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► **Galaxy dispels mine dust fears**

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Galaxy dispels mine dust fears



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GALAXY Resources has dispelled concerns the export of spodumene from its Ravensthorpe mine could lead to dust contamination near the Esperance port.

Locals for Esperance Development president Pam Norris said she was concerned about the potential for dust, with the product being stockpiled at the port and loaded onto ships via an open conveyor.

"We're very concerned about the fact they are going to put it in an open stockpile and tarp it and load it by unsealed conveyors," Ms Norris said.

She said the group was also concerned about the lack of bunding to prevent any leaching.

But Galaxy's general manager for operations Terry Stark said the product was very coarse and would not contain dust-size particles after going

through a wet screening process at the Ravensthorpe minesite.

"There is no opportunity, because of the size of the material, for dust to move outside the port boundary," he said.

He also said there was no health risk as it comprised benign minerals.

Mr Stark said the stockpiling could start within the next two weeks.

"Esperance Ports Sea and Land is waiting for the Department of Environment and Conservation to issue an operating licence amendment," he said. "As soon as the port has received that, we will be in a position to start stockpiling material there.

"The equipment we need to be able to do that is on its way from the eastern States." Spodumene concentrate is used in the manufacture of high quality optics, additives for lubricants

and pharmaceuticals and as a source of lithium for batteries. According to a statement from Galaxy, spodumene is non-toxic and is not listed in the Australian Government Safety and Compensation Council Hazardous Substances Information System as a hazardous substance.

"Galaxy's product will be coarse and dust-free, eliminating the potential for irritation or discomfort that sometimes arises from direct or chronic exposure to dust from more finely ground spodumene," it said.

A DEC spokeswoman said the department was waiting for Galaxy to submit a works compliance certificate.

"So there is a step in the process they still need to complete," she said.