



\$37.3 million to address lead exposure in Broken Hill

[Roy Butler MP FB post,](#)

3rd July 2026 🚗

I'm pleased to see the NSW Government commit an additional \$37.3 million over four years to expand lead remediation efforts in Broken Hill. This funding will make a real difference for local families and children.

The investment means the number of homes remediated each year will double, with work targeted towards high-risk areas, high-risk families and the homes of children who have already recorded elevated blood lead levels. It will also ensure important community outreach and education programs continue.



For years I've raised this issue alongside Broken Hill City Council because we know the serious impact lead exposure can have on children's health and development. Last year I successfully pushed for the extension of the Broken Hill Environmental Lead Program, and I also sought additional funding through the 2026-27 NSW Budget process.

While the number of Broken Hill children with elevated blood lead levels has fallen significantly in recent years, there is still more work to do. The progress we've seen shows that remediation and education programs work, and this funding will allow those efforts to be expanded.

Broken Hill City Council had asked for additional funding for street sweeping trucks, but unfortunately that has not been included in the additional funding package.

Strong local leadership, backed by long-term support from state and federal governments, is the key to achieving lasting results for our community.

👍❤️ 242

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75 🗨️ 45 ➦

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Comments

Helen Williams

My late mother-in-law told us stories of playing & sliding down the skimp dumps, they drank rain water all their life & guess what she drove until she was ninety, lived in her own home until she was 100 on her own having lost her husband at 69 & she passed at 102 & 8 days. Oh & her & her sister who's still alive went to the club, played the pokies & shared a meal between them. Broken Hill bred them strong 🤗🤗 miss you mum

Geoffrey Keith Lawrence

Supply cheaper Water so that gardens and trees will grow.

Simon Dermody

Let's ensure the whole 37.3 million is...

(a) accounted for

(B) allocated for what it is intended

(C) not frivoloed away with;

Inadequate Program Evaluation

Administrative Bloat and Complexity

Pork Barreling

Poor Evaluation and Transparency

Cumbersome Compliance

If the local council has petitioned for this and then received, then lets ensure its allocation is exactly for what it is granted. One would expect that a clear, concise statement was made to acquire this funding, and now received not wasted on how do we achieve this.

Reply

Rick Mack

3 x-ray fluorescence spectrometers have been bought so the community could detect dangerous heavy metal contamination. \$200 thousand dollars, lost or stolen. Never used.

Kylie Lawrence

It's about time. Also, what are the mines doing to contribute to mitigating lead pollution in the Hill? Why aren't they doing more? With the profits that they make, why don't they cough up for the street-sweeping trucks (they would claim them back on tax as a business expense anyway)?

Errol Hussein

But does the testing continue after they're 5 years old?



Reply

Jason Doubtfire

Errol Hussein nothing wrong with me 🤔🤔🤔

Reply

Errol Hussein

Jason Doubtfire ummmm yes I beleive you mate 😊😊😊😊

Peter Davis

It's a mining town, the mines have supported us for over a hundred years. I'm sick and tired of the mines being blamed for existing.

Rachel Storey

If you would like to look at the long-term effects of lead on communities, Mt Isa has some very excellent studies. For some reason, Broken Hill does not, despite same lead exposure. If you think its ok for a multi trillion-dollar company, and those who subsequently have operated the mines, to mine and do what they like with no remediation works, then well done you. You may want to do some research into the long-term neurological effects of exposure to lead on kids. Companies have a responsibility too. This money is long over deserved. Just because you live in Broken Hill does not mean you should accept third world standards for being grateful to now foreign companies who will take what's good from the land but leave precious little to you and your families. Well done Roy and the Greens who pushed this through.

Vicki Trengovemccormack

Just have your lead levels tested. I was born and still there, my kids born and still there - we are alright. Wash their hands after being outside. Kids of today don't even play in the dirt like we did. You will be fine.

Jason Cox

Drop in the ocean compared to how much revenue has left the town in the last 130 odd years in comparison to what been spent back in the community that made it.

Broken Hill should be the Las Vegas of Australia, nonetheless we fight on.

Rick Mack

I've been trying to get Roy Butler to at least look at [what they've done in Morocco to protect preschool and school kids from lead](#). He's been too busy getting money for remediation.

A solution probably wouldn't make as much money.

Rohan Jones

Free water - encourage lawns and gardens



Kate Marsden

This is great news. The damage lead does is well documented and has been for decades, that's why they removed it from petrol! The people of Broken Hill deserve to live lead free.

Reply

Rick Mack

They can. A simple registered food additive stops lead accumulating in the body. Ask Roy, he has the information I've given his office.

Lead is a slow acting cumulative poison. Unless you're exposed to a lot of lead as a lead risk worker, the effects of chronic low-level exposure are just an increase in what is put down to aging; increased cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, neurological disease and cancer. Nothing dramatic, just a higher incidence. The more apparent effects are with kids; lower IQ, behavioural problems, learning difficulties.

