

Media Release



The Hon Jane Garrett MP
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming & Liquor Regulation

Thursday, 26 March, 2015

FISKVILLE SHUT FOREVER

The Andrews Labor Government has permanently closed the CFA training facility at Fiskville.

The CFA board unanimously recommended the closure of the site following the results of around 550 tests at the site.

The results showed that while the drinking water and showers were clear of contamination, high levels of the toxic chemical PFOS were found around the fire training area and a completely new zone at the site where the chemical had not been previously detected.

The exhaustive tests showed PFOS levels ranged from less than 1 microgram per litre to as high as 50 micrograms per litre.

International guidelines for safe levels of PFOS in drinking water is 0.2 micrograms and for non-drinking water is 4 micrograms per litre.

The source of the latest contamination has not yet been determined but the pumping system and old pipes are considered the most likely.

The Minister for Emergency Services, Jane Garrett, says despite previous clean ups, Fiskville remains a dangerous site which can no longer operate safely.

The training previously done at the site will be taken over in the short term by other CFA facilities.

The Parliamentary Inquiry continues to examine the history of the site, the lessons to be learned and consider compensation.

Quotes attributed to the Minister for Emergency Services, Jane Garrett

"Today ends a dark chapter in our fire fighting services. While we are relieved that the drinking water is safe, the ongoing discovery of contamination at Fiskville means it can no longer operate as a training ground."

"Our immediate concern is for the people at Fiskville, and we are working closely with the CFA and the affected staff to assist them through this difficult change."

"Another major issue is to ensure proper consultation about the much loved memorial at Fiskville for fallen firefighters who perished protecting our community."

"We will learn the lessons of Fiskville as the Parliamentary Inquiry does its work."