

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1194

asked on Wednesday, 11 October 2023

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**MR J LANGBROEK** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING AND MINISTER FOR WATER (HON G BUTCHER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the copper detected in Yarrabah's Health Facilities this year and the lead that was detected in Yarrabah's schools, health facilities and some housing—

Will the Minister advise:

- a) what has been done to date (reported separately for both incidents);
- b) when the State Government was first made aware that the water infrastructure was compromised;
- c) how many adults and children were tested for copper levels and how many had elevated results; and
- d) how many adults and children were tested for lead levels and how many had elevated results?

ANSWER:

Queensland Health have confirmed the water leaving the Yarrabah Water Treatment Plant is safe to drink.

In March 2023, the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council experienced some operational issues with its water infrastructure and, at that time, advised the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water of these issues, including the results of a single sample from a tap, taken prior to flushing, that had returned elevated metal levels.

Following this notification, testing was undertaken by Queensland Health. Details about the testing regime undertaken by Queensland Health, or by other agencies with buildings in Yarrabah, should be directed to those agencies.

The Queensland Government then provided \$275,000 funding to undertake priority work at the Yarrabah Water Treatment Plant. This priority work included installing a chlorine analyser; remediation of the reservoirs including valve replacement and cleaning; and installation of an automated pH-control system, all of which has now been installed and is operating effectively. While these works were underway, water from the Council's water treatment plan met the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and was safe to drink. As a precautionary measure, the community was asked to flush water for 30 seconds before consuming.

The Queensland Government has also allocated \$1.25 million to upgrade the water treatment plant as part of the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program and a further \$3.2 million under the Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program to support water, wastewater and solid waste projects in Yarrabah.