



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 26 May 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Drinking Water, State Schools

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (10.01 a.m.), by leave: On behalf of all members, I welcome to the gallery students from the Mount Crosby State School. Many schools and Education Queensland residences and other facilities across the State rely on non-reticulated water systems for drinking water. In the past there has been a reactive rather than a strategic approach to the maintenance of water quality in those non-reticulated systems. Advances in testing procedures give us the opportunity now to generate a strategic response. This Government is developing a comprehensive strategy to ensure clean drinking water in all Queensland State schools and Education Queensland facilities that depend on rainwater, bore water and other non-reticulated water supplies.

Staff from my department are currently compiling a list of all such facilities across the State and identifying current maintenance and housekeeping practices. This process to address the continuing integrity of non-reticulated drinking water supplies commenced last year. Q-Build has provided initial details of sites to Education Queensland and this information is now being checked. This validation process should be completed by the commencement of term 3. A complete risk containment strategy is being developed, as well as water system maintenance guidelines for schools. This will ensure that the quality of water at schools and other Education Queensland facilities remains optimal. Guidelines should be completed by August and are being developed in consultation with the Departments of Public Works and Housing and Health.

I have instructed the department to advise me as to a regimen for the testing of non-reticulated water and additional filtration systems, as well as other practical measures. The quality of water supplied to our students and staff must be of an acceptable standard, and we will ensure that this occurs through the establishment of more formal water quality maintenance processes than we have had in the past.