What people need to recognise is that the effects of lead can be avoided. Lead can be irrelevant when it comes to health. Simple, safe and inexpensive, an authorised food additive can provide complete protection.

Not everyone has won the genetic lottery by getting good genes from their parents. Just because some people are unaffected by lead doesn't help people who are.

Greg Bell

How about new bridges from Broken hill to Silverton so people can travel safe over flooding creek and river ????? Keep store open for everyone to visit? 🙄🙄

Jordon Singleton

What about all the kids who are grown now with problems because of the high lead levels?

Reply

Rick Mack

Many of them could be treated. Remove the lead and a lot of neurological effects disappear. But the health department only treats severe lead poisoning, otherwise you're on your own.

Milt MacFarlane

Well done Roy. As an outsider I read a random article on it a few months back that wasn't too flattering for it.

Linda Doevendans

Better than giving out free teddy bears, like they did years ago.

Isabelle Eriksson

A total free thing that would help everyone reduce their lead levels in the community is if you could ask Sydney water [and every other local water authority] to remove the flouride from our tap water.



Flouride is a neurotoxin and has a similar effect on children as lead. Flouride also makes the body absorb lead easier. Flouride is a topical solution [it only works while actually on the teeth and there is no benefit to swallowing it] and most children have free dental care so [fluoride added to the water that passes so briefly through the mouth is] no longer needed. Flouride in drinking water is not common practice in most countries. It is Medication without consent.

Sandra Vodic

wow it only took 60 years well done!!!

Michael Thompson

Great to make an announcement. Can you please provide details of what will be done?

Felicity Archbold

Does that mean they will keep testing after kids turn 5? I remember a study that my daughter took part in when she was 4 years old until she was 12. She is 25 now. They would buy her baby teeth when they fell out and ran samples from the house and yard plus blood lead test every 3 months. Nothing came of that

Jake Watson

Need to see all the details before I rejoice

Barb Barbarella

It would be great to see BHP make a sizeable contribution

Ben Hancock

Need to start training up some youngsters with your values and ethics young **Roy Butler MP** not just your electorate needs you the whole country needs these things and approach strong👊.

Bruce Welburn

Reckon fix up the Tibbooburra road be a better idea?

Stephanie Reghenzani

Need Erin Brockovich on it lol

Craig McNamara

I'm sure those tax \$\$\$ will be well spent.😂😂😂😂😂😂😂😂😂😂

Sebastian Sadgrove

Ain't their expanding like a couple of mines in BH?

Ruth Holmes

Love to know the high risk areas please🙏

Craig Bonell

Fix the roads.



Daniel Sullivan

Great job!

Lyndie Jackson Symonds

You could build a lot of houses for half that money.

Bruce Johnston

IT MIGHT B CHEAPER 4 EVERYONE 2 MOVE 2 ADELAIDE ETC,. COZ HUNDREDS OF **#MILES#** IN ANY DIRECTION COZ ALL D "LEAD DUST" IS BLOWN 360'DEGREES. LOOKS LIKE WE WILL CONTINUE 2 LIVE N DIE HERE.

Jenny-lee Rowbotham

The lead levels dropped because the method of blood lead testing changed. You cannot have lots of results above 15ug/dL [micrograms per decilitre] then all of a sudden there's a change in testing the blood lead levels and the average comes down to 3 ug/dL.

In 1995 the lead levels were 65 ug/dL at 18 months old for 3 children.

NSW Health Department then stated levels were too high so back then, Gribbles Pathology changed their method of testing and from then on there was a 39% decline in blood lead levels [of children up to the age of 5 in Broken Hill].

When the level of concern dropped to 5ug/dL, they changed the method of testing so levels would read below the level of concern - that's why Broken Hill didn't get the funding they should have – it was because the blood lead levels fell below the level of concern.

I have reports that state even low blood lead levels cause brain damage. **Lead impairs learning and behavior by mimicking calcium to cross the blood-brain barrier, directly disrupting neurotransmitter pathways essential for memory formation and impulse control.** By altering the release and reception of chemicals in the central nervous system, lead exposure lowers IQ, accelerates forgetting, and increases impulsivity and aggression.

A report by a leading professor and five other specialists both here in Australia and in America, found from tests conducted on some Broken Hill children that the brain damage they're seeing in these brain tests, was never seen before - extreme poisoning of the brain from lead and other chemicals.

That would be the mine mill reagents from historical dumps that have been moved and the dust created as the dumps uncontrolled dust spewed over the town for years and still to this day every time the mines fire up their underground large fans which pump all fumes, dust and radon gas to the surface. These have spewed all over the town for years.

No wonder there are so many brain masses/tumors in the community.

The method for blood lead testing now is flawed and the results are not NATA accredited so the results cannot be used if your children get sick.

So the Health department have covered themselves.



And Broken Hill deserves that the monitors for dust should be testing what's actually in the dust including chemicals, heavy metals and radiation levels.

