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**Authors** Nic Conland, Pollution Control Officer  
John Sheriff, Resource Investigations Manager

## **Pollution Control Report for the period 24 January 2004 to 12 March 2004**

### **1. Purpose**

To report on incident response, investigation and audit work undertaken by Greater Wellington's Pollution Control Team during the reporting period.

### **2. Background**

The Resource Investigations Department provides proactive and responsive services to combat environmental pollution in the Western Wellington Region. These pollution control initiatives are summarised below:

- 24-hour Incident Response, which deals with pollution complaints, environmental incidents and alleged non-compliance with the regional plans.
- *Take Charge*, a pollution prevention programme, aimed at improving the environmental performance of small to medium sized industry.
- Special Projects, which include the development of resource materials, or targeted investigations to establish baseline conditions, track trends, and characterise environmental problems.
- Selected Land Use Register, a database of sites in the Region where hazardous activities/industries are known or suspected to have been present, and may have resulted in site contamination. This database is maintained in accordance with proposed guidelines issued by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE).

### **3. Strategic context**

Greater Wellington's Pollution Control activities give effect to the following Take 10 targets:

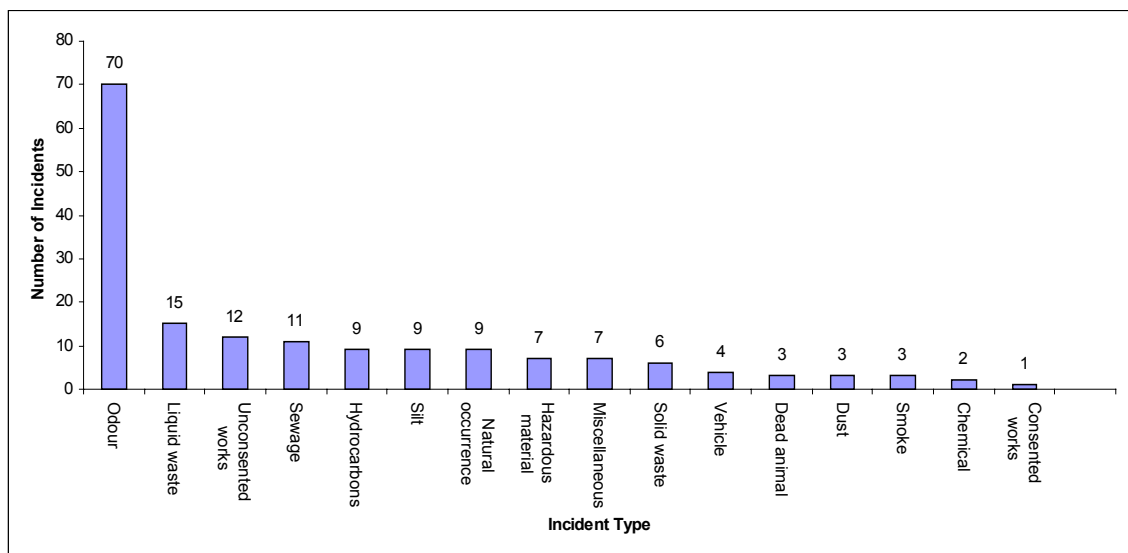
By 2013:

- reported incidents will be reduced by half of 2003 levels;
- 80% of businesses surveyed have waste reduction initiatives in place;
- the water quality of our five most polluted streams improves;
- there will be no significant deterioration of water quality in our key rivers and streams;
- there will be no overall deterioration in the health of our soils.

#### 4. Incidents

A total of 171 incidents were recorded during this reporting period, as summarised in Figure 1<sup>1</sup>. Further information about these incidents can be found in Attachment 1.

**Figure 1: Summary of incidents (24 January 2004 to 12 March 2004)**



The majority of incidents were associated with odour. Most of the incidents relating to odour were attributed to a meat-works in Ngauranga Gorge, the Carey’s Gully complex in Happy Valley, a fish rendering plant in Seaview and odour from miscellaneous panel-beating and foundry workshops.

Discharges of liquid waste were associated predominantly with overflows from the sewerage network and stormwater contamination. Unconsented works in stream beds also continue to be a problem.

