

# LEX LOCI'S TRAVELS

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*An irregular one-pager from The Public Land Consultancy*

## Lex goes Radioactive at the Lyonville Mineral Springs

Lex knows that a *curie* is a measure of radiation, but he's not sure whether it's big or small. Still, a micro-curie must be small, and a milli-micro-curie even smaller. So he's reassured when he drinks Daylesford mineral water.

The springs around Daylesford contain traces of all sorts of minerals, carried up from deep subterranean aquifers. One of them is radon gas - a byproduct of uranium. According to one study, the highest concentration occurs at the Lyonville No 2 spring, where the Geiger counter ticks over at 180 milli-micro-curies per litre.

Mineral waters have long been regarded as therapeutic, and one of their supposed medicinal attributes was radioactivity.

In Victoria, the attraction has waxed and waned. In 1868 Crown land at Hepburn was set aside for a mineral springs reserve in 1895, the bath-house was built

but fell into grubby disrepair; and then was rebuilt in 1985.

What interests Lex, as he downs another litre or two, is the legislation. In 1980 Parliament decided we needed a *Groundwater (Mineral Water) Act*, and a *Crown Land (Mineral Springs) Act*. Under the former, a levy of 1 cent per litre was deposited to a fund for the benefit of mineral water-related tourism; under the latter the bathhouse got a long-term lease.

Some things change, others don't. The levy has gone; the lease provision remains, despite having been made redundant by subsequent reforms to the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act*.

**And no one these days (as far as we know) actually wants to become radioactive. So our Lex has turned off the light - just to check that he's not glowing in the dark.**



See you there! Lex Loci

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