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Committee Environment Committee
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Pollution Control Report for the period 13 March 2004 to 22 April 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;

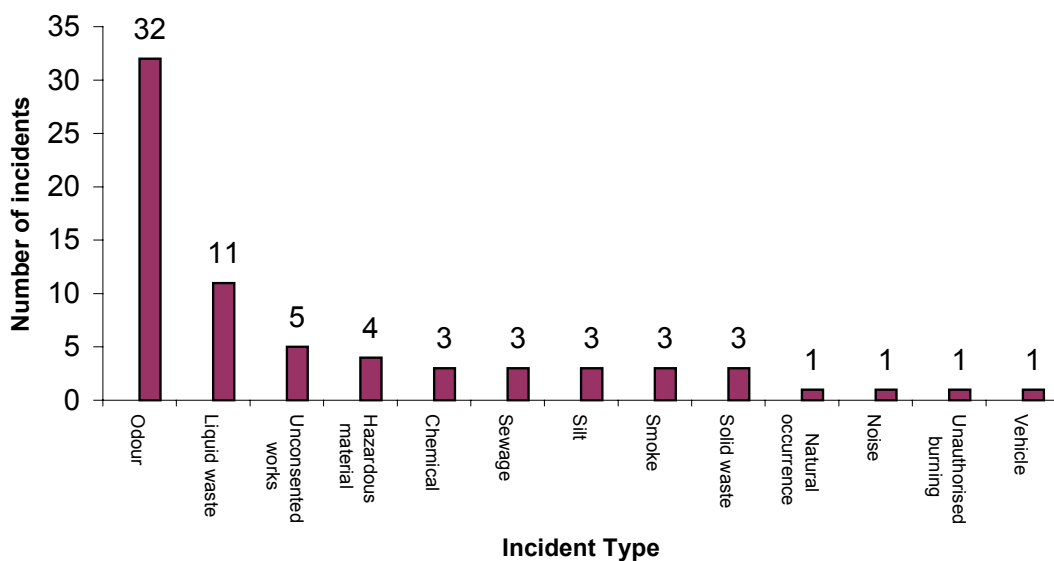
- 80% of businesses surveyed have waste reduction initiatives in place;
- the water quality of our five most polluted streams improves;
- there will be no significant deterioration of water quality in our key rivers and streams;
- there will be no overall deterioration in the health of our soils.

4. Incidents

4.1 Incident summary

A total of 71 incidents were recorded during this reporting period, as summarised in Figure 1. Further information is provided in Attachment 1. This compares with 169 incidents during the same period in the previous year. The decline is attributed mainly to fewer reported odour incidents because of unsettled weather conditions

Figure 1: Summary of incidents (13 March 2004 to 22 April 2004)



However, the majority of incidents were still associated with odour. Most of these were attributed to the Taylor Preston meat-works in Ngauranga Gorge, the Carey's Gully complex in Happy Valley, and NZ Fish Products and Hutt Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant at Seaview.

Liquid waste discharges were attributed to a variety of sources, and unconsented works in stream beds were also a common problem.

The most significant incidents that occurred during this period are summarised below:

- 400 litres of cyanide waste was spilt at a transport company depot in Seaview. The spill was contained and treated on site, with no discharge to the stormwater network. This incident had the potential to cause a very

significant disaster, possibly leading to loss of life. The cyanide waste was being transported with chromic acid. If these chemicals had mixed, there could have been a significant discharge of cyanide gas, either in the Seaview area, or on the Interislander when the chemicals were in transit. The Land Transport Safety Authority and Occupational Safety and Health Service are currently initiating regulatory proceedings in relation to this incident.

- A culvert constructed in Ohariu Valley Road was completed at a significantly larger scale than was anticipated. A Pollution Control Officer is currently liaising with the landowner and the Consents Management Department.
- Sodium hypochlorite spilled from a rail wagon onto the rail siding at CentrePort. There was no discharge to stormwater, and no significant adverse effect on the environment.
- Disposal of non-cleanfill material at Kenepuru Hospital led to the issue of an Advisory Notice to Mainzeal (Project Managers), requiring them to arrange for the removal of non-cleanfill material.
- A fire in the ventilation system between the plant and pollution control system at South Pacific Tyres. Good communication between the plant manager and the Fire Service resulted in minimal environmental impact.
- Pollution Control officers identified bacteriological in a dry weather discharge into Lavender Bay from the Moa Point short outfall. The source was confirmed to be wash-down water from the nearby WCC dog pound. Works are currently underway to prevent wash-down water entering the stormwater network.

The Pollution Control Team completed four proactive odour monitoring exercises at Carey's Gully during this reporting period. One of the interesting observations made was that during light wind conditions odours can actually move in a direction opposite to the prevailing wind direction. This is due to localised airflow patterns. There was no significant correlation between odours detected during these exercises, and incoming odour complaints.

4.2 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 Teams achieved all target response times during this reporting period.

Table 1: Response time summary

Target response tie	Mean response time
Red (60 minutes)	36 minutes
Yellow (24 hours)	0.4 hours
Blue (30 days)	5.4 days

4.3 Enforcement action

Table 2: Summary of enforcement action

Advisory Notices	4
Infringement Notices	0
Abatement Notices	1
Enforcement Orders	1
Prosecutions	0

The Pollution Control team is currently reviewing regulatory options for several environmental incidents that have occurred in recent months, with three already referred to legal counsel.

An application has been made to with the Environment Court for an Enforcement Order against Mr Graham Alexander, Mangaroa Valley Road, Upper Hutt. Greater Wellington has a long history of involvement with Mr Alexander over various filling operations on his property. This Order seeks to prevent further disposal of fill anywhere on this property and the removal of existing cleanfill material from the property.

An abatement notice was issued to Capital Carpet Cleaning, requiring the Company to cease discharging process wastewater into road-side stormwater sumps.

4.4 Take Charge

This financial year, *Take Charge* assessments have been conducted for 143 sites, comprising 101 motor mechanics, and 60 service stations. All service stations in the region have now been invited to participate, and there has been a 95% uptake.

Take Charge assessments were completed at 20 service stations in the Wairarapa between 19 and 22 April 2004. These were done in collaboration with Wairarapa staff. This exercise revealed that issues at Wairarapa service

stations were much the same as those in the west of the region, although the disposal of trade waste is a problem in the Wairarapa.

5. Special projects

Nic Conland and Rita O'Brien prepared a paper for the NZ Water and Waste Association Stormwater Conference in Rotorua. It assessed reasons for the growing number of silt incidents associated with steep and hilly subdivision developments in the region. The paper considered the perspectives of Greater Wellington, territorial authorities, developers and community groups, and identified a number of possible mechanisms to improve the current situation. A copy of this paper is available upon request.

6. Contaminated sites

URS Corporation has been commissioned to undertake additional background soil sampling to validate and add to the findings of the 2002 sampling exercise.

The Selected Land Use Register has a total of 1,581 entries at the present time. The Pollution Control Team has been responding to requests for information from the Register and responding to territorial authority requests for information on planning/building consent issues on contaminated land.

7. Communication

No further public communication is necessary for this report.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

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

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Attachment 1: Incident Response Summary