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Tuesday 8 May, 2018

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Newshub kills quarry dust lung cancer story

Bernie Napp - Fri, 19 Jan 2018

Newshub has taken down a news story published on Wednesday alleging that "Fulton Hogan quarry could cause lung cancer and nose bleeds".



The Canterbury Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr Alistair Humphrey, told *Inside Resources* yesterday he had spoken with the chief reporter of Newshub, "and they think they have wrongly attributed comments to me".

"Newshub have agreed to take down the story from their website while they find out 'what went wrong'."

The Newshub web site item appeared amid community concern in the media over Fulton Hogan's plans for a [new 170-hectare quarry](#) near Templeton.

It quoted Dr Humphrey as saying that sharp silica dust from quarries when breathed in has caused nosebleeds in hospital patients. A link was also made to lung cancer in people living near quarries.

Dr Humphrey said: "Though I have been interviewed by TVNZ yesterday and by Wendy Nissen of Radio Live on this issue, I have not been interviewed by Newshub."

"In both the interviews I gave, I was careful only to describe symptoms attributed to quarry dust by general practitioners and Canterbury District Health Board clinicians. I also described the theoretical risk of silicosis, which I also explained was usually an occupational disorder."

Dr Humphrey told TVNZ: "Freshly mined dust is like sandpaper; if you get it on your face or in your eyes, it is extremely unpleasant. It causes conjunctivitis; it can and does cause nosebleeds when you try and breathe it in; it can cause sore throats."

Following an indoor air quality trial last September to measure respirable crystalline silica exposure using personal monitors, Dr Humphrey, and two other medical specialists assured the seven Yaldhurst residents who took part in the trial that the "results had all come back below any level which was remotely likely to cause silicosis".

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Organisation [Fulton Hogan](#)

Live data from one site at the Environment Canterbury air quality monitoring programme for [Yaldhurst quarries](#) showed the 24-hour average for PM10 (airborne particles less than or equal to 10 microns across) exceeded the official safe level between 15 and 17 January. The data feed started on 8 January, and also showed exceedances in that week.

ECan advised today the data feed is yet to be validated, noting it stems from a method other than a reference method, and cannot be compared directly with the national PM10 standard.

MinEx CEO Wayne Scott described the Newshub item as "full of non-truths, and a typical case of not letting the facts get in the way of a good story".

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Alexandra Quarry



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Description Gold explorer · Gold producer

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