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**Report 01.650**

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Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee  
from Barry Strong, Section Leader, Resource Quality

**Proposed Hazardous Waste Collection Strategy**

**1. Purpose**

To outline the proposed strategy for the collection of unwanted agricultural chemicals and household hazardous waste in the Wellington Region for the 2001-2003 financial years.

**2. Background**

In 1997, a Hazardous Waste Liaison Group (HWLG), consisting of representatives from all of the Region's Territorial Authorities and the Wellington Regional Council, was formed to provide a co-ordinated approach to the management of hazardous wastes in the Wellington Region. This group identified the collection and appropriate disposal or reuse of unwanted agricultural chemicals in the Region as the highest hazardous waste management priority. Importance was also placed on the collection and appropriate disposal of hazardous household wastes. In developing its Long Term Financial Strategy (LTFS) the WRC included funding for the collection and disposal of unwanted agricultural chemicals over two years, starting this financial year.

The Council has an allocated budget of \$227,000 for the collection and disposal, or storage, of unwanted agricultural chemicals from within the Wellington Region this financial year (2001-2002). A similar amount has been allocated for 2002-2003.

In the LTFS, the Council has also signalled its intention to provide funding for household hazardous waste (HHW) collections in the 2003-04 and 2004-05

financial years. Many of the territorial authorities represented on the HWLG have expressed a willingness to collaborate with the WRC to collect household hazardous waste.

The agricultural chemical collection has been given priority over household hazardous waste collection as these chemicals are far more persistent in the environment and are often located in remote areas and sensitive environments.

### **3. Collection Methodology**

A collection methodology has been developed in consultation with territorial authorities within the Region.

We propose to start the collection of unwanted agricultural chemicals in the Wairarapa area this summer. Over half of the total number of rural properties in the Wellington Region are located in the Wairarapa. Carterton District has been identified as being the most appropriate place to start due to its location in the centre of the Wairarapa and its small geographic area. From there the contractor can move south into South Wairarapa District and north into Masterton District.

Prior to starting collections we will need to establish a facility in the central Wairarapa for the temporary storage and repackaging of unwanted agricultural chemicals.

We intend to visit individual rural properties rather than establish a drop-off point that people can bring unwanted agricultural chemicals to. This collection methodology has been shown elsewhere in the country to be the most effective way of collecting as much of these chemicals as possible in the safest way.

Drop-off points have been used in other parts of the country but have proved to be difficult to run and an ineffective means of collecting the chemicals of concern. They also result in large volumes of non-targeted or unknown chemicals being collected, resulting in some potentially serious health and safety issues and increased disposal costs.

Collection will be preceded by a promotional campaign. This will outline why we are collecting these chemicals, when and where we will be collecting them and how the collection will run. Individual landowners will be contacted and a time will be arranged for our contractors to visit their property. The contractor will collect all unwanted agricultural chemicals from the property and return them to the temporary collection area for further processing.

In some cases, e.g. in remote areas, there may well be volumes of other chemicals that fit into the household hazardous waste category. It is proposed that these will also be collected with agricultural chemicals to avoid having to make repeat visits to these sites in future years.

While our intention is to collect all of the unwanted agricultural chemicals from our targeted areas, the reality is that we will most probably have to do a second sweep of these areas at some stage in the future. The details and timing of this second sweep have not yet been determined. However, it may be practical for it to occur when we undertake household hazardous waste collections.

#### **4. Where to from Here?**

The proposed strategy will be taken back to the Hazardous Waste Liaison Group for final review. Once this has been done we will be tendering this project out for expressions of interest to carry out this work.

We will liase with territorial authorities in the Wairarapa to:

1. Find an appropriate facility to act as our temporary storage area;
2. Sort out the finer details of how the collection will run.

We will also consult Federated Farmers to sort out the finer details of how the collection will run and how best to promote the project in the Wairarapa. We will shortly be putting out a tender for the provision of collection and disposal services.

#### **5. Communication**

A large amount of promotional activity will precede the collection to ensure that it is an effective operation. This promotional activity will occur closer to the time that collection is planned.

#### **6. Recommendation**

*That the report be received and the contents noted.*

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