

Dear all,

The buck apparently stops with you, The Wollongong Council.
It is your responsibility to do air, water and soil testing.
So therefore the paper trail will lead directly to each one of you if another child in Helensburgh gets ill.

I want to make it perfectly clear to you all that we are NOT looking for a reason for our son Matthew's cancer. We realise that we will never know.

We also want to make it perfectly clear that we have accepted that this is the path we now are on. Our son is alive. We are very grateful.

Our objective is to give Matthew the best chance possible at long-term survival. His cancer has a relapse rate. He is higher risk of further cancers and is at risk of secondaries due to the chemotherapy.

He is at risk of heart muscle damage due to the chemotherapy also.
We are into prevention. We now maintain an alkaline diet, organic and free of preservatives and filter his water and that of his brother. But this is pointless if there is an aggravating, contributing factor in his environment.

As Cr Chris Connor will testify, being the school principle of my children, my sole purpose for pursuing this testing into the soil, air and water would be solely motivated over my children and their health. He has witnessed me doing this before over other issues. And I don't stop until I get a result.

We arrived in Helensburgh 5 years ago. I was raised in this area and have some knowledge of its history, both with business practices and the general health of the residents.

The health of residents, children and adult with the cancers rates, is appalling!

During the time we have resided in Helensburgh, top end of town I have witnessed 5 other children develop blood cancers of the DNA of the white blood cells. Some are called leukemias some are lymphoma but ALL are white cell cancers.

I have also for a long time known of this "CLUSTER". The talk around town a long time before Matthew became a victim was that there was illegally dumped drums of toxic material used in the old quarry site as landfill and that all the children circled this now rezoned and redeveloped residential site that comes complete with a duck pond and children's playground area.

I am aware of other toxic hotspots around Helensburgh and have some information pertaining to these other areas of concern. I am happy to send all the information I have been sent onto the council.

Five of the 6 children also attended Helensburgh Public Primary School, and as my petition that will be tabled tonight at council says, that also is an area I would like to see tested. The Education Department has been contacted about the possibility of testing by the Illawarra Mercury and have said testing could go ahead.

I am getting mammoth support for my desire for answers from the Helensburgh residents. In fact in a few short hours with no notice I managed to get approx 10% of the voting population's signatures on my petition.

I am being inundated with requests for more petition papers and people are giving me support as I am asking the question that has been on everyone's minds for a long time.

This issue will NOT go away. Even if we do, this issue will always be here until it is dealt with.

God forbid another child in our small area, top end of town gets sick. The paper trail goes to you all now. I hope it doesn't happen as I hope the tests get done and come up negative. But you don't know, neither do I, if another child will.

I understand the possible outcome and how detrimental that may be to the commerce of Helensburgh and the possible legal problems and so are all the residents that I speak to, but they like me understand that the health and lives of our children come before money, profit and pride.

Two of the 6 children are dead. Reason to do testing

2508 postcode area is a huge area and yet these cancers are happening within a few streets of each other. Reason to do testing

There are approx 2000 children in Helensburgh (I can supply the age breakdown and exact total number of residents from the 2011 census). Reason to do testing

Burkitts Lymphoma happens to approx 12 Australian children a year. In 4 years Helensburgh (small area, top end of town) out of 48 cases has had 2!! Reason to do testing.

The residents are onto this now, collectively ... the question has been asked and there is a paper trail. Reason to do testing!!

I pray that you all don't bury your heads in the sand. I don't know if the rumours of toxic waste in the new residential area are true.

What I do know is that the voting population of Helensburgh thinks like we do and that if another child gets ill then the town will be looking directly at council. There is no hysteria in town at the moment but it would only take one more child for that to change, and no one wants that.

I would like to see the end to the rumours or the problem fixed.

Thank you

Diane Young