

Geoff Skene
Manager, Environment Education

Environment Education Department Report – December 2005

1. *Take Action*

Term four is drawing to a close with two guided schools now undertaking their action projects and two self-guided schools. With a lighter school load this term, the *Take Action* team are devoting a lot of time to the development of the second *Take Action* programme on air and transport. The development of this programme is working to a timetable of June 30, 2006 and at present we are keeping to that schedule.

1.1 Guided schools taking action

This term the schools doing the guided programme are the last syndicate from Fergusson Intermediate (the whole school has been doing *Take Action* this year) and Samuel Marsden School. At Fergusson Intermediate students have again been working on the Moehau Stream. At Samuel Marsden students are working on their action projects. The school has indicated a desire to run the self-guided version annually from 2006.

A development at Douglas Park School in Masterton (guided in term three of this year) has seen the students working to incorporate the lessons from *Take Action* into their school's operations. Douglas Park is an Enviroschool so already has structures in place to enable this to happen.

1.2 Self-guided schools

This term's self-guided schools are Seatoun, where four classes are involved, and Waikanae, which was also a self-guided school last term. Having run *Take Action* once with the senior group of classes, Waikanae School decided to let their middle syndicate get involved this term. The school had access to a number of high quality microscopes and got a close up look at the macro invertebrates they had collected from their local stream. This proved a powerful learning experience.

1.3 *Take Action* and be the Difference

Given the large number of schools from Upper Hutt which have taken up *Take Action* this year, we saw the potential to use the students' activities to inform parents and members of the local community about Greater Wellington's

environmental messages. We have arranged a public meeting for Monday 5th December where the students' work will be demonstrated and staff will talk about *Take Action* and Corporate Communications staff will promote Be the Difference.

1.4 Schools for 2006

Places are filling fast for *Take Action* for 2006, with eight schools having signed up for the guided programme. Three of these are large schools with more than one syndicate wanting to participate (i.e. six or more classes). These schools are located in Mauriceville, Petone, Featherston, Upper Hutt, Kilbirnie, Porirua, Ngaio, and Hutt. We are still recruiting for both guided and self-guided schools.

2. Partners Porirua

Partners Porirua is a trust dedicated to linking schools and businesses in the Porirua area to their mutual advantage. In early November Partners Porirua launched its 2006 programme based on water. This is an ideal opportunity for us to link up with the Trust to promote *Take Action* and develop connections with businesses in the area working with schools on environmental issues.

At the launch we heard from Rob Kuiti the principal of Titahi Bay Intermediate School, who described the schools recent progress in teaching environmental education. The school has taken an environmental approach for some time and undertook *Take Action* in the first term of 2003 and again in 2004 (self-guided). Building on these beginnings, it has integrated environmental education into its operations and teaching, and has been successfully re-vegetating two local streams and making other environmental improvements. It has established a relationship with the research institute ESR, which analyses water samples taken at regular intervals by the students. However, perhaps the most interesting comment made by Mr Kuiti was that the school's environmental focus has now become a point of difference for the school, with parents keen to send their children to the school because of its reputation for innovation and environmental learning.

3. Take Care

The annual application round for *Take Care* closed on Friday 14 October. Nine applications were received. Staff have been assessing the applications and applicants were advised of the outcome in late November.

With the planting season over, most groups have now scaled back their activities and are concentrating on weeding and maintenance.

4. Corporate Volunteers Programme

On Wednesday 26 October, 16 volunteers from NZI spent a day at the Forest and Bird nursery at Pauatahanui potting up jointed rush and weeding. These plants are intended to be planted as part of the Horokiri Stream mouth restoration next year.

5. Kakaho and Horokiri Stream Restoration Projects

Work has continued over the last six months on the restoration of the Kakaho and Horokiri stream estuaries on the Pauatahanui Inlet. Most of this work has been done by a Community Service team from the Department of Corrections, and the projects have been underway for a number of years. Excellent progress has been made by the team, with the Kakaho project now being completed. Most of the south bank of the Horokiri has also been planted with over 2000 plants having gone in this season. There is room for more on the north bank but further work has been deferred while a walkway is being constructed for Porirua City Council along this stretch of the stream.

The completion of planting at the Kakaho estuary concludes a project started by Nigel Clarke in 1999. Restoration of a salt marsh is unusual in New Zealand but through the outstanding efforts of the Community Service workers and their supervisors, the contribution of volunteers from the Forest & Bird nursery at Pauatahanui, labour from corporate volunteers, and the work of a number of Greater Wellington staff over time, this restoration has been successfully concluded.

6. Recycling Trial

As part of our efforts to get more businesses adopting environmentally friendly practices, we have commenced a recycling trial at the Majestic tower in Wellington. This project aims to help businesses in the building become aware of their waste to landfill and learn how it can be reduced. It involves two waste audits, and a 1 month recycling trial for paper, mixed recyclables (plastic, metal, and glass), and the collection of food waste. The results will be developed into a case study to help promote waste minimisation to other buildings in the CBD. The trial involves ten of the building's tenants.

7. Sustainable Management Fund Applications

The Ministry for the Environment has recently changed the focus of its Sustainable Management Fund (SMF), with a view to funding more practical projects at a community level. We have made an application to the Fund for 2006-07 with the Hulls Creek care group to build a fish pass on the creek and undertake a significant weed eradication exercise that is beyond the capacity of the Take Care programme and the group to address. The Waikanae Estuary care group has also made an application to enable them to expand their restoration and implement a restoration plan prepared for the estuary. Wellington City Council has made an application (which we are supporting) to introduce recycling in multi-tenanted office buildings and change environmental behaviour in the commercial sector. This builds on the work described in 6 above.

Nicola Shorten
Manager, Resource Policy

Resource Policy Department Report – December 2005

1. Maintaining Regional Policies and Plans

1.1 Regional Plan Changes

There is one outstanding appeal on Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan. A new rule requires resource consent to drive heavy vehicles on stopbanks. The Council appealed the decision of the Environment Court to exclude a length of stopbank within the Lower Wairarapa Development Scheme from the rule. The High Court has allowed the Council's decision to the extent that conditions should be included in the rule that prevent future changed use that could have unpredictable consequences. Agreement has been reached on a number of conditions and a memorandum filed with the Court to resolve two other conditions.

There have been two pre-hearing meetings on the plan change to include minimum flows and allocation for the Mangaterere Catchment in the Regional Freshwater Plan. Submitters have now been advised that the Plan Change will proceed to a hearing.

2. Regional Policy Statement and Plan Implementation

2.1 Freshwater Ecosystem Programme

Concept designs for fish passes at weirs and culverts have been prepared at sites in four urban streams - the Owhiro, Kaiwharawhara, Waiwhetu and Hulls Creek. Community groups have prompted the work in all instances. There has been consultation on the designs at the Kaiwharawhara and Owhiro Stream.

2.2 Wetlands

The document *“So you're thinking about a pond... a guide to design, management and consent requirements for landowners”* has been printed and distributed to landowners, landscape architects, consultants and territorial authority consent and planning staff. It is also available on our website.

The guide was written in response to the growing popularity of artificial ponds as landscape features. A number of ponds around the region have been badly designed, built in the wrong place, or are poorly maintained. These ponds cause environmental problems including bad smells, insect plagues, algal blooms and aquatic weed infestations. On top of this they can also damage existing streams and wetlands.

Greater Wellington supported a joint bid from Landcare Research and NIWA for FORST funding to study wetland function and restoration of degraded lowland wetlands. The bid has been successful, and we hope that some wetlands in our region will be used as case studies.

Ten more landowners joined the wetland incentives programme in the last three months - most of the applications have been for fencing. In addition, the National Biodiversity Condition Fund is funding weed control in three wetlands this summer.

2.3 Project Kaiwharawhara

Progress has been made on the three signs that are to be erected at various locations in the Kaiwharawhara catchment. Under the title of Project Kaiwharawhara, the signs contain generic material about the catchment, what has happened, who is involved in the Project, and a map showing the whole area with various areas and features highlighted. For each of the three signs, there will also be material specific to that location and the project carried out there.

Councillors have been advised of the “launch” event planned for 9 December. The event will recognise project achievements and acknowledge the voluntary effort that has been given by the community groups. It is expected that about 6 councillors and various officers from the Wellington City Council will attend, as well as the media and representatives of participating community and environmental groups.

The bus will leave the Wellington City Council offices at 10am, and lunch will be provided.

2.4 Waiwhetu Stream

The stream rehabilitation and the floodplain management studies for the Waiwhetu Stream are being progressed together. A decision on the preferred option for remediating the contaminated sediments is needed before flood protection works can be designed for the lower Waiwhetu reach. The project scope for the lower Waiwhetu flood mitigation investigations is being expanded to include the final work needed to arrive at a decision regarding the contaminated sediments. It is hoped that this work will be completed by April 2006.

The Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Committee (WSAC) has accepted the role of deciding on the optimal stream remediation option and making a recommendation to both councils. WSAC is chaired by Stuart McCaskill and

includes councillors from Hutt City and Greater Wellington and Les Roberts, Chair of the community based Waiwhetu Stream Working Group. Members of WSAC were recently taken on a bus tour of the lower Waiwhetu to look at the contamination and flooding issues.

The final report of an investigation into the extent of the contaminate sediments and the levels of contamination in the land adjacent to the lower reaches of the stream has been received. The findings of this report and the other two studies looking into contamination entering the stream will be reported early next year.

3. State of the Environment Report

The findings of work done for the State of the Environment Report were presented to Councillors at a workshop on 16 November. Updates on the work done for five chapters of the State of the Environment Report are the subject of separate reports to the Committee.

4. Other

4.1 District Plans and Notified Consents

Seven notified resource consent applications have been received since the last Committee Report.

One submission was made on the application by Wellington Marine Conservation Trust. The application is for the development, use, operation and maintenance of a new Wellington Marine Education Centre/Aquarium of New Zealand. Greater Wellington's submission was neutral, but sought that:

- Wellington City Council include a condition on the landuse consent to require a detailed tsunami response plan, for a locally generated tsunami; and
- the applicant further assess the impact of traffic movements on the safety of cyclists and whether public transport services could safely pick up and drop off passengers (should such service be required in the future).

An application for subdivision at Navigation Drive and James Cook Drive, Whitby is currently being assessed. It is likely that a submission will be made due to the potential impacts on two significant ecological sites.

One district plan change has been notified since the last committee report. This is a private change to the Kapiti Coast District Plan to rezone land at 34-50 Lupin Road Otaki, from rural to residential and open space. The application is currently being assessed.

One hearing has taken place since the last committee report. The hearing for Hutt City Council's District Plan Change 4: Demolition and Relocation of Listed Heritage Buildings and Structures was on 5 October. Greater Wellington provided written evidence in support of the proposed change.

4.2 Proposed National Environmental Standard for Human Drinking Water Sources

Ministry for the Environment have released a discussion document introducing a national environmental standard for human drinking-water sources. The standard will require that:

- New consents for drinking water catchments shall only be granted if the proposed activity does not result in drinking water being non-potable or unwholesome following treatment.
- Consent authorities will periodically assess the risks within drinking water catchments to ensure permitted and unregulated activities do not cause impacts beyond the performance of the affected treatment facilities.
- Resource consents within drinking water catchments will have a condition that any unauthorised activity will need to be notified to the water supplier immediately.
- Resource consents to take water for drinking will have a condition that requires appropriate action, including turning off the supply, if notified of events or activities that make the drinking water non-potable.

We are currently preparing a submission on the proposed national environmental standard for human drinking water sources. The submission will be presented to the next meeting of the Policy Finance and Strategy Committee.

John Sherriff
Manager, Resource Investigations

Resource Investigations Department Report – December 2005

1. Resource Information

1.1 Flood warning

The Resource Investigations Department provides a flood warning and monitoring service for the western part of the Wellington Region. Rainfall and river level recorders around the Region automatically relay information to the Regional Council Centre. When specified rainfall intensities or river levels are reached the system automatically alerts staff who implement response procedures.

Details of alarms received are provided to the Committee to fulfil reporting requirements set out in the Annual Plan.

Since the last meeting of the Committee no rainfall or river level alarms have been received.

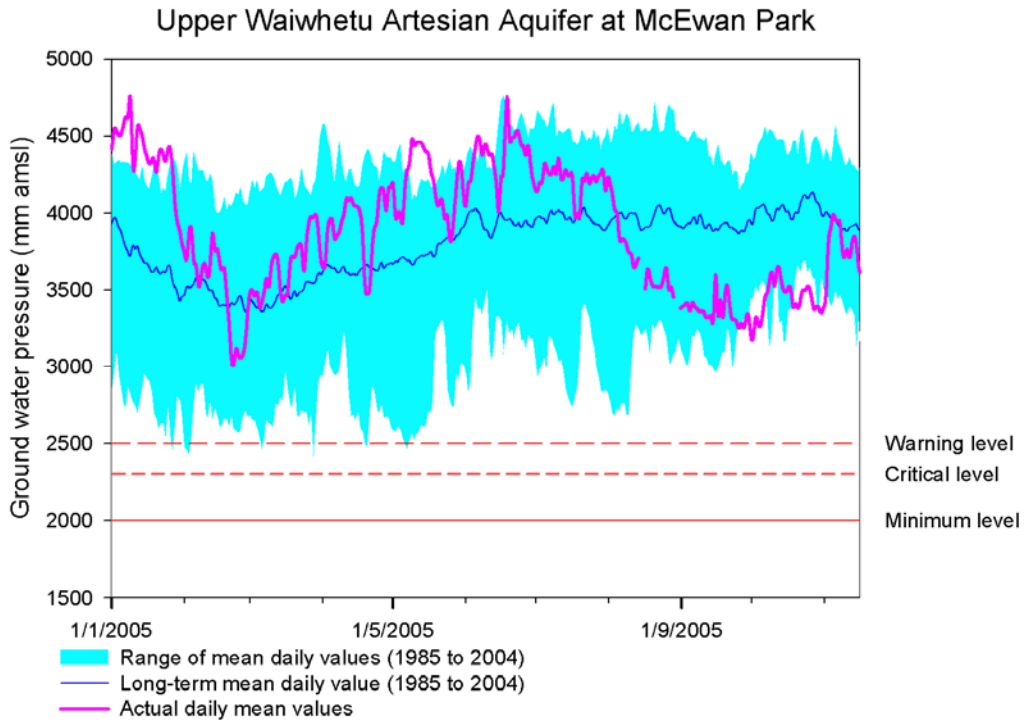
2. Resource analysis

2.1 Groundwater levels

The Department monitors groundwater levels at 46 sites around the western Region. We use two of these bores, McEwan Park at Petone and Hautere Plain on the Kapiti Coast as general indicators of the state of groundwater resources in these areas. Records from these two bores and a synopsis of the situation are provided to the Committee at each meeting.

2.1.1 Lower Hutt groundwater zone – Upper Waiwhetu artesian aquifer

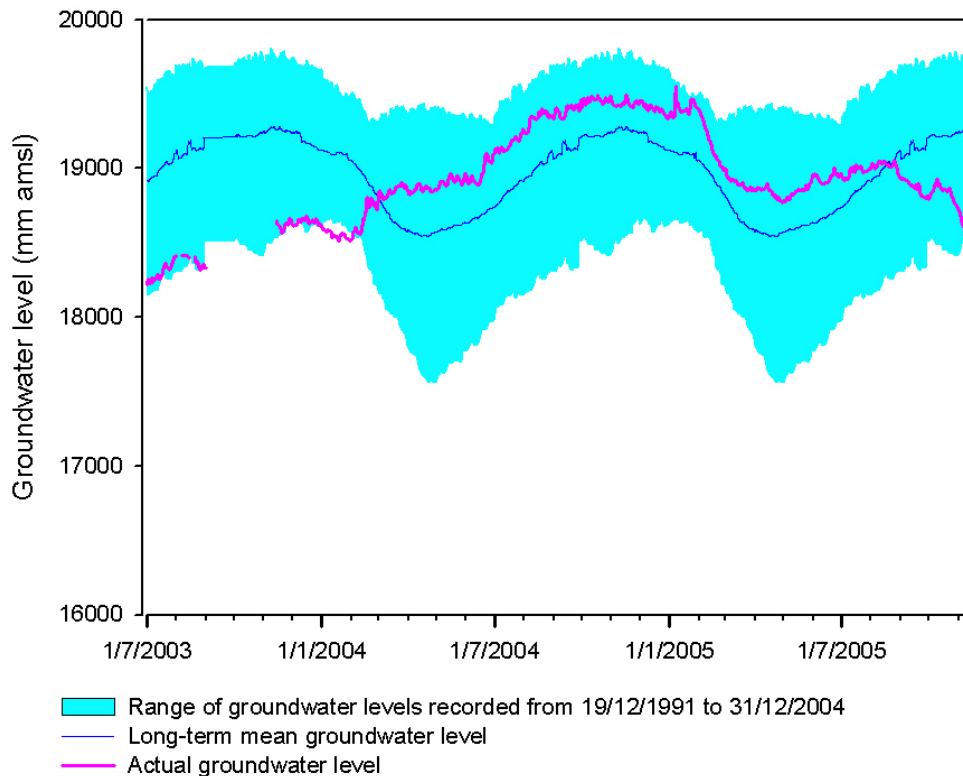
Aquifer pressure at our McEwan Park monitoring bore is slightly below the long-term mean, but has recovered well after recent heavy use of the aquifer by the Utility Services Division.



2.1.2 Kapiti Coast

The water levels in Kapiti aquifers are being affected by the recent lack of rain in the region. The hydrograph below shows the record from a monitoring well on the Hautere Plain, which intercepts a deep rainfall recharged aquifer. The hydrograph shows the normal winter recovery slowing in June and becoming a decline in August. Since August the groundwater level has dropped to record low levels. This observation is supported by the management of the Nga Manu Nature Reserve who say that their wetland complex is as low as they have ever seen it at this time of year. We have recently installed a shallow well at this wetland to monitor water levels.

Monitoring bore S25/5208 at Te Horo, Kapiti



2.1.3 Kapiti Coast District Council Well field monitoring

Staff have been developing a series of monitoring and sentinel wells, around the KCDC well field. These will allow us to monitor the effects of water extraction on both shallow and deeper groundwater and provide a saline intrusion alarm capability.

2.2 Rainfall and river flows

Spring has been unusually sunny and dry for most of the Wellington region. During September, anticyclones were centred east of the North Island bringing more frequent northerlies than usual. As a result, September rainfall was well below average (Figure 1) and mean monthly temperature was well above average.

During October, high air pressures to the south of New Zealand brought more easterly air flows over the country. Apart from a southerly storm in early October, the dry spell has continued in Wellington, the Wairarapa and the Kapiti Coast (Figure 2). The eastern Wairarapa had some respite from the dry conditions with an additional southerly storm on October 22-21.

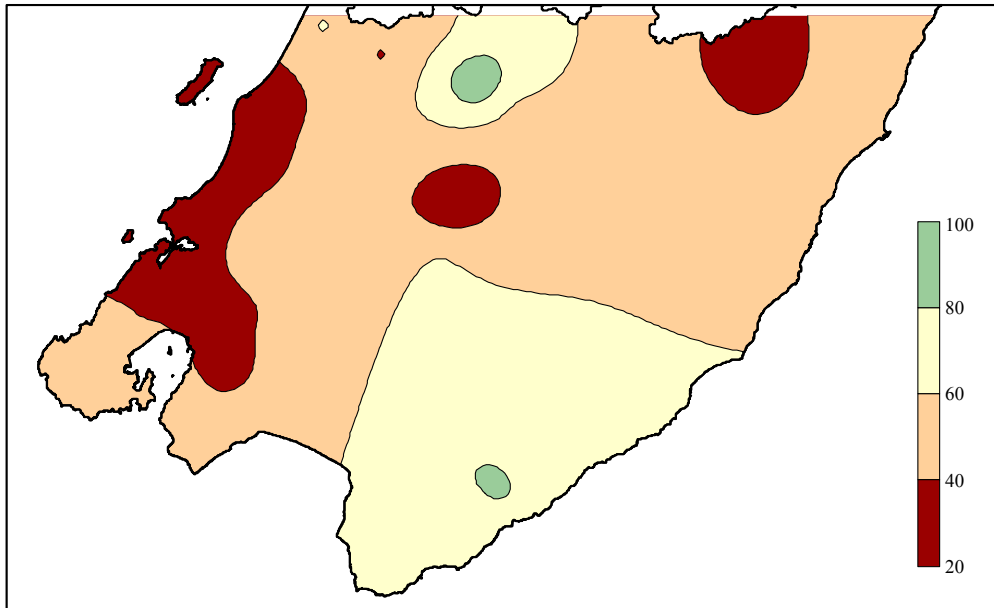


Figure 1: Rainfall during September 2005 as a percentage of average for the month

Low rainfall for the spring period resulted in low river flows for the Wellington region. Below average spring rainfall in the Tararuas has not given rivers the boost they normally have during late spring. This late-season boost is important to sustain river base flows throughout the summer season. River flows in September were 25 to 40 % lower than normal (Table 1). Rainfall in early October provided a small boost for river flows, but they were still 30-50 % lower than normal for the month. Flow in the Waitohu fell below the first allocation step-down for a week in mid September and again on November 7.

The sunny and dry regional trend has continued into November with no significant rainfall events having occurred since October. As a result, river flows are falling much earlier than normal with the Waitohu already approaching its minimum flow level. A wet summer will be needed to recharge the hill catchments and ensure that river flows remain above their minimum flow levels.

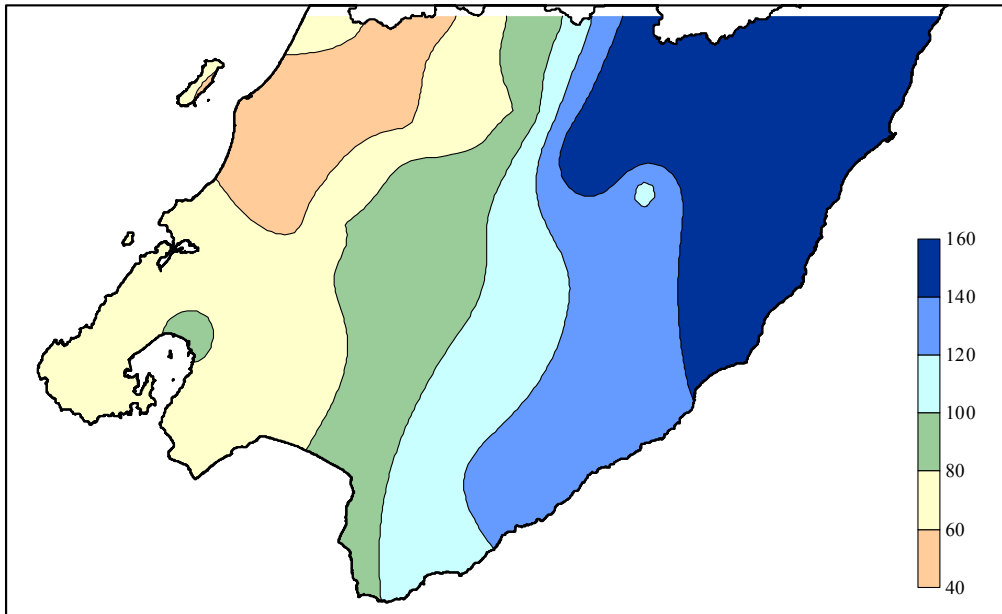


Figure 2: Rainfall during October 2005 as a percentage of average for the month

Table 1: September and October River flows in the Wellington Region

	Average flow during Sept 2005 (m ³ /s)	Long-term average for Sept (m ³ /s)	Average flow during Oct 2005 (m ³ /s)	Long-term average for Oct(m ³ /s)
Wainuiomata @ Manuka Track	0.33	0.93	0.47	1.22
Hutt @ Taita Gorge	8.07	25.77	18.15	36.81
Mangaroa @ Te Marua	0.94	3.70	1.43	4.87
Akatarawa @ Cemetery	1.82	5.70	3.78	8.85
Porirua @ Town Centre	0.31	0.87	0.49	0.98
Waikanae @ WTP	1.98	5.20	3.45	6.29
Waitohu @ WSI	0.37	0.90	0.66	1.27
Mangaone @ Ratanui	0.12	0.35	0.19	0.67

2.3 Air quality monitoring

2.3.1 Ambient air quality monitoring

We currently monitor ambient air quality at three permanent sites in Lower Hutt (Birch Street Reserve), Upper Hutt (Savage Park) and Masterton (Wairarapa College). Our mobile ambient monitoring station is still located at Trentham Fire Station and will soon be moved to a site in the Porirua airshed.

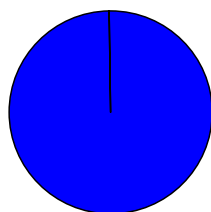
The graphs below represent air quality at the location indicated when the monitoring results are compared to ambient air quality guidelines. The assessment categories are as follows:

Category	Maximum Measured Value	Comment
Action	Exceeds Guideline	Completely unacceptable by national and international standards.
Alert	Between 66% and 100% of the guideline	A warning level which can lead to guidelines being exceeded if trends are not curbed.
Acceptable	Between 33% and 66% of the guideline	A broad category, where maximum values might be of concern in some sensitive locations, but are generally at a level that does not warrant dramatic action.
Good	Between 10% and 33% of the guideline	Peak measurements in this range are unlikely to affect air quality.
Excellent	Less than 10% of the guideline	Of little concern.

Councillors will be aware that our *Take 10 - Quality of Life* target for air quality is that there will be no recorded instances when air pollution reaches the "alert" level of the national air quality guidelines.

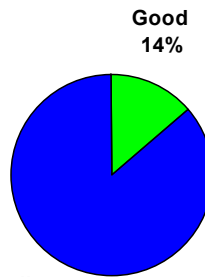
Results for the past two months at Upper Hutt

8-Hour Average CO at Savage Park



Excellent
100%

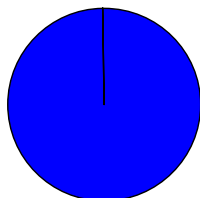
24-Hour Average NO₂ at Savage Park



Excellent
86%

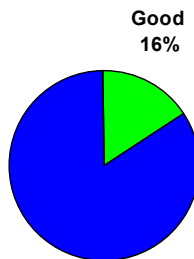
Good
14%

8-Hour Average CO at Upper Hutt



Excellent
100%

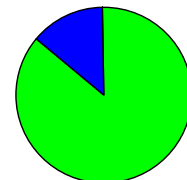
24-Hour Average NO₂ at Upper Hutt



Excellent
84%

Good
16%

24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Upper Hutt

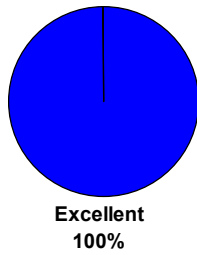


Good
86%

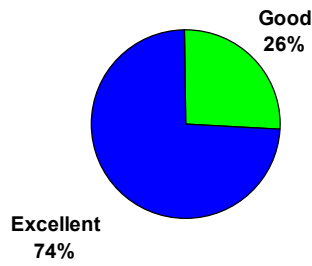
Excellent
14%

Results for the past two months at Lower Hutt

8-Hour Average CO at Lower Hutt



24-Hour Average NO₂ at Lower Hutt

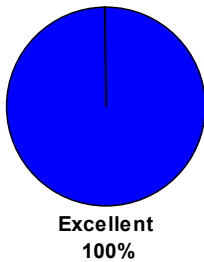


24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Lower Hutt

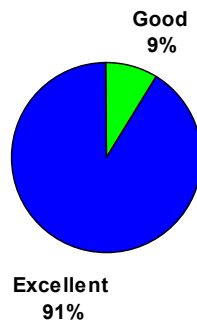


Results for the past two months at Masterton

8-Hour Average CO at Masterton



24-Hour Average NO₂ at Masterton



24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Masterton



2.3.2 Traffic emissions monitoring

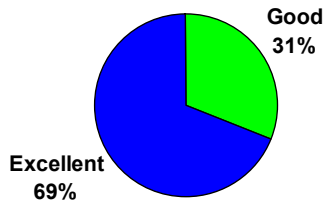
The effects of transport emissions are monitored at a permanent site at the corner of Vivian and Victoria Streets. The first of our mobile traffic emissions stations has been commissioned in Ngauranga Gorge, however, no data is available to present in this report. We also monitor carbon monoxide emissions at a site in Te Aro adjacent to the new inner city bypass.



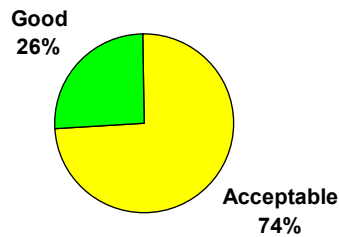
The mobile traffic emission monitoring station @ Ngauranga Gorge

Results for the past two months at Corner Victoria & Vivian Streets

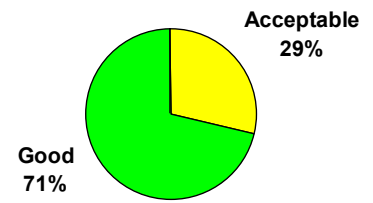
8-Hour Average CO at Corner V



24-Hour Average NO₂ at Corner V



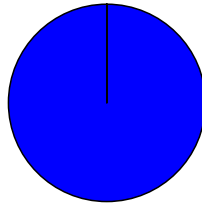
24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Corner V



Results for the past two months at Te Aro

8-Hour Average CO at Te Aro

Excellent
100%



2.4 Stormwater

A further workshop with territorial authorities was held on 11 November 2005 to discuss the stormwater management issues and options report which was produced after earlier workshops. The issues and options report was generally well received. We have proposed the development of a Regional Stormwater Management Action Plan. This will be a non-statutory plan that takes a co-ordinated approach to improving stormwater management throughout the Wellington region. We have also proposed that the development of the Action Plan be overseen by a working group comprising representatives from Greater Wellington and each territorial authority. Each territorial authority in the region has been asked to support this approach and to nominate a staff member to represent their views on a working group. We hope to have completed this plan by the end of the financial year.

2.5 Recreational water quality monitoring

The bathing season started on 1 November and runs until the end of March. During this period key bathing sites along our coast and in our rivers are monitored for bacterial contaminants on a weekly basis. The results of this monitoring, and each site's suitability for bathing, are presented on Greater Wellington's website.

This programme is undertaken in close collaboration with territorial authorities in the Region.

2.6 Off farm disposal of animal carcasses

Staff are currently working with Biosecurity New Zealand to identify and map areas where off-farm disposal of animal carcasses could occur in the event of a biosecurity emergency such as an outbreak of foot and mouth disease or avian bird flu. The task is being completed using an exclusion process, i.e., identifying areas that are not likely to be suitable for such use due to proximity to water supply sources, proximity to residential areas, soil characteristics and cultural issues. The disposal areas will also need to be relatively close to farming areas.

2.7 Didymo and sea squirt

Biosecurity New Zealand has recently been monitoring water in our region to ascertain whether or not the pest plants didymo and sea squirt are present in our region. We have been co-operating where we can. So far it appears that these pests are not present in our region's water.

3. Pollution Control

3.1 Pollution and non-compliance complaints

A summary of pollution complaints, our performance in responding to them and enforcement action taken is reported separately.

4. Staff

Scott Wilson has joined us for a 10 month period and will be working as our hydrologist while Laura Watts is overseas. Until recently Scott worked in a similar role at Marlborough District Council.

Nigel Corry
Manager, Consents Management

Consents Management Department Report – December 2005

1. Consent statistics

In the period from 1 July to 16 November 2005 we have received 174 consent applications. This compares with 165 received for the same period last year.

Over the same period, we have processed 131 consents. This compares with 153 over the same period last year.

All consents processed since the last Committee meeting have been done so within statutory timeframes. Our median processing time for non-notified consents is currently sitting at 13 working days. When we have regained a full complement of staff, and some of the major notified consents we are currently working on are completed, I expect this timeframe to reduce to be more in line with our 10 day performance indicator.

A summary of the notified consents we are currently processing is also attached for information.

2. Appeals and objections

2.1 Ridvan Garden Developments Limited

As reported at the last Committee meeting, the joint GW/Wellington City Council decision on the Ridvan Gardens consent, which was released on 19 July, has been appealed by two parties - Action for the Environment Inc. and the Southern Environmental Association (Wellington) Incorporated. Both appeals are identical in their content, and while the majority of reasons for appeal relate to issues under the City Council jurisdiction, issues such as protection of small gullies, culverting and cumulative effects are relevant to GW.

Since this time, both the Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group and Ronald England have also joined the appeal as section 274 party.

Some of the appeals and section 274 applications were filed out of time. However, the Environment Court has subsequently approved the appellants' requests for waivers of timeframes. The applicant has formally put on record their view that the matters subject to the appeal cannot be resolved by way of mediation, and that they will seek to go straight to a hearing. It is likely that

this matter will be heard in the Environment Court in March/April next year and I anticipate that it may take a three day hearing for all matters to be heard by the Court.

2.2 Exide Technologies Limited

The Exide Technologies Ltd consent review decision was released on 30 September 2005. We have received appeals from three parties in relation to this decision.

The Exide Pollution Action Group (EPAG) Incorporated has appealed on a number of issues in relation to emission limits, location and type of monitoring, and plant upgrades. We also received an appeal from Richard Whiteside and Barbara Whiteside and Plaster Coat Limited. The points raised in this appeal are similar to those raised in the EPAG appeal.

Exide Technologies has also appealed the decision. However, this is relation to one point only which is the discharge limit on the Western boundary of the plant. This is the most restrictive limit set by the review, and Exide are simply arguing that it is too restrictive.

In addition to the appeals, EPAG also sought an order from the Environment Court, under section 116 of the Resource Management Act 1991, seeking that the conditions contained in the Council decision have immediate effect, despite the fact that there are appeals on this decision. This request is currently with the Environment Court. We have agreed to abide by the decision of the Court in relation to the matter.

As with the Ridvan Gardens appeal, this issue is highly unlikely to go before the Courts earlier than March/April next year. The prospect of the issue raised in appeals being resolved by mediation appears remote at this stage; although I understand that all parties are willing to pursue this route in principle.

3. Compliance

3.1 General

We have now completed the 2004/05 Annual Compliance report. As noted, we have taken quite a different approach to this report this year, with a pamphlet style document being prepared that simply provides a high level overview of compliance highlights and work during the year. We hope this will be seen as a bit more user friendly than the large documents produced over the last few years. The report will be sent to those interested parties on our mailing list such as territorial authorities, key government agencies, local interest groups and agencies such as Fish and Game. Copies of the compliance report have already been placed in the Councillors lounge.

3.2 Abatement notices

We have not served any abatement notices since the last Committee meeting.

3.3 Infringement notices

We have served two infringement notices since the last Committee meeting. Both of these notices were served in relation to gravel extraction activities in the Wainuiomata River where works were occurring well outside the consented area. One notice was served on the consent holder, Norman Cobb, and the other on the contractor undertaking the works, J B Hughes.

All infringement notices outstanding at the last meeting (three of which had been served on Taylor Preston Limited and two on Summerset Villages) have been paid.

3.4 Prosecution and enforcement orders

There are no prosecution proceedings currently underway.

The Mangaroa Metals enforcement order issue has finally been resolved with Michael Mears withdrawing proceedings against both the Council and Mangaroa Metals. After indicating that we would be seeking costs if the issue had to go back to the Environment Court, Mr Mears initially withdrew proceedings against the Council. After ongoing dialogue with Mangaroa Metals, and the continued involvement of GW staff, Mr Mears also eventually withdrew proceedings against Mangaroa Metals.

4. Other

4.1 Muddy Waters Workshop

In conjunction with the Pollution Control Team, we held a Muddy Waters workshop on 28 October. This workshop was specifically tailored to meet the needs of Territorial Authorities, and covered issues such as a pre application and site visit checklists, and conditions. The issue of Muddy Waters is subject to a more detailed paper as part of the agenda for this meeting.

4.2 Meridian Wind Farm Application

The Meridian 'West Wind' consent application has been heard over the last six or so weeks, with over 200 submitters taking the opportunity to present their evidence to the Commissioners. Rights of reply were scheduled to conclude in the week ending 18 November, and Commissioner deliberations are scheduled for the week commencing 21 November. Despite having some initial reservations around some of the bulk earthworks proposed as part of the application, negotiation with the applicant and submitters allowed GW officers to recommend in their right of reply that all consents subject to GW jurisdiction be granted.

A decision on this application is likely sometime before Christmas. There is a high likelihood that the decision of the Commissioners, whether it to be grant or decline the applications, will be appealed.

4.3 Staff issues

Liz Hislop left the Department on 10 November to do her OE. Liz had been with us for nearly three years and made a great contribution to our work. With Claire O’Hehir having left in August to work with the Pollution Control team, we currently have two vacancies.

However, we will have two new staff starting with us before Christmas. Sean Lisle is a recent graduate from Massey University and will start on 28 November, and Fiona Betteridge will start with us on 1 December. Fiona has recently worked with Horizons Regional Council in their compliance team, and also has some excellent experience working in Australia.

As of Christmas, Tracey Grant will be taking 12 months off on parental leave. Another new Massey graduate, Natasha Hoogeveen, will start in early January to fill Tracey’s role while she is away.

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Wellington City Council	Change of consent monitoring conditions for the Moa Point Pump Station.	02/11/00	08/12/00	2		On hold for further information in relation to monitoring requirements.	-	-	-
Wharfe Quarry ¹	To undertake a quarrying operation, including discharge of stormwater, dam and diversion of water, taking of water and piping a watercourse.	06/11/03	04/02/04	57 plus 2 late	-	Hearing not yet scheduled - on hold under s92 and s91 of the RMA 1991.	-	-	-
Ridvan Garden Development ²	To lay culverts and discharge contaminated stormwater as part of a residential subdivision development in Crofton Downs.	23/12/04	25/02/05	51		27/28 June	Sally Baber Liz Mellish Ian Hutchison	19 July	Appealed by 4 parties
Wellington Waterfront Ltd and the Wellington Tenth's Trust ³	To construct and maintain a new Wharewaka on the western side of the extended Lambton Harbour Lagoon.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	-	Hearing closed with decision due prior to Christmas
The Wellington Tenth's Trust	To construct and maintain a new building (wharanui) at Taranaki Street Wharf.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	-	Hearing closed with decision due prior to Christmas
Wellington Waterfront Limited	To develop, use and maintain public spaces, landscaped areas and associated structures at Taranaki Street Wharf.	02/06/05	08/07/05	54	-	22/23 August and 6/7 September	Glen Evans Aka Arthur	-	Hearing closed with decision due prior to Christmas

¹ This application will be jointly heard with Porirua City Council

² This application was jointly heard with the Wellington City Council

³ This application was jointly heard with the Wellington City Council

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Hutt City Council	To discharge treated and disinfected wastewater from the Seaview wastewater treatment plant.	07/06/05	20/07/05	3	6 September 2005	All parties have agreed to sign off on draft conditions – will not need to proceed to hearing.	-	-	-
Meridian Energy Limited ⁴	Various land use, discharge, and coastal permits associated with the development of the "West Wind" wind farm proposal.	01/07/05	10/08/05	4000 +	-	Scheduled for late September and early October.	Commissioners: Jim Lynch David McMahon	-	-
Wellington Marine Conservation Centre ⁵	Establish an aquarium at Te Raekaihau Point.	13/09/05	2/11/05	1500+	-	-	Chris Turver Sally Baber	-	-
Whitby Coastal Estates ⁶	Various land use and discharge permits for an 81 lot subdivision in James Cook Drive, Whitby.	6/09/05	29/11/05	-	-	-	-	-	-
GWRC – Biosecurity	Discharge permit to discharge Endathol across the entire Greater Wellington region for the control of hornwort and aquatic pest plants.	7/10/05	2/12/05	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pacific Wallcoverings Ltd (Limited notification)	Discharge permit associated with the operation of a wallpaper manufacturing plant.	15/08/05	9/12/05	-	-	-	-	-	-

⁴ This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

⁵ This application will be heard jointly with the Wellington City Council

⁶ This application will be heard jointly with the Porirua City Council

Mike Pryce
Manager, Harbours
Harbours Department Report – December 2005

1. Harbour navigation aids

All navigation aids operated satisfactorily.

2. Oil pollution response

- Seven reports of oil spills were received and investigated. None required further action.
- Oil pollution training - six GWRC staff attended a Fundamentals course in October and a further two staff also attended a Fundamentals course in November. These courses were held by Maritime New Zealand at Te Atatau, Auckland.
- The annual service of marine oil spill equipment was carried out on 27 September. Maritime New Zealand also undertook a stock take of sorbents and dispersants at the same time.
- A Tier 2 oil spill response table-top exercise was held on 16 November in the Hoyts Room, Regional Council Centre. This room is identified as the location for the Incident Command Centre should our region need to respond to a significant and/or protracted marine oil spill response.

3. Port and harbour risk assessment

A first-draft of the risk assessment was received from Marico in early November. The finalised risk assessment is planned to be presented to the Environment Committee in early February 2006.

4. “Skyshow” harbour fireworks display

The annual “Skyshow” fireworks display from a barge moored in Lambton Harbour took place on Saturday 5 November, with our usual safety arrangements in place. It was enjoyed by thousands ashore and afloat, and it was pleasing to note the excellent cooperation of recreational boats on the harbour and the lack of any marine safety incidents.

5. Sinking F69-Wellington

Various meetings were held with Sink F69 Trust, Wellington Maritime Police Unit, EventPro, explosives experts, etc in October and November to coordinate

arrangements and the required public notices in order to scuttle the frigate F69-Wellington off Island Bay.

Deputy Harbourmaster Patrick Atwood had been kept busy issuing Hot Work Permits for work on the hulk since June 2005. Consents Management, Resource Investigations and Harbours staff carried out final on-board inspections of F69 on 10 & 11 November to check and certify that the hulk was clear of contaminants.

Bad weather delayed the scuttling by one day, but F69-Wellington was successfully sunk by explosives at 3.30pm on Sunday 13 November, watched by over 220 boats of all sizes off Island Bay/Houghton Bay, and thousands of spectators ashore. Harbour rangers Grant Nalder and Greg Meikle assisted with the GWRC-Harbours workboat and jetski in patrolling and enforcing the required exclusion zone/reserved area around the sinking, together with Wellington Maritime Police Unit and Coastguard craft. It was again pleasing to note the excellent cooperation of recreational and charter boats in the area and the lack of any marine safety incidents.

5. Honorary enforcement officers function

A function was held on the 27 October in the Board Room of the Wellington City and Sea, to thank our Honorary Enforcement Officers. Maritime New Zealand also had a few of their Safe Boating advisors along.

Rian van Schalkwyk
Manager, Emergency Management

Emergency Management Department Report – December 2005

1. Civil Defence Emergency Management Group

1.1 Exercise Phoenix IV

Project Phoenix began in 1998 as a joint project between Auckland and Wellington. It involved the regional councils and territorial authorities, emergency services, health providers and many other response agencies. The main aim of the project was to determine how Auckland could assist Wellington to recover from a large earthquake and what logistical support Auckland could provide to Wellington.

Phase I of the Project (1999 and 2000) explored what resources Auckland had to offer to the Wellington Region. That culminated into Exercise Phoenix I, a tabletop exercise for organisations in Auckland.

Phase II (2001) was a needs analysis of Wellington's logistics requirements and the role of lifeline utility services. Exercise Phoenix II took place in October 2001 and tested the operational response of lifeline utility services.

Phase III (Exercise Phoenix III in July 2002) was an exercise to reality check all the planning that had been conducted in Wellington and Auckland, but specifically, the management of urban search and rescue, treatment and movement of the injured and the provision of potable water.

The information gathered from Exercise Phoenix III was used in the preparation of the CDEM Group Plan and also for the update of councils' standard operating procedures.

Phase IV of Project Phoenix was to test the functioning of the CDEM Group Plan. Exercise Phoenix IV took place on 25 November 2005 under the direction of the Group Controller.

To ensure that the effectiveness of the Wellington Region CDEM Group Plan is evaluated, it is essential that the Plan be tested in an exercise. More than a hundred organisations with roles and responsibilities in emergency management have contributed to the preparation of the Group Plan and most of these organisations' operational responses were tested in the exercise. Phoenix IV was the first opportunity to exercise the CDEM Group Plan. The exercise was being co-ordinated by the CDEM Group Office Manager.

The scenario for the exercise was a major earthquake, with the Wellington fault rupturing. It was a Level 4 event.

The exercise lasted for 12 hours and involved all organisations with roles and responsibilities in the CDEM Group Plan.

The effectiveness of the following CDEM activity areas were assessed in Exercise Phoenix IV:

- The co-ordination of regional civil defence welfare
- The co-ordination of Lifelines restoration – based on the Protocols for Lifelines Response
- Information and media management
- Resource management (logistics, external supply, etc)
- The interrelationship between the Group Emergency Operations Centre (Group EOC) and local emergency operations centres (EOC), the Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management (MCDEM) and the role of the Emergency Services and other emergency organisations in a Level 4 emergency; and
- The operating procedures of all participating organisations.

Exercise Phoenix IV was a very important means of testing the Wellington CDEM Group Plan.

However, there were huge spin-offs. For months the participating organisations have planned together, and looked at their operating procedures and response capability. This in itself meant that valuable relationships were being built.

Now that the exercise has been completed, we will be reviewing our response performance, changing the identified gaps into work programmes where possible, and we will endeavour to work even more co-operatively to improve our CDEM operational capabilities.

It is planned to have such a major exercise every three years.

1.2 Progress with CDEM Group Work programmes

We have seven CDEM Group programmes listed in the CDEM Group Plan for completion in the 2005/6 year as well as the sewerage disposal project which was requested by the CDEM Co-ordinating Executive Group.

The programmes are:

- CDEM Group Public Information and Media Management
- CDEM Group Welfare Management

- Review of Standard Operating Procedures
- The Role of the CDEM Group in Public Health Hazards
- Lifelines Communications System implementation
- Development of a Joint Agency Training and Exercise Schedule
- CDEM Group Reconnaissance Plan developed and tested
- Sewerage disposal

Steady progress is being made in all these programmes.

1.3 Upgrade of the Regional Communications system

At the last meeting of the Committee it was reported that installing a satellite system (iPSTAR 400) proved to be too costly over the long term and that we were looking at alternate systems.

After extensive research, and following numerous discussions with other service providers, we now have a much clearer picture of what type of system would provide the capacity and capability to transmit data effectively. This is the subject of a separate report, *“Upgrade of Regional Communications System”*, to this meeting of the Committee.

1.4 CDEM Group submission on the Proposed National CDEM Plan

The Proposed National CDEM Plan was publicly notified on 23 August 2005 with submissions to be received by 14 October 2005.

Sections 39 and 44 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 require the Ministry of CDEM to prepare and approve a National CDEM Plan within three years after the date of the commencement of the Act, which is by 1 December 2005.

At the meetings of the Co-ordinating Executive Group (CEG) on 26 September 2005 and the CDEM Group (3 November 2005) the draft submission (prepared by the emergency management officers in the Region) on the Proposed National CDEM Plan was considered. All the members of both the CEG and the CDEM Group expressed their concern about the quality of the Plan.

There was general surprised that the National CDEM Plan has departed so significantly from the format promoted for CDEM group plans in the Director’s Guidelines and other Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management (MCDEM) publications. While it is acknowledged that the national plan and group plans are different documents, there are a number of similarities between the two types of plan. This is evidenced by the similarities between Sections 39(2) and 49(2) of the CDEM Act 2002.

It was noted that the plan introduces another document “the *Guide*” to the hierarchy of arrangements that will underpin and support the plan. This document is intended to be a comprehensive compilation of detail and resources comparable to the previous National Civil Defence Plan and will be prepared within the same timeframe as the proposed plan.

The CEG and CDEM Group expressed their dissatisfaction and disappointment with the quality of the Proposed National CDEM Plan. The view was that the Plan needs to be withdrawn and rewritten due to its significance.

The submission also included a reference that if the Proposed National CDEM Plan is not able to be withdrawn and rewritten, it should, at the very least, undergo detailed editing and include a clause guaranteeing a full review within two years.

2. Marketing and Communications

There is a lot of education work being conducted in the Region, both as a Group, and as individual authorities.

The preparation of a CDEM Group Education Strategy, planned for the future, should provide direction and priorities for this work, as well as ways to monitor our progress. Meanwhile, emergency management officers are, where possible and practicable, endeavouring to work more closely together on education initiatives.

Set out below are some of the initiatives that we are currently undertaking.

2.1 The CDEM Group website

The Wellington Region CDEM Group website (www.wrcdemg.govt.nz) went live on 7 October 2005.

We have received some really good and positive feedback from other local authorities, emergency services, and the public on the ‘user-friendliness’ of our site.

The server is now being operated from Auckland which provides us much more robustness, especially for operating the site during an emergency. The decision to move the server to Auckland aligns the web services to both the CDEM Group and the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The new website was extensively tested during Exercise Phoenix IV.

2.2 Disaster Reduction Week (9 to 15 October 2005)

The Group, in conjunction with the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) ran a campaign during Disaster Reduction Week.

During that week there was a national radio campaign to profile the CDEM emergency warning sound – called the STING (a repetitive loud beep!). The public was advised about what they should do when they hear the STING.

During the same week the Ministry of CDEM also ran its ‘Know what it takes’ radio campaign.

In addition, the Wellington CDEM Group developed a household emergency plan in a wallet sized format. These household plans were distributed all over the Region. An A2-size poster, profiling the need to store emergency water, to have survival supplies and to have, and practise a household emergency plan, was also designed, printed and distributed. This campaign was very successful and excellent feedback was received from the wider public on the household emergency plans.

3. Environment

3.1 Earthquake Reports

Since preparing the last report for the Environment Committee meeting 66 reports for earthquakes bigger than 3 on the Richter Scale were received from GNS. The following earthquakes were felt in the Wellington Region.

Date	Magnitude	Depth
Nov 15 2005	Magnitude 3.9	25 km 20 km north east of Seddon
Nov 11 2005	Magnitude 3.9	20 km 40 km s-east of Martinborough
Nov 1 2005	Magnitude 4.8	5 km 10 km east of Seddon
Oct 31 2005	Magnitude 4.6	5 km 10 km east of Seddon
Oct 31 2005	Magnitude 3.3	5 km 10 km east of Seddon
Oct 28 2005	Magnitude 3.8	30 km 10 km west of Castle Point
Oct 23 2005	Magnitude 3.9	40 km 10 km north of Eketahuna
Oct 19 2005	Magnitude 4.6	25 km 10 km n-east of Pongaroa
Oct 15 2005	Magnitude 3.8	40 km within 5 km of Paraparaumu
Oct 12 2005	Magnitude 3.5	25 km 10 km n-west of Martinborough
Oct 11 2005	Magnitude 3.5	10 km 10 km n-east of Martinborough
Oct 9 2005	Magnitude 3.4	30 km within 5 km of Greytown
Oct 8 2005	Magnitude 3.9	40 km 20 km west of Wellington
Sept 19 2005	Magnitude 3.6	25 km 20 km south of Wellington

3.2 Special Weather Bulletins

Two Special Weather Bulletins (for strong wind) were received since the last Committee meeting. The relevant agencies were notified and no problems were experienced.

3.3 Communications

Weekly tests of the radio communications network are being carried out and the system is functioning well.

Richard Waddy
Designation Divisional Accountant
Financial Position: 31 October 2005

1. Operating Results

We are pleased to report the operating results for the period ended 31 October 2005.

<u>Environment Division</u>				
<u>Summary Income Statement</u>				
<u>For the Period Ended 31 October 2005</u>				
	<u>Actual</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Year to Date</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Full Year</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>\$000s</u>
Rates	2,699	2,699	--	8,097
Other Revenue	644	694	50 U	2,147
Total Revenue	3,343	3,393	50 U	10,244
Less:				
Direct Expenditure	2,683	2,832	149 F	9,003
Indirect Expenditure	453	468	15 F	1,427
Total Operating Expenditure	3,136	3,300	164 F	10,430
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	207	93	114 F	(186)

2. Surplus

The Division's finances are satisfactory and the result is slightly better than we anticipated in our budgets. For the period the operating surplus came in at \$207,000, which compares favourably with our budgeted surplus of \$93,000.

The result translates to a net favourable variance of \$114,000, comprising reduced revenue of \$50,000, and offset by lower than expected expenditure of \$164,000.

3. Revenue

Total Revenue at \$3,343,000 is some \$50,000 short of our budget target of \$3,393,000.

The shortfall is mainly with a lower than expected number of notified consents processed in the first few months of the year. However, with a number of large consents that have been or are being processed e.g. the consent for Meridian's wind farm, we expect that the shortfall will be reversed.

We also received funds of \$34,000 from the Ministry for the Environment towards the cost of an Air Quality Monitoring Station, and this has helped offset some of that shortfall. This contribution was not specifically included in our budget.

4. Total Expenditure

The Division's expenditure at \$3,136,000 is some \$164,000 less than our budget.

The main reasons for this variance are:

- **Personnel costs** were slightly under budget by 70,000. Staff movements during the period are the main cause of the underspend. We have assumed for budgeting purposes that the saving that arises from a staff vacancy will be offset fully by any subsequent recruitment cost.
- **Consultant costs** were less than budget by \$50,000.
- Some of the specialist external costs are at a lower level from those that we anticipated in our budgets. These are mainly for laboratory and technical assistance. We expect that this variance will be corrected later in the year.

Some of the projects that fall into this category are as follows:

- policy works - freshwater ecosystem work and special marine studies (\$17,000).
- investigatory works - groundwater (\$10,000), coastline (8,000), air monitoring (\$6,000), and soil analysis (\$9,000).

In addition, QE11 National Trust work is behind (\$35,000). Although funds have been allocated, invariably, with this type of work there is a significant time-lag from the stage funds are committed to the completion of projects

5. Capital Expenditure

The capital expenditure programme (after asset disposals) is in general agreement with our budget.

However, the sale of a harbours vehicle has been held-over until the end of the summer. The vehicle is to be used by a temporary Harbour ranger for the period.