

CENTRAL COAST Express Advocate

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Residents fear coal dust

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VOLUNTEERS hit the streets this week informing residents of the health issues associated with the proposed coal loader a few kilometres west of densely populated suburbs.

Australian Coal Alliance members and supporters letterboxed every home at Blue Haven, San Remo, Hamlyn Terrace and Woongarra with the alliance's hard-hitting brochure Water or Coal Dust? Its Your Choice!

South Korean government-owned mining giant Kores, which is seeking approval to mine coal beneath the drinking water catchment valleys of Dooralong and Yarramalong, will build the coal loader on land it owns in Tooheys Rd.

The loader, coal stockpile and rail link will be within 3km of the largest urban growth area on the Central Coast, including the proposed Warnervale town centre.

Concerned resident Sharon Salmisaid if the mine went ahead dust suppression would become a major problem.

"There are three schools in this area alone as well as a fast growing residential population," she said.

"We're very worried about the likely effects of this project."

Alliance spokesman Alan Hayes said it was important to follow up quickly on the recent Blue Haven rally where residents raised the issue of coal dust and their health.

Coal dust could cause coughing, wheezing, worsening of asthma, increased need for medications and increased breathlessness.

"This problem is well documented in our brochure and is supported by a publication Mine Dust and You published by the NSW Health Department," he said.

"Fine particles of coal dust can travel very quickly with just the slightest breeze and northerly and westerly winds could see a dust blanket spreading to Wyong and beyond."

The alliance's brochure includes a map of the dust fallout area and encourages people to write and express their concerns to the Premier, Planning Minister and Central Coast Minister.

Mr Hayes said the next alliance brochure, Vote 1 for Water, would be letterboxed the first week in January with a clear message that the Government had so far failed to protect the coast's largest water resource.

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