

Estimates Committee 2013
Questions Taken On Notice

(18/06/2013 to 27/06/2013)

Date: 20/06/2013

Output:

Sub Output:

Subject: Water Quality

From:Mr Kon Vatskalis to Hon Robyn Lambley
Department of Health

5-3

Question: Does the environmental health branch monitor water quality in cooling towers in the Darwin area and is there a register?

Answer:

Answered On: 20/06/2013

T.P.S.3 ~~S.3~~ Answer to QON S.3



Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory
Estimates Committee

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Registration No.:
Responsible Minister:
Responsible Agency:

QUESTION ON NOTICE

FROM: [Estimates Committee Member/Shadow Minister/MLA] **Tel.:**
TO: Minister for Health

Does the Environmental Health Branch monitor cooling towers in Darwin and how often?

ANSWER

2.Disease Prevention and Health Protection – 2.1 Environmental Health:

Legionella

Private building owners are responsible for testing cooling towers as per the Australian Standard AS/NZS 3896 and have maintenance contracts in place. An examination for the presence of legionellae in cooling tower systems shall be carried out in accordance with this standard. If legionellae are detected (i.e. greater than or equal to 10 cfu/mL), a control strategy shall be immediately initiated in accordance with this Australian Standard.

There is no requirement under Public Health legislation for ‘cooling tower systems’ to be registered with the Environmental Health Branch.
No routine testing on cooling towers is routinely carried out by Environmental Health Officers on Legionella levels in Northern Territory Government buildings. This is the responsibility of the Department of Infrastructure.

Legionnaires’ disease is a Schedule 3 notification (urgent laboratory notification by phone, fax or email) under the Northern Territory *Notifiable Diseases Act 1985*.

Laboratories report directly to Environmental Health on any elevated levels of legionella detected for cooling tower water samples collected by contractors.

Environmental Health Officers respond in an advisory capacity to Legionella-related issues by:

- carrying out a public health risk assessment for Legionella;
- providing information and technical advice on managing health risks associated with public Legionella exposure; and
- assisting the Centre for Disease Control or NT WorkSafe with public health advice on Legionella-related issues as requested.

Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Committee: Estimates
 Paper No: S.3 Date: 20/6/13
 Submission No:
 Signed: 