



Report 04.311
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Committee Environment Committee
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Pollution Control Report for the period 23 April to 21 May 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.

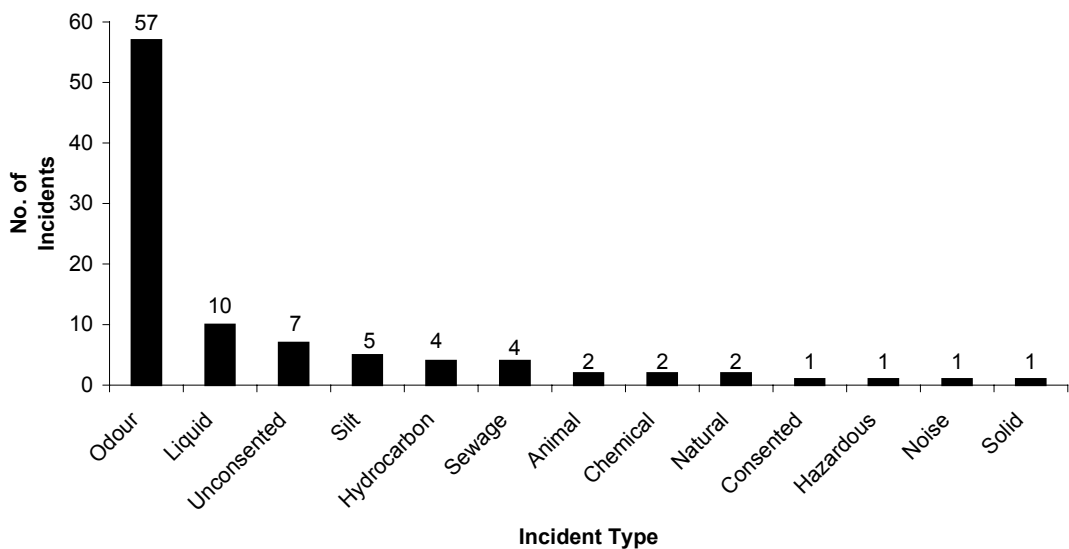
4. Incidents

4.1 Incident summary

A total of 97 incidents were recorded during this reporting period, as summarised in Figure 1. Further information is provided in Attachment 1. This compares with 78 incidents during the same period in the previous year.

The majority of incidents were associated with odour. The number of odour incidents is increasing as the weather settles. Complaints about odours from Carey's Gully were more prevalent than any other odour source.

Figure 1: Summary of incidents 23 April to 21 May 2004



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

- Approximately 300 puffer fish were washed up on beaches around the eastern suburbs of Wellington. Investigations did not pinpoint a cause, but dumping of by-catch from a fishing vessel is suspected.

- The discovery of a chronic process wastewater discharge from a concrete company yard to an adjacent stream in Lower Hutt. This is being investigated.
- Discharges of contaminants to land, and to stormwater, from a waste treatment facility in Seaview are being investigated.
- An unconsented track on private property in Wainuiomata. This is being investigated for compliance with regional rules.
- Multiple discharges of silt from subdivision activities at a site in Brooklyn. This is being investigated.

The Pollution Control Team completed four proactive odour-monitoring exercises at Carey's Gully and one at Taylor Preston during this reporting period. Observations made are giving us a clearer understanding of local weather conditions and the impact of site activities on odour characteristics beyond the boundary of the property. Preliminary findings will be presented at Wellington City Council's Carey's Gully odour workshop scheduled for 30 June 2004.

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)	42 minutes
Yellow (24 hours)	9.3 hours
Blue (30 days)	4.3 days

4.3 Enforcement action

Table 2: Summary of enforcement action

Advisory Notices	8
Infringement Notices	0
Abatement Notices	1
Enforcement Orders	1
Prosecutions	0

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

In June, the Environment Court issued an Enforcement Order for Mr Graham Alexander, Mangaroa Valley Road, Upper Hutt. Greater Wellington has a long history of involvement with Mr Alexander over various illegal filling operations on his property. This order forbids further unauthorised dumping anywhere on his property and requires the removal of existing non-cleanfill material present on his site.

4.4 Take Charge

So far this financial year, *Take Charge* assessments have been conducted for 151 sites, comprising 109 motor mechanics, and 60 service stations.

Pollution Control Officers are presently compiling information about major business sites around the region, to identify potential future participants in the *Take Charge* Programme.

5. Special projects

A review of stormwater discharge consent conditions is being undertaken, to determine how the compliance monitoring data gathered can be integrated with baseline water quality information.

A project is underway to identify contaminant sources impacting on an unnamed tributary of the Waiwhetu Stream in Gracefield.

Work is continuing on developing memoranda of understanding (MOU's) with the region's territorial authorities. The MOU's are designed to increase levels of co-operation and information sharing between territorial authority staff and GWRC pollution control officers.

6. Contaminated sites

Selected areas of Wellington City and Porirua City are being investigated to map old sheep dip sites.

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.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

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Attachment 1: Incident Response Summary