

GLASS provides information & referrals on lead poisoning & lead contamination prevention & management, with the goal of eliminating lead poisoning globally & protecting the environment from lead.

GLASS is run by The LEAD Group Incorporated ABN 25 819 463 114

and ***Toxic Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania***



global lead advice
& support service

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INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON ARSENIC AND LEAD POISONING IN AUSTRALIAN LEAD MINING TOWN

The Global Lead Advice and Support Service (GLASS), has published, on one of the most popular lead websites in the world, the story behind [Australia's recent controversy on heavy metal poisoning in an Australian Lead Mining town](#). Four residents have abandoned their homes and many pets have died.

Australian Public interest Law firm Slater and Gordon have taken up the fight on behalf of 30 residents of the small Tasmanian mining town of Rosebery. Some of the residents of Rosebery have been diagnosed with heavy metal poisoning by Dr Andreas Ernst, an eminent Occupational Health and Musculoskeletal Specialist with many years of experience in the mining industry.

Arsenic, lead, cadmium and other heavy metals have been found at high levels in soil, water and dust samples, even by the Chinese mine owners MMG, and some residents have presented with symptoms of both chronic and acute heavy metal toxicity despite low doses – indicating that effects of one heavy metal are synergistic (meaning more than additive) with those of another.

Some of the town residents now working with the Toxic Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania have called on the Tasmanian Government to conduct an independent population-based public and environmental health survey in the town.

Ex-resident Kay Seltitzas says, “The Government's first two investigations were both seriously limited and deficient in so many ways. There’s a desperate need to find out what is causing the very high incidence of cancer and other chronic health problems in Rosebery and other mining towns on the West Coast.”

“Children and the elderly are especially at risk and it is not acceptable for newcomers to Rosebery not to be made aware of the potential health risks from living in a mining town.”

Elizabeth O'Brien, Manager of GLASS said “There is an urgent need for the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to review its guidelines in relation to health risk assessment where complex mixtures of heavy metals can expose people to long term health problems from low level exposure.

“As long ago as January 1992 an [NHMRC guideline](#) stated ‘*synergistic effects of multiple toxicants being present have not as yet been evaluated.*’ The [1999](#) and [2001](#) guidelines both reiterate: ‘*protocols on complex issues such as home-grown produce sampling,...groundwater testing, and the implications of complex mixtures for health risk assessment may need further development in future versions of the Guidelines*’. Yet the affected community is still waiting on credible investigations and clean-up of the contamination.”

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