



Report 05.13
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Committee Environment Committee
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Pollution Control Report for the period 6 November 2004 to 14 January 2005

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 service, addressing pollution complaints, environmental incidents and alleged non-compliance with regional plans.
- *Take Charge*, a pollution prevention programme, aimed at improving the environmental performance of small to medium-sized industry.
- Special Projects, which include the development of resource materials, and targeted investigations to establish baseline conditions, track trends, and characterise environmental problems.

3. Strategic context

Pollution Control activities contribute to the following Take 10 targets:

- reported incidents will be reduced by half of 2003 levels;
- 80% of businesses surveyed have waste reduction initiatives in place;
- the water quality of our five most polluted streams improves;
- there will be no significant deterioration of water quality in our key rivers and streams;
- there will be no overall deterioration in the health of our soils.

4. Incidents

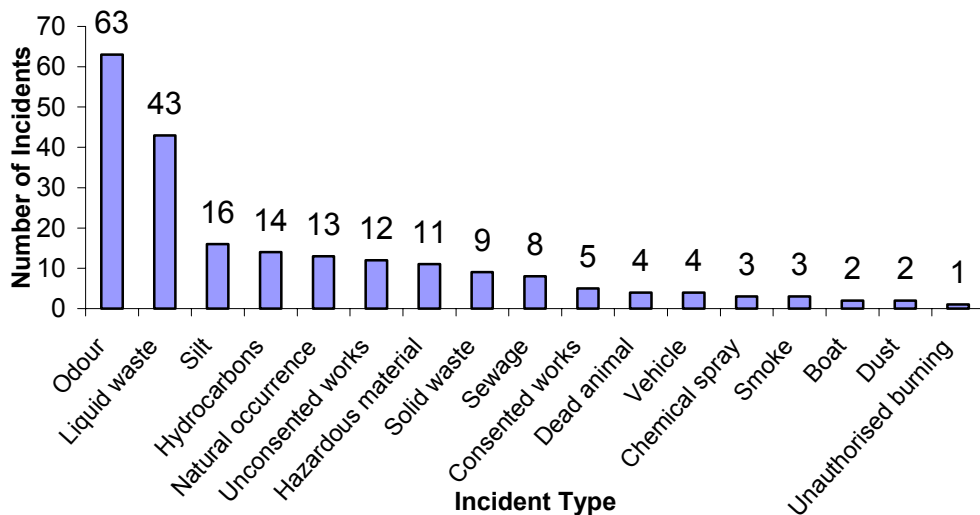
4.1 Incident summary

A total of 214 incidents were recorded during this reporting period, as summarised in Figure 1. Further information is provided in Attachment 1.

The majority of incidents were associated with odour from industrial source. Of the 63 reported incidents, almost half were attributed to Taylor Preston (27%) and Carey's Gully (19%), although this represents a marked decrease compared to the same period in previous years. The remaining incidents arose from waste treatment facilities in Seaview (24%) panelbeating operations (8%) and miscellaneous sources (22%).

Incidents resulting in discharges of liquid waste to the environment have increased from the last period, resulting in impacts on stormwater (49%), surface water (30%), the coastal marine area (19%) and land (1%).

Figure 1. Summary of Incidents 6 November 2004 and 14 January 2005



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

- In December, an uncontrolled wastewater discharge from the Exide Technologies battery recycling plant at Petone led to an unknown quantity of heavy metals discharging into Te Mome Stream, a tributary of the Hutt River. Exide Technologies mobilised an effective response to this incident, and has subsequently implemented infrastructure and procedural improvements at the site.

The Pollution Control Team conducted environmental sampling exercises prior to and following this incident. Results indicated that fugitive emissions from the plant were contributing to elevated lead and antimony levels in street sediments and stormwater sumps around the plant. Sampling confirmed that stormwater from the catchment in which the

Exide plant is situated exhibits unacceptably high lead and antimony concentrations, as does water and sediment in the Te Mome Stream around the stormwater outfall, both of which exceed national guideline values by at least an order of magnitude. By way of comparison, concentrations of lead in the Te Mome Stream are comparable with those measured recently in the nearby Waiwhetu Stream.

Greater Wellington is currently working with Exide Technologies to better characterise the environmental impact of fugitive emissions and historic discharges from this site, and ensure they are adequately managed.

- A structural failure of the wharf surface at Kings Wharf led to a 20 tonne shipping container falling from a parked trailer in December. Much of the content (carpet adhesive) escaped onto the wharf, and an unknown quantity entered the harbour, resulting in minor discoloration around the wharf, and clumps of glue entering Chaffer's Marina. Emergency services responded promptly and an effective clean-up of wharf surfaces was implemented by CentrePort and Pacifica Shipping. The Pollution Control Team is currently working to determine responsibility for this incident.
- An error in valve switching at the Golden Bay Cement site led to over-filling of a silo and an uncontrolled escape of 3-7 tonnes of cement dust onto Aotea Quay and the adjacent harbour in December. Golden Bay Cement removed residues promptly, and investigations are now underway to determine responsibility for the discharge.
- Track construction and small-scale logging operations in conjunction with the development of a house platform in the Blue Mountains contributed to major land slips in December. The first slip discharged several hundred tonnes of silt to the Witako stream, while the second blocked the Blue Mountains Road. The Pollution Control Team is currently working with affected landowners and the Upper Hutt City Council to determine the most appropriate course of action for re-instating the stream and preventing further slips.

4.2 Response summary

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 were unable to achieve the 60 minute response target. This was due to officers receiving multiple incident notifications, travel time to incident locations and being unable to assess incidents due to failing light. If the response time is adjusted to remove the influence of these factors, mean response time was 56 minutes. Officers met the mean response times for all other incident response targets.

Table 1: Response time summary

Target response time	Mean response time
Red (60 minutes)	206 minutes
Yellow (24 hours)	11 hours
Blue (30 days)	2 days

4.3 Enforcement action

Table 2 summarises enforcement action taken during this reporting period.

Table 2: Summary of enforcement action

Advisory Notices	10
Infringement Notices	2
Abatement Notices	0
Enforcement Orders	0
Prosecutions [information's laid]	0

Infringement notices were served on the following:

- Capital Cleaning Services Ltd for the breach of an abatement notice requiring them to cease the discharge of cleaning waste to land
- Artie Mathew Hunter as his vehicle was driven on a restricted part of Titahi Bay beach.

Advisory Notices were issued for a range of incidents where impacts were minor, typically requiring an activity to cease and the affected area to be cleaned-up.

The Pollution Control Team is currently considering regulatory options for four significant environmental incidents that occurred in December 2004 (see section 4.1 above).

5. Take Charge

Pollution Control Officers continue to compile information about industrial and commercial areas around the region, to identify potential future participants in the *Take Charge* Programme, and to contribute background data for environmental contamination surveys.

A new Take Charge project is proposed for an industrial area in Paraparaumu, in conjunction with Kapiti Coast District Council. This will involve an assessment of industrial sites within the stormwater catchment of Drain 6.

6. Special projects

The incident database has recently been upgraded to rank incidents according to the officer's assessment of their severity, extent and duration. This initiative provides an objective basis for prioritising and reporting 'significant' incidents. It will also provide an important insight into problem issues and trends.

7. Contaminated sites

The Ministry for the Environment has released Contaminated Land Management Guideline #4 for consultation. A workshop is planned for Territorial Authorities to prepare a response.

The mapping of old sheep dip sites in selected areas of Wellington City and Porirua City continues.

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.*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Incident Response Summary