

# Department of Health and Human Services

## POPULATION HEALTH

GPO Box 125, HOBART TAS 7001, Australia

Ph: 1800 671 738

Fax: (03) 6222 7407

Web: [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au)

Email: [public.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:public.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au)



File Number:

23 July 2010

### **Water quality – St Pauls River, Royal George**

Dear Resident,

A large water tank was placed at Royal George on Thursday and will be regularly refilled by the Northern Midlands Council. I understand that bottled water has also been given to you.

**This water has been supplied to you free and you should use it for ALL drinking and cooking purposes for the time being.**

**Because of potential risks to your health, you should NOT drink or cook with water from the St Paul's River or from rainwater tanks in the area.**

**We also advise that you do not use the river water for watering home-grown fruit and vegetables until you are advised that the water is okay to use.**

**Showering and bathing is okay, but children should be supervised and told not to drink the bath water.**

**Please also keep your children away from the old mine site.**

Water in the St Pauls River at Royal George was recently tested after heavy rain. Results showed the river water was contaminated. This contamination may only occur after heavy rain. The results show there is too much heavy metal in the water, including lead, cadmium and arsenic. This may be from tailings from the old Royal George Tin Mine leaching into the river. The tin mine is not currently in use.

We have taken water samples from household rainwater tanks in the area as an extra precaution, and are waiting for the results.

It is likely that the amount of metals in the water varies, and is affected by rainfall. The metal levels may drop back to acceptable levels over time without any action being taken, but we don't have enough information yet. We don't know enough about how the river flow affects the amount of metals in the water.

As it is, the river water poses a significant health risk for residents.

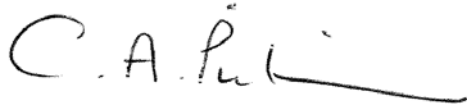
The Public and Environmental Health Service, Mineral Resources Tasmania, the Northern Midlands Council and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment are working together to fix this problem on a short and long term basis.

If you are worried that the water may have affected your health, or your family's health, please talk to your doctor and ask for a blood and urine test.

If you would like more information, please contact the Public and Environmental Health Service. Phone 1800 671 738 (free call) or email [public.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:public.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au)

More information about the Council's water tank is available from the Council, telephone 63977303.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. A. Pickin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Chrissie Pickin  
Deputy Director of Public Health