

KIDNEY HEALTH — GOLDFIELDS

812. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to a study into the correlation between water quality and kidney health in the goldfields, focusing on the communities of Coolgardie, Kurrawang, Norseman, Menzies, Morapoi, Leonora, Mulga Queen, Laverton, Mt Margaret, Tjuntjuntjara and Coonana carried out by Kalgoorlie paediatricians Dr Christine Jeffries-Stokes and Annette Stokes.

- (1) Is the minister aware that uranyl nitrate— $\text{UO}_2(\text{NO}_3)_2$ —a compound formed when nitrate and uranium are present in water, has been identified in the communities listed?
- (2) Is the minister aware of the implications of drinking water tainted with uranyl nitrate, particularly on renal health?
- (3) What action is this government taking to ameliorate the impacts of this contaminant on the communities where it has been identified?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Health has advised that all drinking water supplied to the communities mentioned complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines in relation to both uranium and nitrate. Accordingly, there is no health issue posed by uranyl nitrate to community members.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The Department of Health requires all drinking water supplies in the region that are either managed by the Department of Communities or the Water Corporation to conform with all health-related criteria set out in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, including for uranium, arsenic and nitrates. I am advised that both the Department of Communities and the Water Corporation continually monitor drinking water supplies to their respective communities to ensure that drinking water is safe to consume.