

FIRSTNAME: MARG
SURNAME: CUSTANCE
ORGANISATION:

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: ORROROO WATER QUALITY PROJECT: Response to Draft determination for SA water

I am aware that the Essential Services commission of SA has handed down its draft determination for SA water and has not supported the Orroroo Water Quality Project. As a resident of Orroroo for the past 15 years, I am extremely concerned about this and wish to protest strongly so that the decision be reconsidered in the final determination.

I cannot comprehend that the people making this decision believe that customers, residents and ratepayers of SA would be satisfied with a non potable supply. Neither could I believe they have not considered the fact that the quality of drinking water does not meet aesthetic standards. I invite the members of ESCOSA to drink our water at their meetings and see if they would be happy for this to be supplied in their homes to drink. It is undrinkable! We are being treated as second class citizens.

I also cannot believe that the economic impact of Orroroo water on residents has not been considered. We change the element in our hot water service every 15 months! We spend a fortune replacing shower heads, taps, both inside the house and out. We repair pipes leading to our house so often it is causing my husband quite a bit of stress. Fortunately he is able to undertake these repairs himself, imagine the cost if a plumber was called out every time! Consider also that Orroroo does not have a plumber living in the town. Would you be happy to have to call out a plumber every week to repair leaking taps, pipes that have been eaten out, hot water service elements? All this whilst paying exactly the same water rates as every other resident in SA? I think not!

Considering we are only 35 kilometres away from beautiful quality water, I cannot believe we might have to put up with this water for another four years and demand that the decision be reconsidered.

I am concerned that the committee deduced that only 36 residents would drink the water and are basing their determination on one survey sent to households. People are not going to say they will drink the water when they have no concept of what a drinkable supply through the taps "might" be like when poor and declining quality has been delivered through their taps for years. Similarly, 36 households probably represent a lot more people considering that families share the water meter.

We have to drink rainwater because we have no alternative. Yet, SA health comment in relation to rainwater states:

".....people with lower immunity such as the very young or very old, cancer patients, people with diabetes, organ transplants or those who are HIV positive should consider boiling the water before consumption as a precautionary measure."

<http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/PDF-files/ph-factsheet-alt-water-supplies.pdf>

With a high percentage of retired people in the town I am concerned about the impact of this decision on the elderly.

Let's hope that common sense, a sense of fairness and equality for rural residents prevails in the final determination and Orroroo can have the water quality it needs and wants and has waited for!

Sincerely

Marg Custance (and on behalf of Mike Custance)