

Community update: Sunshine groundwater investigation



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria

EPA staff will be available to talk to the community at a drop-in stand on **Tuesday 27 June** at the Sunshine Library (Brimbank Community and Civic Centre), **301 Hampshire Road, Sunshine** from 4.00 pm – 7.00 pm.

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Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) has investigated groundwater contamination in the Sunshine area, with a focus on the former Massey Ferguson site (also known as the Sunshine Harvester Works site).

EPA's investigation began after becoming aware that a chemical called trichloroethylene (TCE) was found in groundwater and as a vapour (gas) at the former Sunvale Primary School site in Sunshine (see location on map) in late 2014. EPA has identified the former Massey Ferguson site as a source of contamination.

EPA has issued a clean-up notice to AGCO Australia Limited (previously known as Massey Ferguson), requiring them to investigate the extent of contamination and prepare a clean-up plan for the former Massey Ferguson site.

How are residents affected?

It is unlikely that current community members will be exposed to the groundwater beneath Sunshine. It is around 10 metres below the ground surface. It is also not used for drinking in the Sunshine area, and is not commonly used for activities such as watering the garden or filling swimming pools because it is too salty and in low supply.

If community members have an underground cellar or basement, please contact EPA to assess any potential risks.

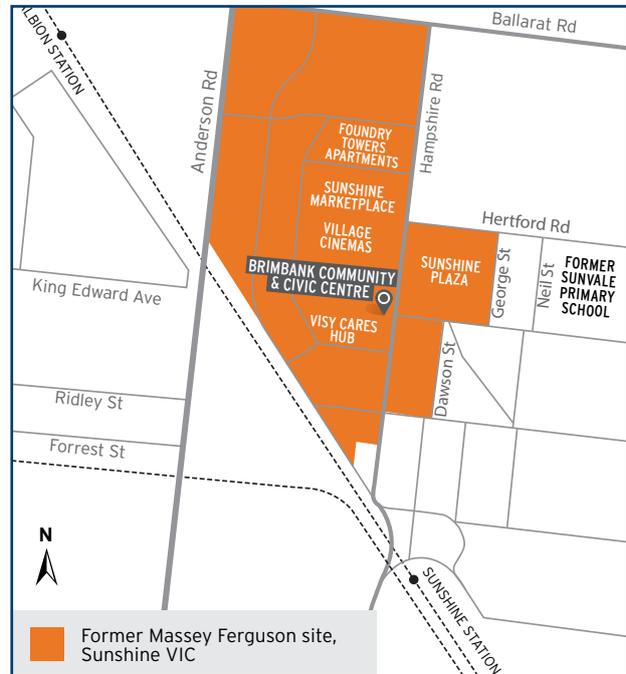
Anyone accessing groundwater via a groundwater bore should avoid direct contact with the water, and test that it is suitable for the intended use.

EPA will continue to investigate groundwater contamination and potential sources of soil and groundwater contamination in the wider Sunshine area.

Results of testing so far

Groundwater testing

Groundwater testing at the former Massey Ferguson site and the former Sunvale Primary School site shows that there is TCE in groundwater. The highest level of TCE found (299 µg/L) indicates the groundwater is unacceptable for uses such as drinking, recreation, irrigation and as water for pets and livestock. A range of other chemicals were also found, including vinyl chloride – a chemical that forms when TCE breaks down in the environment.



The orange shading on the above map shows the area the former Massey Ferguson site once occupied in Sunshine, while the white labels indicate current site users.

Vapours in soil

Vapours from contaminants in groundwater may move through the soil. Vapours of TCE and other related chemicals have been found within soil at the former Massey Ferguson site. The highest recorded vapour level of TCE in soil (610,000 µg/m³) is above the guideline for commercial land use. Because of this, a vapour barrier was installed beneath the office building in the affected area, which is an appropriate measure to reduce the risk of vapours collecting in the building.

All indoor and outdoor air testing has shown that the air is **not** affected by TCE vapours (see next section).

Vapours in air

EPA tested indoor air at:

- Foundry Towers apartment complex
- Visy Cares Hub
- Sunshine Plaza
- Sunshine Marketplace, including Village Cinemas
- Brimbank Community and Civic Centre.

(See map for locations)

TCE was not found in any of the air samples and these places are considered safe.



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Further information

More detailed information, results and updates about this ongoing investigation can be found at: epa.vic.gov.au/sunshinegroundwater or by calling EPA on **1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC)**.

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If you need interpreter assistance or want this document translated, please call **131 450** and advise your preferred language.