

Facts Sheet 1: Moanataiari subdivision

Public health advice

Elevated levels of arsenic have been detected in initial test results from soil samples at sites around Moanataiari. There are also potential issues with other metals at a few locations.

Authorities are analysing the full implications from a health perspective and are looking at what remediation measures will be needed to help avoid future health risks.

The samples have been taken at differing depths and, with the exception of the school, have been taken from roadside verges.

The Ministry of Health says further sampling of soil on residential properties will help clarify the public health risk.

In the meantime, the Ministry is recommending people take a precautionary approach and minimise their exposure to potentially contaminated soil.

Actually swallowing soil or breathing in dust is what poses the greatest potential health risk and this should be avoided wherever possible.

The Ministry of Health advises residents to:

- take care with personal hygiene (i.e. hand washing after handling soil);
- make sure children don't eat or play in soil;
- remove footwear before going indoors to avoid carrying soil dust indoors - particularly for households with very young children;
- cover soil (e.g. grassing, paving, gravel) to reduce dust and direct access by young children;
- not to eat home grown fruit and vegetables, especially young children, until further quantification of the contamination is available and the risk can be assessed, unless it is known that the garden soil is clean fill. If you choose to eat home grown fruit and vegetables, then thoroughly wash produce that may be contaminated with soil, and peel the skin off root vegetables;
- don't be concerned about the drinking water supply, it is separate (and safe);
- as always, if unwell for any reason, see your doctor.

Don't be concerned about the drinking water supply as it is separate and safe.

As always, if people are unwell for any reason, they should see their doctor.

Excavations

Until further analysis of results has been carried out, the Thames-Coromandel District Council and the Waikato Regional Council recommend that people refrain from digging on their properties.