

Hazards Update November 2002

Hazard research and emergency management news and information

Welcome to the second issue of Hazards Update. This is the first issue with our new branding, new look, and new name: Greater Wellington - The Regional Council. This issue contains articles from a number of organisations involved with emergency management. If you have any projects, news or events that you would like to put in our next newsletter please contact us. This newsletter is also on our website at: www.gw.govt.nz.

Current projects

Wairarapa Coastal Strategy

The Wairarapa Coastal Strategy is a joint initiative between the Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa District Councils, Greater Wellington, Ngati Kahungunu and Rangitaane Iwi. The Strategy will provide a long-term vision and guidance for the management of the coast. It will not be a statutory document.

The recently completed technical report on Wairarapa coastal hazards forms part of the Strategy. Coastal development and human safety in the Wairarapa is at risk from coastal erosion, tsunami, storm surge and sea level rise due to global warming. The report concludes that in largely undeveloped areas, such as the Wairarapa, pre-planned retreat using coastal hazard zones is the only cost effective long-term option to deal with these threats. The Strategy will be completed by December 2003.

Newtown School and Wellington Emergency Management Office Partnership Programme

When disaster hits, will you be ready? The pupils of Newtown School are! They have been busy setting up family evacuation plans and compiling emergency kits.

The Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office has entered into a partnership with Newtown School to help prepare the students, teachers and their families for an emergency.

Over the past few months, 8-12 year-olds at the school have been working on the "Forces of Nature" curriculum. This involved making models of volcanoes, studying how earthquakes affect the environment and the local community and working out how to prepare for an emergency.

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Stakeholder Needs Analysis

We are seeking feedback from our 'stakeholders' in the Region to assess if our hazard information is currently meeting their needs. We have many customers including territorial authorities, utility and emergency service providers, and other related professionals (such as engineering firms and consultants, insurance and real estate companies), and the communities of the greater Wellington Region.

The information will help us to target our hazard information so that all our stakeholders find it useful, user-friendly and relevant to their specific needs.

Wairarapa Engineering Lifelines Association (WELA) - Report Update

The main chapters of the report have been completed and the focus is now on editing and printing. The report will be completed by the end of the year. The report assesses the vulnerability of lifelines in the Wairarapa to all natural hazards and suggests mitigation measures to reduce network vulnerability.

WELA has engaged Victoria University of Wellington to continue to investigate the liquefaction potential of soils around essential engineering structures in the lower Wairarapa Valley to assess the susceptibility of the Blundell Barrage (a flood protection structure) to liquefaction. The fieldwork has been completed and the results are expected around February 2003. Paleoseismic research on local Masterton faults will also be advanced shortly when further trenching work is carried out on the Mokonui Fault, and possibly the Masterton Fault.

Hazard Fact Sheets

We are currently adding to our series of hazard fact sheets. Sheets about meteorological hazards in the Region and the potential climate change effects on those hazards are being prepared. These are based on a recent report called *'Meteorological Hazards and the Potential Impacts of Climate Change in the Wellington Region'* (see more about this report under 'Recent Reports'). Flood hazard fact sheets that discuss the management plans of the Hutt, Otaki, Waikanae, and Ruamahanga Rivers will also be developed.

To see the current fact sheet series online, visit www.gw.govt.nz/em/hazard.htm or if you would like a copy of any of the sheets, please contact us directly.

Recent Reports

Meteorological Hazards and Climate Change

The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Sciences (NIWA) has recently completed a study for Greater Wellington identifying the weather-related hazards in the Region and the effect that climate change may have on these hazards.

Climate change causes and effects:

CAUSES	EFFECTS (climate change can increase these effects)
More rainfall/storms	Floods Landslides Erosion Increased threat to lifelines and services Pest and plant eradication problems Lightning/wildfire risk
Higher temperatures	Drought Suitability for crops affected Pest and plant eradication problems Lightning/wildfire risk
Sea level rise	Salt water intrusion – affecting crops and buildings Erosion Inundation
Increase in wind	Potential damage to lifelines, services and homes/buildings

This report (*Meteorological Hazards and the Potential Impacts of Climate Change in the Wellington Region, WRC/RP-T-02/16*) can be viewed online under 'publications', at the Greater Wellington offices, or you can order a paper copy for \$45 by contacting Hayden Webb on (04) 384 5708.

Tsunami Options Report

Greater Wellington commissioned consultants Tonkin & Taylor to complete a report which discusses and assesses the options available to authorities for managing tsunami risk. The Region's coast was divided into seven classes of landuse or development and seven coastal hazard management techniques were formulated according to the classes. The management options were derived from the principles of the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Programme in the USA.

