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Committee Environment  
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## **Pollution Control Annual Report 2005-2006**

### **1. Purpose**

To report on Greater Wellington's pollution control activities over the 2005/06 financial year.

### **2. Background**

Greater Wellington provides a 24-hour pollution 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 2005-2006 year, presented in further detail in the Annual Pollution Control Report 2005 – 2006. Copies will be made available at the meeting.

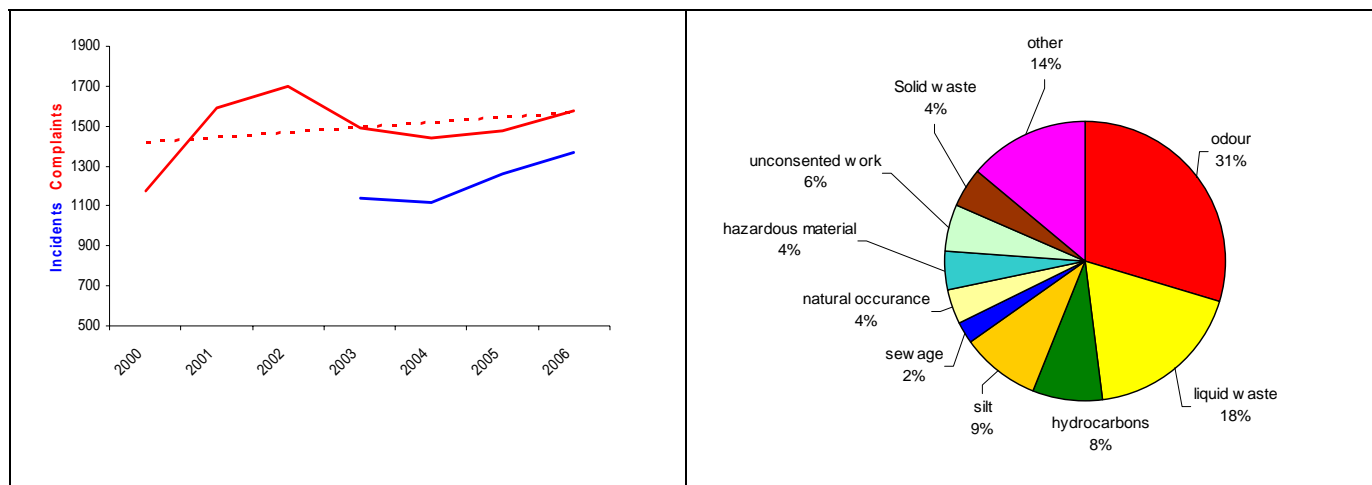
### **3. Incident response**

During 2005-06, the pollution control team responded to 1,368 environmental incidents, which gave rise to 1,579 individual complaints (some incidents, like odour, prompt more than one complaint). This was a small increase in both incident and complaint numbers compared to last year, and is consistent with the general trend since 1998.

The number of complaints for most incident types has been trending upward over recent years, with marked increases for incidents involving silt and liquid waste. Odour showed a marked decrease. The decrease is attributed to continued odour control improvements at the key source sites around the region.

As in previous years, the majority of incidents occurred in the areas administered by Wellington City Council (50%) and the Hutt City Council (24%). Greater Wellington is currently developing pollution control Memoranda of Understanding with territorial authorities throughout the west of the region.

Figure 1: Incidents and complaints



- The most commonly occurring types of incident throughout the region were nuisance odour from industrial sites (31%), and contaminants, such as oil, paint and other waste, entering streams via roadside drainage gullies (18%).

#### 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 continue 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 \$6,000 was recovered.

##### Regulatory action summary 2005 - 2006 (2004 - 05)

Type of action	Wellington office	Wairarapa office	Total
Advisory Notices	58(61)	0	58(63)
Infringement Notices	21(9)	5(4)	26(13)
Abatement Notices	14(17)	8(3)	22(20)
Enforcement Orders	0(2)	0(0)	0(2)
Prosecutions	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

## 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:

- A targeted assessment of 57 industrial/commercial sites in Paraparaumu, as part of a programme to identify and control polluting inputs to the Wharemauku Stream. More detailed *Take Charge* audits have been conducted for 24 of these sites, and recommendations made to address a range of polluting input.
- An initial visit and desktop assessment was made of the Wellington Zoo to identify opportunities for improved environmental performance.
- A new *Take Charge* audit form was developed to remove the delay between the audit taking place and a formal report being delivered to the site. Audit reports can now be issued on the spot as a tear-off form, giving recipients an instant record of their performance and a reminder of actions required.
- *Take Charge* audits were undertaken on nine Service Stations and a Motor Mechanics Workshop as part of the trial of the new rapid audit form.
- The *Take Charge* programme has been streamlined to allow targeting of areas highlighted through incident response and compliance work.
- An 'algae alarm' was developed to notify the pollution control team when flow conditions in specific watercourses may be conducive to causing a toxic algal bloom. The alarm is based on flow parameters which contributed to the algal bloom in the Hutt River in 2005. When an alarm notification is received, the pollution control team notify Greater Wellington hydrologists who will monitor flow conditions in the Hutt River. If an algal bloom is likely to occur Greater Wellington will notify regional public health. The alarm allows Greater Wellington to be better prepared for an algal bloom.

## 6. Communication

The Annual Pollution Control Report 2005-2006 is a publicly available document, and is posted on the Greater Wellington web site. No further public communication is necessary for this report.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. **Receive the report; and**
2. **Note the contents.**

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