

SPEARWOOD INFILL SEWERAGE

850. Mr J.M. FRANCIS to the Minister for Water:

I start by thanking the minister for taking on board the representations made to him by Hon Phil Edman, the City of Cockburn and me about the Spearwood infill sewerage program.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Some people in this place might like to ask the questions. You are all entitled to ask a question. The only person who is asking a question at the moment is the member for Jandakot. I ask that you hear him in silence.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Can the minister please update —

Mr M.P. Whitely interjected.

The SPEAKER: Some people do not listen. I formally call the member for Bassendean for the first time. I at least want to hear the member's question in silence.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Can the minister please update the house on today's developments to connect Spearwood residents to infill sewerage?

Dr G.G. JACOBS replied:

I thank the member for Jandakot for his interest and his representation in this important matter. Some months ago the Spearwood Action Group invited me to Spearwood to see the concerns it had with septic and leach drains in residential areas of Spearwood.

Mr F.M. Logan: Then you ran away from it.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: It is really interesting to hear from the member for Cockburn. Essentially, the opposition never wants to hear any good news. All it wants to do is carp about it. At least I had a background where I could look at the situation, make my assessment, do some special tests and then make a diagnosis and a decision. What does the member for Cockburn do? He carps about it and then when we look at the situation —

Mr F.M. Logan: You wouldn't even come to the meeting.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cockburn, I know you are interested in this. However, there are other ways you can contribute. I formally call you for the first time.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: The member for Cockburn often used to say to me, "If you do this and you do that, I will cooperate with you. Just get this thing done."

The Department of Health prepared a confidential report for the previous Labor health minister in 2006 which detailed serious concerns from both a health and environmental health perspective. Last week my colleague the Minister for Health wrote to me confirming the reported concerns and indicated that those issues have now worsened. It is a responsible government that assesses that and does something about it. It is beyond belief that members of the Labor government, when they were on this side of the chamber, chose to ignore the report during the best economic times Western Australia has ever seen and did not act for the residents.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cockburn!

Dr G.G. JACOBS: When I visited Spearwood some months ago, I saw poor unfortunate residents who had been waiting 40 years. Forty years! I came to this job and over 12 months the member has carped about the fact that we have not done the work. Forty years! When members opposite were on this side, they had a program in the best economic times in Western Australia, and what did they do? They downsized the program. If they had carried on with the schedule —

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cockburn, I know that you are very interested in this; I understand. However, I have formally called you for a first time and now I formally call you for the second time.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I will close with this: instead of repeating the behaviour on this issue shown by members opposite when they were the government, this state government is acting on advice right now, and the last remaining Spearwood residents without infill sewerage will be able to connect around June 2011.