

HON. ROBIN CHAPPLE MLC

The state government must mobilize funds to seal off Wittenoom's asbestos danger

Tuesday 19th May

WA Greens Member for the Mining and Pastoral Region Robin Chapple is calling on the state government to mobilize funds for the Wittenoom area to address severe safety concerns over the large presence of asbestos.

After reports in the media that the Shire of Ashburton was having to pay compensation to claims by people travelling to the town Mr Chapple is urging state government to utilize its Minerals Rehabilitation Fund to deal with the abundant asbestos piles in Wittenoom.

"We will continue into the future to have problems arising from asbestos in the Shire of Ashburton until such time as the government comes to the party and removes the millions of tonnes of tailings that exist at the end of Bilitho Road near the old settlement"

Mr Chapple raised serious concerns over reports that the workshops in the mine shafts had been used for tourism in recent years.

"Put the tailings back into the mine and seal it off in the manner recommended by the Minerals Environment Liaison Committee back in the mid 90's, the government must pick up the tab for Wittenoom"

"I sympathize with the problems faced by the local government, it's appalling that the mine and some of their shafts have recently been found to be open to the public"

"Until the mine site is made safe and the asbestos tailings are dealt with, then that part of WA associated with the Wittenoom area and the Fortescue River will always be a danger to humanity"

Mr Chapple as a former worker at the mine site has recently been diagnosed with asbestosis himself.

MEDIA CONTACT

Colin Ebsworth,
Communications Advisor - 0449 911 427
Colin.ebsworth@mp.wa.gov.au