

Tasmanian Public & Environmental Health Network (TPEHN)

Media Release



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Community Groups Demand Premier Take Action on Water Safety - New Victorian Research shows the way!

Research published in January 2011 from **RMIT, Melbourne University**, the **Victorian Department of Primary Industry** and Melbourne **Water** found that current methods using grab samples to determine the toxicity of pesticides in water are "unreliable".

<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es103227q>

Dr **Alison Bleaney**, spokesperson for the *Tasmanian Public & Environmental Health Network* said:

"The research also showed that 48 pesticides were detected (using grab water and sediment samples and continuous passive samplers) in the Yarra River (water supply for Melbourne) over a five month sampling period."

"Here in Tasmania grab water sampling is done only 4 times a year to determine pesticide levels in river water and no attempt is made to test for the toxic impacts of toxic single chemicals or mixture effects. This is just not good enough. "

"Additionally in December 2010 the pesticide monitoring program was cut from 55 to 24 rivers."

"Despite the recent flood events in Tasmania the flood event monitoring has been cut from 4 to now only 2 rivers state-wide."

"The recent research vindicates the report by Dr **Steve Percival** (2004), the call by the *Break O' Day Catchment Risk Group* (2007) and the *George River Water Panel* (2009), for the Government to urgently commit to integrated catchment management for all major water catchments" said Dr Bleaney.

An article today in **The Australian** by **Annabel Hepworth** "*Warning on cost of water clean-up*" highlights these problems and the main message is that public health is the highest priority for public water authorities (not water pricing) and compliance with the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines* should be mandatory for all States.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/warning-on-cost-of-water-clean-up/comments-fn59niix-1225998373235>

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