



MEDIA RELEASE 03 MAY 2019:

Dengue fever fears more likely to be imported than home grown in Australia's water tanks!

Australia's rainwater tank manufacturers have responded to claims that rainwater tanks are integral to an increased risk of dengue fever outbreaks across Australia's urban centres.

CEO of ARMA (the poly tank industry's peak body) Leisa Donlan notes "There's simply no evidence that more tanks equals more dengue. These annual scare campaigns against rainwater tanks aren't really helpful in addressing the true culprits when it comes to the spread of dengue. Queensland Health's own dengue fever management plan identifies that the larvae of the mosquito responsible primarily develop in artificial containers like buckets, jars, pot plants, boats and tarpaulins. So yes, absolutely check the screens and connections on your tank but spend a bit of time throwing out anything in your yard that could hold water if you're worried about disease control."

The association highlights that even scientists don't agree that rainwater tanks play a major part in the spread of dengue. University of Sydney mosquito expert Cameron Webb said in 2017 that dengue fever cases were increasing globally and travelers were bringing the disease back to Australia. But, he said, if a person brought dengue fever back as an unwanted souvenir, they were unlikely to pass it on because most local mosquito species could not transmit the disease. "Dengue has been a problem globally for 20 years, and in the last 10 years we have seen epidemic spread of the virus through many countries in our neighbourhood," he said. "The chance of travellers being infected may well be increasing." But he said the increased number of dengue fever cases in Australia could also be because more doctors were running tests that determined whether returned travellers were infected with the disease.

Inaccurate reports of health concerns & water quality may be making consumers walk away from the opportunity to store their own water and ensure their families have water for washing, showering and ensuring their most valuable asset keeps its value by being able to maintain a garden, especially with fast rising costs for water in Australian cities and towns.

Ms Donlan continues "The safe guards built into quality poly water tanks that comply with existing Australian Standards actually protect against mosquito breeding by including screens on the inlets that stop mosquitos from entering. Rainwater tanks also provide clean drinking water for millions of Australians, help to manage stormwater and flooding and allow homeowners to take control of some of their environmental impact. All fantastic benefits that when weighed against an unproven risk of a dengue outbreak mean tanks should stay a vital part of every Australian home."

References:

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