be taken?
- (3) Does the minister acknowledge that her failure to fix the problem has caused great disruption and costs to the families who live near that facility?
- (4) Will the affected residents be offered compensation?

Ms M.J. DAVIES replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(4) There has been a flurry of activity from the opposition in the past couple of weeks about this issue, despite the fact that we have been working on it for some time and the Water Corporation has been working on it to try to —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Some of these issues are complex and we have to go through a process. This is about managing the issues. If there is a solution to the problem that will not cost taxpayers an enormous amount, we will go down that pathway, and that is what we have been doing. Every solution that has been applied has improved the outcome for the residents. We acknowledge that it is not acceptable and that is why the solution has been fast-tracked. We are hoping to have it in place by the beginning of 2015. I acknowledge that it is not acceptable for the community, and the smell is significant at times. As I said, we have been working on it for some time. I assure the member, as I have assured the residents on numerous occasions because they have been in contact with my office since I have been the Minister for Water, that it is not at dangerous levels but it is uncomfortable. From my perspective as Minister for Water, we have asked for the problem to be resolved as soon as possible. A considerable amount of work needs to go into planning for these upgrades; it does not happen overnight. We are measuring the air quality in an ongoing way to ensure that it does not exceed unacceptable levels in terms of health outcomes. Sorry, member, I will correct my earlier statement; it is scheduled for completion in June 2015. I have asked the Water Corporation to put every —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you now to order for the third time.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: That solution will resolve the problem. In the interim, there have been a number of interventions from the Water Corporation and we have been communicating with those residents to alert them to the works that have been undertaken to improve the outcome. It is not a simple problem to resolve. I understand the concern from the community. We have been working with them. It has been really disappointing from my perspective to see that the opposition—in particular the shadow minister and Darren West, member for Agricultural Region—inflame the community that is already concerned in that space. The member's behaviour has been unconscionable. We have been dealing with that community —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am confident that the approach that the Water Corporation has taken has been a responsible one. We are continuing to work with the community and we will continue to ensure that there are interventions up to the point where we can finally resolve it after the planning for that upgrade is completed.