

# Costerfield Community Update

September 2016



## Health Risk Assessment

The Costerfield Health Risk Assessment prepared by Golder Associates was finalised in April 2016.

Earth Resources Regulation (ERR) hosted an Open House information day for Costerfield residents in April 2016 to outline and discuss the report. ERR and DHHS also met with affected residents to address their individual concerns.

### What it means for the community

The Costerfield Health Risk Assessment concluded that it is safe to live in Costerfield and any potential risks posed by antimony, arsenic and lead can be appropriately managed.

Information on how to reduce your exposure to these metals and others associated with mining activities is available in the 'Are you Living in an Area with Mine Tailings?' booklet available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/>.

A copy of the health risk assessment is available on the ERR website at <http://www.energyandresources.vic.gov.au/antimony>.

### Local honey testing

As part of the environmental health assessment of the Costerfield district, ERR commissioned Golder Associates to undertake analysis of metals (including antimony and arsenic) in local honey production.

Antimony and arsenic were not detected in the honey sample analysed. The concentrations of metals were typical of honey from other parts of Australia and were found to be safe for human consumption.

This is the final food test undertaken as part of the health risk assessment. Eggs, lamb and sheep have already been assessed and found to be safe for human consumption.

## Drinking Water

Relevant departments are continuing to review long-term options for Costerfield's drinking water supply.

While investigations into a long-term solution are completed, Mandalay Resources have agreed to keep supplying drinking water to residents in the affected area.

**Note: Residents are reminded that you should not drink your tank water.**

**Key contact:** Max Murphy, Regional Environmental Health Officer, Department of Health and Human Services, Loddon Mallee Region, 0417 579 635.

## Mine Dust Control

In April 2016 Earth Resources Regulation (ERR) issued Mandalay Resources with a Remedial Notice (pursuant to Section 110 of the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act, 1990* ('the Act')) requiring a review of mining operations with the potential to generate dust.

While the Costerfield Health Risk Assessment concluded that the Costerfield Mine operations are not a major contributor to antimony, arsenic or lead in tank water, dust and soil, the Act requires that risks posed to the environment, to members of the public, or to land, property or infrastructure by work being done under a licence or extractive industry work authority are identified and are eliminated or minimised as far as reasonably practicable.

In response to the Remedial Notice, Mandalay Resources produced an improvement plan to further reduce dust generated by mining operations. The plan includes:

- applying to VicRoads to reduce the speed limit on the Heathcote-Nagambie Road (section used by haul trucks) and approval to spray a soil binding agent on the Heathcote-Nagambie Road and McNichols Lane verge.
- improving wheel wash facilities, including installing a spray bar at the Augusta site (for haul trucks), and sealing the road between both wheel washes and the Heathcote-Nagambie Road.
- improving dust control at the crusher, including adding wind breaks, extending the covered area and installing additional water sprayers.
- applying to extend the area of the Brunswick stockpile to ensure that the overall height of the stockpile doesn't exceed the height of the surrounding trees.



ERR issued a subsequent Remedial Notice (pursuant to the Act) requiring Mandalay Resources to implement the improvement plan actions by December 2016 and monthly reporting on the progress of implementation.

**Key contact:** Bob Disken, Acting Operations Manager (Northwest), ERR, (03) 5430 4693 or 0409 541 158.



*Improvements to dust control measures include retro-fitting a spray bar (for haul trucks) at the Augusta wheel wash bay (pictured above) and sealing the road between the wheel wash bay and the Heathcote-Nagambie Road at both the Augusta and Brunswick sites.*



## Surface Water Sampling

In December 2014 the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) approved Mandalay Resources' plan to discharge groundwater treated by reverse osmosis to the Mountain South Diversion Channel.

To verify that the treated groundwater or surface water runoff surrounding the Costerfield mine was not adversely affecting the downstream surface water, the EPA investigated water quality in the Wappentake and Tin Pot Gully Creeks.

The investigation was done in consultation with both local community members and freshwater science experts.

EPA presented their findings at the August Environmental Review Committee meeting. They said that neither the treated discharge nor the mine is adversely affecting downstream surface water quality.

**Key contact:** Scott Pigdon, EPA North West Regional Manager, by phone on 1300 372 842 or email at [northwest.mailbox@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:northwest.mailbox@epa.vic.gov.au).



*Mandalay Resources environmental performance monitoring includes surface water quality of the Wappentake and Tin Pot Gully Creek.*

## Environmental Review Committee

The Environmental Review Committee (ERC) was set up so that Mandalay Resources can report to the community on the environmental performance of their operational activities. The membership is drawn from the community, regulators and Mandalay Resources.

The last meeting took place on 10 August 2016 and was independently chaired by Claire Flanagan-Smith. The ERC discussed the latest environmental performance data from Mandalay Resources. The EPA presented the results of surface water sampling and ERR provided an update of regulatory compliance matters.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 and is open to all residents of the Costerfield district.

If you would like to attend, please contact Adam Place, Sustainability Manager, Mandalay Resources at [a.place@mandalayresources.com.au](mailto:a.place@mandalayresources.com.au).

## Community Reference Group

The Community Reference Group (CRG) was established by Mandalay Resources and the community to provide a more relaxed forum for open discussion about future mine planning and how proposed changes will affect the community.

The group meets four to six times a year and is open to all residents of the Costerfield district. If you want to attend or if you want more information, please contact Wayne McKay, Chair of the CRG at [wayne@heathcotenews.com.au](mailto:wayne@heathcotenews.com.au).

## Further Information

For further information, including copies of previous investigation and updates on the progress of enforcement actions, please visit the Earth Resources web site at <http://www.energyandresources.vic.gov.au/antimony>.

## Key contacts

Bob Disken, Acting Operations Manager (Northwest), ERR: [bob.disken@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:bob.disken@ecodev.vic.gov.au); 0409 541 158.

Christian Vasconcelo, Senior Advisor, Stakeholder Relations, ERR, [christian.vasconcelo@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:christian.vasconcelo@ecodev.vic.gov.au); (03) 8392 6064.

Max Murphy, Regional Environmental Health Officer, DHHS, Loddon Mallee Region, [max.murphy@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:max.murphy@dhhs.vic.gov.au); 0417 579 635.

Scott Pigdon, Regional Manager, EPA North West, [northwest.mailbox@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:northwest.mailbox@epa.vic.gov.au); 1300 372 842.

Authorised by Ross McGowan, Executive Director, Earth Resources Regulation

Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

1 Spring Street Melbourne Victoria 3000

Telephone (03) 9651 9999

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