



STUDY FINDS LOW LEVEL EXPOSURE TO ATRAZINE CAUSES REPRODUCTIVE ABNORMALITIES

Tim Morris MP
Greens Water spokesperson

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For Comment: Ben Lohberger, Media Officer, 0428 510 641

mps.tas.greens.org.au

The Tasmanian Greens today continued their campaign for a ban on the use of Triazines in Tasmania following a recent study undertaken by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) which has found that reproduction and spawning in a freshwater fish species are directly affected by concentrations of Atrazine that are below permissible levels in Tasmania.

Greens Water spokesperson Tim Morris MP said the USGS study, entitled "*Atrazine reduces reproduction in Fathead Minnow*," found that after fathead minnow were exposed to low levels of atrazine, total egg production dropped 19-39% and gonad abnormalities were observed in both male and female fish, leading the principal author Donald Tillet to conclude, "*the reproductive effects observed in this study warrant further study and evaluation of the potential risks posed by Atrazine...*".

Mr Morris also noted that there have been more than 139 detections of Atrazine contamination in Tasmanian rivers and waterways, including contamination events at drinking water treatment plants in Hobart and Launceston, and the contamination of groundwater supplies.

"In light of this new study identifying reproductive disruption caused by exposure to allowable levels of Atrazine, the Tasmanian Greens reiterate that all chemicals in the dangerous Triazine group, which includes Atrazine, should be banned from use in Tasmania," said Mr Morris.

"The reproductive abnormalities caused by low level exposure to Atrazine are extremely concerning."

"This USGS study clearly reveals that exposure to allowable levels of Atrazine causes reproductive abnormalities, and the Greens will continue to campaign against this chemical as well as the wider Triazine group to which it belongs."

"The Tasmanian Government must protect the health of Tasmanians living right around the state, and ban the use of the dangerous Triazine group of chemicals," said Mr Morris.

Reference: "*Atrazine reduces reproduction in Fathead Minnow*," USGS, 22 April 2010, abstract available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20471700?dopt=Abstract>