<sup>1</sup> Note that these figures incorporate incidents from consented activities that are in breach of their resource consents.

There have been numerous incidents during this reporting period relating to flood damage and associated works.

The most significant incidents that occurred during this period were:

- Several illegal culverts and diversion of water at a subdivision in Whitemans Valley. Investigating officers are working with the Consents Management Department to determine whether retrospective resource consents can be issued.
- Repeated silt discharges into a stream from bulk earthworks at a residential development in Camborne. We are currently working with Porirua City Council to ensure they are implementing appropriate land use planning controls.
- Repeated silt discharges into a stream from bulk earthworks at a residential development in Happy Valley. We are liaising with Wellington City Council to ensure they are implementing appropriate land use planning controls.
- Officers identified two unconsented contaminant discharges from the Taylor Preston site into the Ngauranga Stream. Investigating officers collected evidential samples, and discussions are continuing with the site managers to ensure that the discharges are stopped.
- Allied Concrete discharged alkaline stormwater from their site into a Happy Valley stream during heavy rainfall. Investigating officers collected evidential samples and investigations are continuing.

#### 4.1 Response summary

The time between receiving an incoming complaint and reaching the source of the complaint (response time) is used as a performance indicator for the incident response service. Table 1 shows that the officers from both Consents Management and the Pollution Control Team largely achieved target response times during this reporting period.

**Table 1: Response time summary**

Target response tie	Mean response time
Red (60 minutes)	53.8 minutes
Yellow (24 hours)	5.4 hours
Blue (30 days)	5.5 days

## **5. Take Charge**

*Take Charge* assessments have been conducted for a total of 216 sites, comprising 122 service stations and 94 motor vehicle workshops. *Take Charge* assessments of service stations in the western Region are now mostly complete. Arrangements are currently being made to visit service stations in the Wairarapa between 19 and 22 April 2004, in collaboration with the Wairarapa office.

Site visits are revealing a general lack of understanding about regulatory requirements, and poor knowledge of site history and stormwater protection requirements. Of the visits to date:

- 25% were aware of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- 20% were aware of our regional rules relevant to their activities (25% of service stations and 10% of motor vehicle workshops).

This level of awareness is disappointing and a source of concern for the Pollution Control Team. It is considered that this lack of awareness may contribute to an elevated risk of environmental incidents, via inappropriate activities, infrastructure and management decisions.

In line with the Take 10 objective to reduce reported pollution incidents, the *Take Charge* team is currently working to raise the environmental awareness of small to medium sized industry, via the development of industry-specific information leaflets (Pollution Solutions).

## **6. Special projects**

The Pollution Control Team have completed an industrial stormwater pollution sources project in the Waiwhetu Stream catchment. The results were reported to the Waiwhetu Stream Working Group on 25 March, and will be presented to the Environment Committee at its next meeting.

The Consents Management Department and Pollution Control Team have begun proactive odour monitoring for Taylor Preston and the Carey's Gully Complex. This is later than originally planned, principally due to adverse weather conditions in the first quarter of 2004, which have resulted in a reduced incidence of odour complaints from these sites.

## **7. Contaminated sites**

The Pollution Control Team has been responding to requests for information from the selected land use register and responding to TA requests for information on planning/building consent issues on contaminated land.

## 8. Enforcement action

**Table 2: Summary of enforcement action**

Advisory Notices	6
Infringement Notices	0
Abatement Notices	1
Enforcement Orders	0
Prosecutions	0
Confirmed breach of resource consent*	3

\*Referred to Consents Management Department

The Pollution Control Team is currently making regulatory decisions for a large number of environmental incidents that have occurred in recent months.

The Environment Court upheld an abatement notice and infringement notice issued to Chatham Islands Seafood Ltd. for unauthorised works in a wetland at Orongorongo station.

## 9. Communication

No further public communication is necessary for this report.

## 10. Recommendations

*It is recommended that the Committee:*

- 1. receive this report; and*
- 2. note the contents.*

Report prepared by:

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

**Nic Conland**  
Pollution Control Officer

**John Sheriff**  
Resource Investigations  
Manager

**Jane Bradbury**  
Divisional Manager,  
Environment

**Attachment 1: Incident Response Summary**