The territorial authorities in the Region are now assessing how they can implement these management options. This report (*Options for Managing Risks from Tsunami in the Wellington Region, WRC/RP-T-02/17*) can be viewed online under 'publications', at the Greater Wellington offices, or you can order a paper copy for \$15 by contacting Hayden Webb on (04) 384 5708.



Flood Updates

Updating Flood Hazard Information on the Kapiti Coast

During the last year as a result of major flood protection projects, Greater Wellington has been working with Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) to revise flood hazard information for the Otaki and Waikanae floodplains.

A set of draft flood hazard maps has now been completed. The maps are available at the KCDC office in Paraparaumu and more specific information will be available by mid December. KCDC is also updating local stream flooding information, so that new flood hazard maps can provide information for all sources of flooding. The draft maps will be finalised next year, and the Kapiti Coast District Plan will be changed to include the new information.

For more information, contact Alistair Cross at Greater Wellington or Andrew Guerin at KCDC.

Developing Flood Hazard Measures for the Hutt Valley

Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils, together with Greater Wellington, are currently developing new initiatives for flood emergency management and investigating ways to manage development in flood prone areas, such as:

- developing maps for public use showing flood hazard and emergency management information.
- producing a co-ordinated media management plan.
- assessing current school readiness-response education packages.

The three councils are also looking at options for modifying current district plan provisions, in line with principles for wise land use in flood prone areas set out in the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan.

The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (WRC/FPMSA-G-01/32) can be viewed online under www.gw.govt.nz/fp/hutt.htm, or you can get a copy at the Greater Wellington offices for no charge. For more information, contact Alistair Cross at Greater Wellington - Wellington Office.

To see live pictures of the Hutt River, check out the web cam on Hutt City Council's web site www.huttcity.govt.nz.

Recent Events

Project Phoenix

The exercise, based on a major earthquake striking Wellington, involved about 200 civil defence, emergency services and national organisations that supply lifeline services in Wellington and Auckland. From 23 -27 July 2002. The emergency management headquarters was activated, and everyone worked together in a week of headquarters activation, workshops, tabletop exercises, briefings, public demonstrations and practical rescue exercises and aimed to:

- test a framework for one region to support another in a major emergency
- exercise the response plans of participating agencies
- identify deficiencies and areas where extra planning is required

As a result of the exercise, projects have been implemented to address



critical issues such as roading access, emergency water, communications, reconnaissance, public information and air support. All these projects will contribute to an "Operations Plan" for our Region (and will also form part of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Plan).

On the Friday and Saturday, Greater Wellington organised a Search and Rescue day at the overseas terminal and Chaffers Park for local rescue teams to train with national specialist rescuers. This was attended by more than 100 search and rescue volunteers, the national urban search and rescue team, emergency services and the media.



United Nations Relief Mission.

From 21 April to 12 May 2002, Rian van Schalkwyk, the Manager of our Emergency Management department, was involved in the United Nations relief mission to Palestine at the Jenin Refugee Camp. There he:

- Assisted the United Nations Resident Humanitarian Co-ordinator
- Co-ordinated response and emergency information
- Assessed the emergency situation and the international relief requirements
- Established an On-Site Operations Co-ordination Centre (OSOCC)
- Co-ordinated reports to disaster relief organisations

Rian also travelled to Iceland in September for a UN training exercise and review of missions in which 45 UNDAC (United Nations Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination) members from 20 countries participated.

Natural Hazard Awareness Week

Natural Hazard Awareness Week ran from 7-11 October 2002. This year we concentrated on commuters, visitors and businesses in the greater Wellington Region as these groups are likely to be affected by a natural disaster. The central message for commuters was "What will you do if you can't get home tonight?" It was stressed that it is likely that commuters may not be able to return home for several days.

Posters were put up in the Region's buses and trains, and on World Disaster Reduction Day (9 October), postcards were handed out at the Wellington Railway Station during peak commuter times. Radio advertising and press releases were also used to emphasise the importance of preparing emergency plans.

The Wellington Emergency Management Office held a business breakfast and a school breakfast, urging schools and businesses to have continuity plans and to regularly test these plans with staff and students.

What will you do if you can't get home tonight?

If a big earthquake or flood happens today, **you might not be able to get home** for hours, or even days.

You MUST have an EMERGENCY PLAN:

- What will you do?
- Where will you meet your family?
- How would you be able to help others around you?

More info: contact the Emergency Management Office at your local council or the Wellington Regional Council
www.wrc.govt.nz or phone: 0800 496 734

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