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[Messenger in bottle lines up Pacific garbage swim](#)

ธันวาคม 14th, 2009 | Author: [admin](#)



Toxic: This sea bird died after eating plastic garbage (AAP)

- [Related Link: Richard Pain on his rubbish swim plan](#)

A Sydney man is hoping to draw attention to the problems of global warming and plastic pollution by swimming between Japan and the US in a giant plastic bottle.

Richard Pain’s swim will take him through what is known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, an area of rubbish the size of Queensland floating in the ocean.

“My plan is to build a giant recycled plastic water bottle out of thousands of smaller recycled plastic water bottles, and then use that as an enclosure or shark cage to then swim from Japan to America, through what is called the North Pacific Gyre or Great Pacific Garbage Patch,” he said.

“It’s an area, and some estimates vary, at least the size of Texas, full of plastic... down to about a depth of six metres, so it’s an environmental catastrophe.

“Basically there are four currents in that area of the Pacific that circulate in a clockwise direction and they aggregate all this plastic in to this central becalmed area called the gyre.”

Mr Pain says he is undertaking the journey to combat ‘green fatigue’ and raise the profile of a cause presently being ignored by governments around the world.

“I think it’s time for everyone to do something, basically my view is if I can do something this crazy

everyone else can do something,” he said.

“It’s a call to arms... an attempt to combat green fatigue.

“And on an environmental level the nature of the problem is so immense and the fact it doesn’t fall under the jurisdiction of any particular country means as a cause it’s kind of like the runt of the litter, something that no particular country wants to take responsibility for.

“So that sounds like my kind of cause.”

Killer slick

He says the public needs to be more aware of the environmental damage the patch is doing.

“It’s a patch of ocean like any other when you look at it from the side, it still undulates, it still has a swell and waves and all the rest of it,” he said.

“When you look down into it however, if you’re passing over it in a boat you’ll see plastic passing below you continuously, everything from a kayak down to a nurdle, which is a building block a couple of millimetres across.

“They blow off the land and ships in their billions and are aggregating in this area, the gyre in the middle of the Pacific.

“Obviously the sea birds and mammals are eating this stuff and it’s killing them. Also, plastic doesn’t biodegrade, it only photodegrades, so no matter how small it breaks down to they are still, at a molecular level, still plastic.

“Those plastics absorb toxins, persistent organic pollutants and PCBs, which we know are contributors to cancer and a whole range of health issues. So they are concentrated in this plastic, which is then eaten or absorbed by salps and jellyfish, and it then moves into the food chain.”

Mr Pain says he is hoping to complete the swim in just over six months.

“I’m planning to be out there for the best part of six months or more,” he said.

“I’m planning to swim five days a week for eight to 10 hours a day, have a couple of days off, be on the boat in the meantime.

“My goal would be 40 kilometres a day.”

He plans to leave in 2011, and says has his work cut out for him to prepare for the journey.

“I have had advice from a scientist and very experienced diver that because the temperatures involved, which can drop to 16 degrees which is quite chilly, to be in the water for that long to maintain body heat and the energy to do it, she has estimated I may need to put on 30 kilos,” he said.

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[Boil water alerts issued after E. coli outbreak](#)

ธันวาคม 7th, 2009 | Author: [admin](#)



Authorities expect the boil water alerts to be lifted by the end of the week. (ABC News: Giulio Saggin)

- [Audio: Ecoli found in Tasmanian cities water supplies \(The World Today\)](#)

The Tasmanian Health Department has issued an alert to residents in the state's two biggest cities, warning them to boil their drinking water.

The department says the bacteria *E. coli* has been found in the water supplies of several suburbs in Launceston and Hobart.

Tasmania has issued boil water alerts before, but not on such a large scale in major cities.

Local environmental authorities are now investigating how the dangerous bacteria managed to infest the state's drinking water reservoirs.

"*E. coli* is a bacteria, some of which are harmless and some of which are harmful and can cause diarrhoea," Tasmania's deputy director of public health, Chrissie Picken, said.

"The Tasmanian Government moved to a new system of water and sewerage authorities because there

was some concerns that there were some vulnerabilities in the system here in Tasmania.

“They are doing more testing and so we think paradoxically it is a good sign that we are actually picking up some of these issues and vulnerabilities that we suspected might be there.”

Ms Picken says people in affected suburbs should boil their water.

“It is important that people who are washing fruit and particularly salads do that with the boiled or bottled water, clean their teeth with boiled or bottled water, and obviously make up baby bottles with boiled or bottled water,” she said.

“In terms of bathing, showers are fine but obviously if you are bathing little children, sometimes they can drink the water so you need to supervise them closely to make sure they are not doing that.”

Ian Dunbabin, from the Southern Water Authority, says he is pleased no-one has become sick from the water and is confident the outbreak will not ruin the state’s clean green image.

“We are fortunate in Tasmania. I think our primary source of water, our raw water that we source and treat and disinfect for our communities, is very good but of course, being a natural environment, there is always bacteria and that is why the efforts of the water corporations are so important,” he said.

“That is the way they treat the water and also, I guess as we’ve seen over this weekend, the monitoring programs that we have in place to ensure that that quality is maintained.”

Cause unknown

Mr Dunbabin says while it is unclear what caused the breakout, a possible reason could be that the reservoir has no roof.

“There is always a background level of bacteria present in the water and we use a disinfectant to control that,” he said.

“One of the issues around the Rosny experience over the weekend is that the water for that area is supplied from the Lindisfarne reservoir and that reservoir is not roofed.

“Contemporary practice is to roof reservoirs because that ensures that disinfections remain effective.”

Mr Dunbabin says plans are in place to put a roof over the reservoir.

“Yes, it is part of Southern Water’s capital investment for this financial year,” he said.

“We are planning to put roofs on six of the larger reservoirs that supply larger populations and we are pleased to say that Lindisfarne reservoir is one of those.”

E.coli is usually killed with chlorine and water authorities are using the chemical to clean up the contamination.

The water authorities expect the boil water alerts to be lifted by the end of the week.

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