COUNTRY LIBERALS

MEDIA RELEASE

RATS, BATS AND CATS SCATS

Peter Chandler MLA

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The continuing revelations about E. coli outbreaks contaminating Darwin harbour beaches is of serious concern to the Country Liberals said Shadow Minister for the Environment Peter Chandler.

We are advised that Nightcliff and Mindil beaches are closed, and we are awaiting further announcements on the rest in the immediate future" he said.

Since the contamination was first identified in June, we have been led to believe that the contamination is from sources and points unknown, and not to be alarmed by the contribution to harbour nutrient levels from the sewage outfalls at Larrakeyah and Ludmilla.

Today we are expected to believe that the contribution of a trace of rain in early July and the faeces and urine of rats are a more probable source of pollution than the wastes of nearly one hundred thousand residents being dumped into the harbour.

The department has identified that the most serious contamination, the enterococci levels, are 10 times the safe level. Enterococci is used as an indicator of other pathogens, particularly the presence of viruses and bacteria that cause diseases in humans.

The department’s spokesperson said on ABC radio:

"could be animal faeces, could be bat droppings, could be rat droppings, urine etcetera on people's roofs"

"It's time the government came clean on its monitoring programs and further, released the PowerWater Corporation discharge license monitoring data from its sewage outfalls.

We call on the government to provide public reporting of all monitoring in the harbour as it is received and increase the rate and scale of monitoring for these health related contaminants around Darwin’s beaches during this emergency.

"It's a huge leap of faith for Territorians to be made to believe its rats, bats and cats scats."

Further comment : Peter Chandler 0429 076 493