

WESFARMERS CSBP, GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION PLAN

20. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Housing representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Further to Question on Notice 540 tabled on November 1998 -

- (1) Has Wesfarmers CSBP developed a groundwater management and remediation plan for the arsenic contaminated groundwater detected in 1996?
- (2) If yes, will the Minister table a copy of that plan, and if not why not?
- (3) Has this arsenic contaminated groundwater entered Cockburn Sound?
- (4) How extensive is the arsenic contamination and what level (eg. ppm) has it reached?
- (5) When has the DEP carried out sampling of the contamination?
- (6) When has independent sampling been carried out on the contamination and by which organisation(s)?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) Yes. Wesfarmers CSBP has prepared a remediation action plan for the approval of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Water and Rivers Commission (WRC). Wesfarmers CSBP has liaised with the public and presented a summary of the investigation and remediation in an open forum. This plan is currently being reviewed by the DEP and WRC.
- (2) Yes. I seek leave to table the report. [See paper No 424.]
- (3) It is possible that groundwater containing low levels of arsenic is entering Cockburn Sound. The concentration of arsenic in the shallow monitoring bore closest to Cockburn Sound is 0.015mg/L and in the deep monitoring bore is 0.003mg/L. The natural background concentration of arsenic in groundwater in this area varies between 0.002 and 0.004 mg/L arsenic.
- (4) Three distinct zones have been identified covering an area of about 4.1 hectares contained in the upper groundwater aquifer. The highest concentration of arsenic in groundwater in the most recent monitoring sampling program is 130 mg/L in one bore.
- (5) The DEP has not carried out sampling of the contamination. The DEP requires occupiers of premises to conduct monitoring and sampling, to established protocols and then remediate contamination to criteria set by DEP. This is consistent with the polluter pays principle.
- (6) Wesfarmers CSBP contracted the professional services of a consultant to prepare the remediation plan. The Chemistry Centre WA analysed the groundwater monitoring samples for arsenic concentrations.