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Committee Regulatory
Author Naomi Middleton, Environmental Protection Officer,
Environmental Regulation

Pollution Control Annual Report Summary 2006-2007

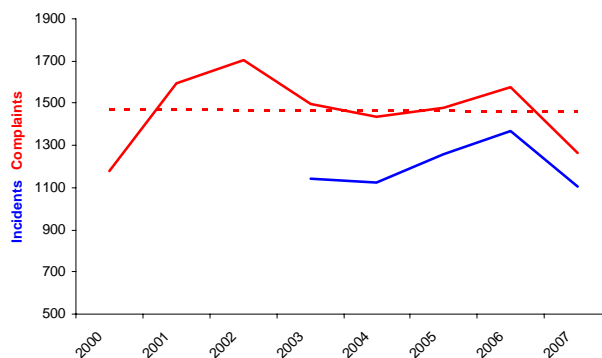
1. Purpose

To report on Greater Wellington's pollution control activities over the 2006/07 financial year.

2. Background

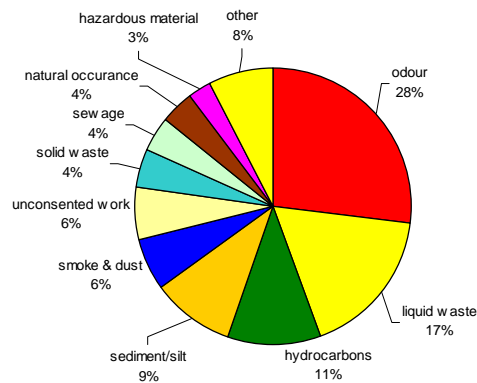
Greater Wellington provides a 24-hour incident response service throughout the region. It also conducts environmental assessments for industrial or commercial sites, and undertakes a range of special projects to establish baseline conditions, track trends and characterise environmental problems. This report provides a brief summary of the main findings from 2006-2007 year, presented in further detail in the Annual Pollution Control Report 2006 – 2007. Copies will be made available at the meeting.

3. Incident response



During 2006-07, the pollution control team responded to 1,106 environmental incidents, which gave rise to 1,264 individual complaints (some incidents, like odour, prompt more than one complaint). This represents a small decrease in incidents numbers compared to previous years and is a stabilising of the trend since 2000.

Figure 1: Incidents and complaints



The number of incidents for most pollution types has remained constant since the 2005/06 reporting period, with significant increases in incidents involving sewage (41%) and hazardous materials (87%), and significant decreases in odour (28%) and liquid waste (23%). The decrease in odour incidents is consistent with the trend since 2002 and can be attributed to continued odour control improvements at the key source sites around the region as well as complainant fatigue in some instances.

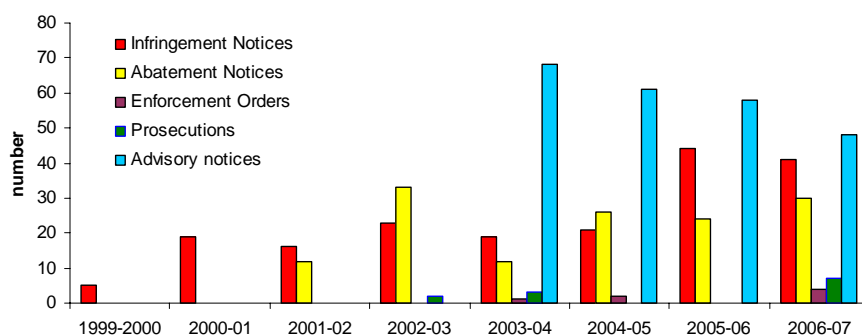
As in previous years, the majority of incidents occurred in the areas administered by Wellington City Council (46%) and the Hutt City Council (20%). Greater Wellington has developed a Memorandum of Understanding for incident response activities with the Hutt City Council.

4. Enforcement action

We took formal enforcement action for unconsented activities where non-compliance with regional rules resulted in adverse environmental effects that were more than minor (see table). Issuing advisory notices and requiring unconsented works to seek the necessary resource consents continues to be a cost-effective way to address most matters of non-compliance.

We are continuing to recover investigation costs - rather than issuing infringement fines - from people whose activities are non-compliant but where the environmental effects are only minor. Last year \$6,748.84 was recovered.

Regulatory action summary 2006 - 2007 (2005 - 06)



4.1 Prosecutions

Tenga Pickering Contracting Ltd and Tonkin & Taylor Ltd were charged in July 2006 for discharging sediment laden water from a large sediment pond at Silverstream Landfill into Halls Creek and the Hutt River in January 2006. Charges were withdrawn against Tonkin & Taylor, while Tenga Pickering Contracting Ltd was convicted on two charges after pleading guilty, and the Environment Court agreed to restitution offered by both parties of \$10,000. The restitution amount, to be managed by Greater Wellington, will be used for environmental enhancement works in the Halls Creek and Hutt River area.

Burrell Demolition Ltd and Alec Burrell were charged in November 2005 for the unauthorised laying of a pipe in a tributary of Owhiro Stream at C&D Landfill, in Wellington in August 2005. Charges were withdrawn against Alex Burrell, while Burrell Demolition Ltd was convicted on four charges and fined \$6,000 after pleading guilty on 12 February 2007; costs of \$3,125 were awarded to Greater Wellington. The Environment Court took into account the deliberateness of the works and considered that a strong deterrent was required to discourage other operators from taking a similar approach.

Brooklyn Holdings Ltd and Lance James were charged in May 2006 for the unauthorised discharge of sediments to the Owhiro Stream, Brooklyn Wellington in December 2005. Charges were withdrawn against Lance James, while Brooklyn Holdings Ltd was convicted after pleading guilty on 6 November 2007. He was fined \$2,000 and costs of \$5,000 were awarded to Greater Wellington.

5. Pollution prevention

The Pollution Control team uses its observations of incident trends and environmental pressures to make detailed assessments of risk areas and issues that have local and regional significance. The *Take Charge* programme is one of the ways in which this work is achieved.

Key aspects of our pro-active work during the past year are summarised below:

- Greater Wellington organised the collection of 1.25 tonnes of agrichemicals from the Wairarapa, which were disposed of by the Ministry for the Environment in a joint initiative.
- Our *Take Charge* pollution prevention team completed assessments at industrial and commercial sites in Paraparaumu for their compliance with the Resource Management Act 1991, and undertook a new *Take Charge* area assessment in Grenada North around the Takapu Stream.
- We also carried out eight audits for the EnviroSMART Programme, which helps businesses find ways of reducing energy, water use, and waste generation.
- Since identifying the problem of sedimentation in 2004 Greater Wellington has been up-skilling regulators, developers and contractors in how to control erosion and sediment loss at construction sites. The 'Muddy Waters' programme continued in 2006-07 and pollution control officers participated in a series of workshops highlighting the importance of Small Streams were held at Greater Wellington.

6. Communication

The Annual Pollution Control Report 2006-2007 is a publicly available document, and is posted on the Greater Wellington web site. A media release will also be prepared to accompany the release of the annual report.

7. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report; and***
2. ***Notes the contents.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Naomi Middleton
Pollution Control Team
Environmental Regulation

Al Cross
Manager, Environmental
Regulation

Nigel Corry
Divisional Manager,
Environment Management