The monitors should not just be for one form of lead - galena - when there's a host of various forms of lead in those samples. Why are the mines only reporting larger particle size fractions? They are only required to report insoluble lead and 10 micron particle size when it is well documented that the 2.5 micron particle size fraction causes the most health effects because it lodges in the lungs and is absorbed into the bloodstream and travels to the brain causing a host of health effects including bronchitis etc.

Broken Hill community needs to stand up and demand to know what's in the dust in their homes, preschools, schools, parks, air conditioning units – all this dust should be tested for everything.

NSW EPA and other government departments have covered themselves by under reporting what's in the dust and soil.

And EPA covered the mines from any liability by only having to report 10 micron lead galena, when they are aware what's in the dust from historical dumps this is toxic and hazardous material.

Broken Hill City Council have a lot to answer for... granting licences for open cut mining in the centre of the community. Nowhere else in Australia has this ever been allowed.

As the EPA stated it was your council giving licences for open cut mining and remnant salvage mining that's created contamination of the town.

You had members of Council having shares in the mining company granting a mining licence for open cut mining in the centre of town with family homes sitting on the mine boundary fences and trains carting lead and zinc concentrate uncovered through town with concentrate billowing off rail trucks contaminating all the homes it passed before leaving Broken Hill bound for Port Pirie, South Australia.

Poisoning all the towns along the rail path.

It's been the negligence of a lot of government departments that turned a blind eye to the poisoning of the Broken Hill community. Their way of fixing the problem has been to downplay the true extent of the contamination of the community and people living there.

I did ask why they couldn't put covers on rail trucks. I was told that the Acids in the concentrate would eat holes in the tarps. For this reason, they couldn't be used to stop concentrate billowing off rail trucks.

Our homes and schools were covered in the concentrate.

Then I asked the question: so if acids eat holes in tarps what's it doing to our lungs when we inhale the concentrate lead, zinc and chemicals used in the milling process?

I was told by NSW Mineral Resources staff "it's ok, the material has been treated. No harm."

This is what's happening still: downplay the true contamination and poisoning of the



community in Broken Hill.

Have a look at how many children are on Ritalin and anti-depressants and have autism and other brain disorders.

Even at low levels, lead in any form, along with all the other metals and chemicals cause brain disorders.

Neurotoxins are still getting in to our children every day.

Reply:

Rick Mack

Jenny-lee Rowbotham That's probably why the three x-ray fluorescence spectrometers the community bought have been lost. They just detect lead, not the form of lead.

Lead doesn't affect everyone the same way, some people are relatively immune, most aren't. Some people die early, some don't.

Nobody needs to be badly affected by lead, but most people in power don't want to admit there's a problem, so it doesn't need a solution, regardless of how cost-effective the solution is.

Good hygiene is important, but doesn't keep lead out of your body if you've got chickens. They eat dirt.

James Mullany

And why are taxpayers funding this **Roy Butler MP** and not BHP who caused it?

Jason Doubtfire

Why ?

BHCC [Broken Hill City Council] dry blows the footpaths down the main St!!

Lead Ted would not approve.....😞...

Where are all the dust collection points for the lead level recordings?

Reply

Rick Mack

I don't know BH well enough yet to answer that question, except to say that wet sweeping would be a lot safer. But dust measurements really don't matter because the EPA averages the results so they never have to report that the miners are exceeding licensed emissions limits.

Reply

Gary Smith

Jason Doubtfire - As I replied before maybe their theory of the lead dust in



Argent & Patton Streets is that they run parallel too the line of load ? Whats got me stuffed is how comes it doesn't lob in the residents' yards that live in Eyre, Piper & Hebbard Streets & lands in Patton St. & the Patton St. Park.

Dean Dwyer

What about the effects on people and children who have been exposed to prolonged exposure to lead dust it's all good to clean up but what about the people and children living with the side effects from high levels of lead in their system

Bradley Jenkins

37 million wasted, we all grew up in it no issues. Spend it on infrastructure that keeps this town alive.

Keith Smith

BHP own it. Give them the bill.

Kym Roberg

That will never happen.

Arthur Mergler

Port Pirie?

Marjorie Mason

About time. I'm surprised the Aboriginal owners of BH are not claiming compo for contamination of their country

Dan Daniel

So who do I contact to see if I'm eligible? CBH you guys just dig it up, I'll put down my own stuff. So I only need part of the work done.

Glen Walker

So the taxpayer funds this and the mining companies that caused it pay nothing!!! Yep, the way it always works...

Kouta K Hodge

Mines should be the ones forkin out for it they cause it so....

Rick Mack

Up to 3 years is the age when lead can most lower IQ. But learning difficulties, behavioural problems happen in older kids.

Lead accumulates in the body so testing older kids and adults would make things look really bad. Baby teeth are a brilliant way to measure past lead exposure by the way, as is bone lead. Both teeth and bone can be tested for lead using appropriate portable XRF analysers.
