

# TOXIC HEAVY METALS TASKFORCE TASMANIA

*Media Release*  
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## **Taskforce Warns Rosebery Residents**

Since the release of the Government's Final Report into heavy metal contamination in Rosebery several residents from Rosebery have undergone medical tests and been diagnosed with heavy metal poisoning.

Marsha Stejskal, Spokesperson for the newly formed network Toxic Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania (The Taskforce) today said "Four seriously ill residents have now left their contaminated properties in Rosebery and found accommodation away from the West Coast."

"We decided we needed to warn residents of the health risks of living in Rosebery by producing a pamphlet - [Reducing Your Exposure to Heavy Metals in Rosebery](#). This weekend our pamphlet has been letterboxed to residents in Rosebery and to other towns on the West Coast of Tasmania."

"The Government and West Coast Council have failed in their duty of care to provide this **critical risk information** to all residents of Rosebery. Contained in the Government's Final Report are **sixteen precautionary measures** recommended for residents to reduce their exposure from heavy metals and we have included these in our pamphlet. Since the release of the Final Report in April this year this information has not been distributed to the Rosebery community who are vulnerable and exposed to heavy metal poisoning. Our pamphlet gives nine additional measures to those outlined in the Oz Mineral's pamphlet ***What you should know about Lead*** distributed in October 2008."

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“In June 2009 The Minister for Health Lara Giddings opened the \$800,000 Rosebery Community Health Centre Redevelopment upgrade. Deplorably the Minister's statement on the Centre's “increased emphasis on health promotion and management of chronic disease” failed to identify the need for greater awareness and action on health issues around heavy metal contamination.”

“The West Coast Council's 2009/2010 Annual Plan *Creating A Dynamic West Coast* commits “to increase public awareness and participation in public health initiatives..” but also failed to promote public awareness on heavy metal poisoning.”

“We believe that there are many more people in Rosebery suffering from the effects of heavy metal poisoning, particularly arsenic and lead.”

“In collaboration with an Independent Environmental Scientist our Taskforce has produced a detailed [critique](#) of the methodology of the environmental investigation undertaken for the Rosebery investigation. We maintain that the Government's investigation in Rosebery was greatly restricted in its scope, used inappropriate benchmarks and produced flawed conclusions. **The Government has no right to play with science when peoples lives are at risk.**”

“We will be calling on the Government to establish an independent population based public and environmental health investigation on heavy metal contamination in Rosebery and we will take our issue to the state election next year.”

“We have established a **Heavy Metals Public Awareness Hotline on Tel 62 655 776** for people concerned about heavy metal contamination in Rosebery. We have also been asked by one family including a three month old baby who are all very ill from heavy metal poisoning, to put a call out for **help for alternative accommodation.**”

“Our medical reports are now with lawyers and we are waiting on legal advice” said Marsha Stejskal.

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