

# TOXIC HEAVY METALS TASKFORCE TASMANIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 23 November 2009

### *Dr Roscoe Taylor has no Evidence*

Kay Seltitzas has today criticised comments on the safety of growing vegetables in Rosebery made by **Director of Health Dr Roscoe Taylor**. “Dr Taylor’s statements in The Mercury 23/11/09 **can not be backed by any scientific evidence**. In response to **Peter Cundalls’ claims of deformed vegetables grown in Rosebery as far back as 1974**, Dr Taylor stated that “the State Government had no knowledge of deformed vegetables growing at Rosebery but residents had been advised to always wash vegetables before cooking and eating” said Kay Seltitzas.

“There is an enormous amount of international research on growing vegetables in heavy metal contaminated soils and it has been proved that **40% of some heavy metals are absorbed into cell walls and can not be removed by washing.**”

During the Rosebery investigation, the government did not conduct any research into heavy metals in vegetables. The Final Report from the Rosebery investigation recommended that people “introduce clean top soil 30cm in depth in areas where vegetables are to be grown.” Clearly raised beds for vegetables in Rosebery are not the solution when high levels of arsenic and lead have been found in samples from roof cavities, soil and water. **An environment in which heavy metal dust is accumulating is not a safe one to grow food in.**”

“**Dr Roscoe Taylor should urgently establish a research program** into uptake of arsenic, thallium, lead and other heavy metals in vegetables grown in Rosebery. Arsenic and thallium have much greater toxicity than lead.”

“As Director of Health, **Dr Taylor must apply the precautionary principle in the absence of definitive research proving the safety of eating vegetables** grown in Rosebery.” said Kay Seltitzas.

For further information contact: Kay Seltitzas 62 655 776

Toxic Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania