

Report **06.600**
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Committee **CDEM Group**
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Strategy for disposal of sewage during a disaster

1. Purpose

To inform CDEM Group of the progress in developing a strategy for the disposal of sewage during major emergencies.

2. Background

At its meeting of 23 August 2004 the CEG requested the CDEM Group Officers to also consider how best to deal with the disposal of sewage following a major emergency. This project was not outlined in the work programmes named in the CDEM Group Plan, but a start was made shortly after the request.

Following the success of the Wellington Metropolitan Emergency Water Supply project carried out by the Kestrel Group, it was decided to approach Kestrel to co-ordinate this project as well. Kestrel agreed to lead the initial stage of the project at a cost of \$5,000.

Kestrel's proposal was to do the project in two stages;

- Stage 1 – identify all the planning issues associated with the disposal of sewage during a disaster, and mapping out the actual disposal process. This also includes establishing specific preparatory measures that Territorial Authorities (waste water asset managers and emergency managers) will need to implement prior to an event.
- Stage 2 – focus on the key messages (pre-event and post-event) to be communicated to the community via stakeholder organisations.

The project is being overseen by a steering group which comprises utility managers and emergency managers from each of the Local Authorities in the Region. Representatives from Greater Wellington's Pollution Control Team, Capacity Water, and various waste treatment companies have also been included at key stages of the project.

A workshop attended by asset managers, emergency managers, pollution control representatives and Regional Public Health was held on 29 June 2005.

Structural and non-structural measures were discussed as well as the impact of sewage failure on the wider community.

A working group comprising emergency managers, public health staff, pollution control staff and asset managers was set up at the Sewage Disposal Workshop of 29 June 2005. The Working Group met on 12 September 2005 and focussed on the three key stages of the disposal chain, namely household/facility containerisation and initial storage, collection from households/facilities, and disposal by territorial authorities and/or contractors.

Further meetings of the steering group and working group took place during December 2005, April, May, June and August 2006.

3. Progress

Stage 1 of the project has now been completed.

A strategy for the disposal of sewage during a disaster has been prepared and is attached (*Attachment 1*).

4. The Way forward

The work that has been undertaken during 2005/ 06 identifies the various physical process elements involved with disposing of sewage during and subsequent to a disaster event, along with the many associated information needs.

However, more work needs to be carried out, especially regarding Stage 2 of the project. It is also important to implement the ideas and principles as set out in the Strategy. This work will take time, and there needs to be a stronger level of involvement from wastewater asset managers.

The Working Group needs to continue in an ongoing role to address a specific programme of work. Appropriate resourcing in terms of project management will be required. It is estimated that completing and implementing the strategy will cost \$8,000 - \$10,000.

The key elements of the proposed work programme for 2006/ 07 for which approval is sought from CDEM Group are:

- A generic Response Plan to clarify post-earthquake roles and responsibilities between Asset Managers, Emergency Managers and contractors (as applicable)
- A Logistics Plan to develop the *containerisation, collection* and *disposal* strategy and logistics for mass assembly/ critical facilities (possibly using one specific facility as a pilot)
- An Information Strategy and content to develop the level of detail where printing of some elements can be undertaken (including a Fact Sheet); material for public display
- We are seeking the CDEM Group's approval to use the Kestrel Group to lead the project.

5. Conclusion

Progress to date on this project has been good and the potential benefits for the public and asset managers are clear.

However, completion and implementation will require unbudgeted funds.

6. Recommendation

That the CDEM Group:

1. *Receives the report and note the contents*
2. *Endorses the Strategy for Disposal of Sewage during a Disaster*
3. *Approves the continuance of the Kestrel Group to lead the remainder of the project; and*
4. *Approves an amount of not exceeding \$10,000 to complete the project according the CDEM Group's financial arrangements (GW 50% and TAs 50%).*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Strategy for disposal of sewage during a disaster