

Report 03.401
Date 27 June 2003
File ENV/17/02/01

Committee Environment Committee
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Pollution control report for the period 24 May to 27 June 2003

1. Purpose

To report on incident response, investigation and audit work undertaken by Greater Wellington's Pollution Control Team during the reporting period.

2. Background

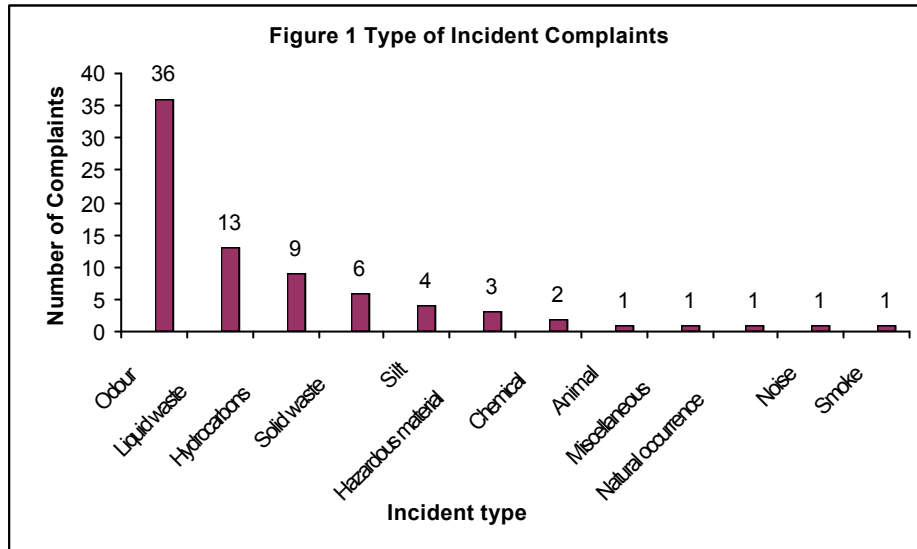
The Resource Investigations Department provides proactive and responsive services to combat environmental pollution in the Western Wellington Region. These pollution control initiatives are summarised below:

- **24-hour Incident Response**, which deals with pollution complaints, environmental incidents and alleged non-compliance with the regional plans.
- **Take Charge**, a pollution prevention programme, aimed at improving the environmental performance of small to medium sized industry. The pollution prevention team is also trained in ISO14001.
- **Special Projects**, which include the development of resource materials, or targeted investigations to establish baseline conditions, track trends, characterise environmental problems, and define our priorities for future initiatives.
- **Selected Land Use Register**, a database of sites in the Region where hazardous activities/industries are known or suspected to have been present, and may have resulted in site contamination. This database is maintained in accordance with proposed guidelines issued by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE).

3. Incidents

A total of 78 incidents were recorded in this time period. These are, summarised in Figure 1. Further information about these incidents can be found in Attachment 1.

Figure 1. Summary of Incidents



The majority of complaints (47%) were odour related, and attributed to a meat-works in Ngauranga Gorge, the Carey's Gully complex and the Hutt Valley Wastewater Treatment Facility at Seaview. Discharges of liquid wastes and hydrocarbons represented 28% of all incidents and mainly involved discharges to road surfaces and into the Coastal Marine Area.

The most significant incidents that occurred during this period are summarised below:

- The discharge of 120 litres of diesel into the stormwater system from a ruptured hose at a petrol station in Thorndon.
- Small quantities of oil were washed up on the beaches between Paraparaumu and Otaki. It is not known where the oil originated.
- A possible cross connection between the sewer and stormwater system in Kelburn resulting in the discharge of sewage into a stream.
- Unconsented earthworks at an Ohiro Road subdivision causing the diversion of a stream channel and silt discharge into the stream.
- The discharge of diesel into the Harbour following a collision between the Aratere and a fishing vessel. The Harbours Department investigated and organised the clean up.

The time between receiving an incoming complaint and reaching the source of the complaint (response time) is used as a performance indicator for the incident response service. Table 1 shows that the officers from both Consents Management and the Pollution Control Team achieved a high level of responsiveness during this reporting period.

Target response time	Average response time	Conformance level
Red (60 minutes)	33 minutes	88 %
Yellow (24 hours)	9 hours	100 %
Blue (30 days)	36 hours	100 %

4. **Take Charge**

Take Charge assessments are continuing at service stations and feedback from participants remains positive. These visits continue reveal a low level of understanding about the Resource Management Act 1991 and rules in the Regional Plans.

Our Pollution Control Officers have recently undergone environmental auditor training, to improve their ability to do site assessments. This will contribute to the quality of our assessments, and improve our ability to advise industry about the development and implementation of effective environmental management systems.

5. **Special projects**

- We are working with Transit NZ to develop a protocol for the clean up of hydrocarbon spills on our main highways within the Region.
- A Pollution Solutions pamphlet about domestic stormwater has been completed. This advises people about how to prevent stormwater pollution.
- The revision of the Sewage Spill Response Manual is approaching completion. This is being done in collaboration with the regional public health service, which is now approaching completion.

6. **Contaminated sites**

The Selected Land Use Register is being used regularly to provide information to territorial authorities and prospective property buyers.

We are awaiting the final report on the investigation to characterise ‘background’ concentrations of common contaminants in soils across the Region.

7. Enforcement action

Allied Concrete was prosecuted for the unauthorised discharge of contaminated wastewater into surface water. In lieu of a fine, Allied Concrete agreed to donate \$5,000 to the rehabilitation of Owhiro Stream.

No infringement notices or abatement notices were issued in this reporting period.

8. Communication

No further public communication is necessary for this report.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *receive the report; and*
2. *note the contents.*

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Attachment 1: Incident Response Summary