

Geoff Skene
Manager, Environment Education

Environment Education Department Report – May 2005

1. *Take Action*

Term two is fully underway with three guided schools and three self-guided schools doing *Take Action*.

1.1 Guided schools taking action

This term the schools doing the guided programme are Gracefield (Lower Hutt), Island Bay (Wellington), and Fergusson Intermediate (Upper Hutt). All three have had the multi-media show presentation and have been working in the classroom on *Take Action*.

Gracefield School, which is close to the Waiwhetu Stream, has been particularly proactive and will be working closely with the Waiwhetu Stream Action Group (Greater Wellington and Hutt City Council's partners in the rehabilitation of this stream) when it comes time to "*Take Action*".

Fergusson Intermediate is taking a whole-school approach, with all nine classes and teachers getting involved between now and the end of 2005. We provided training for 14 of the school's teachers, management and support staff on April 29. The event was a big success, with the staff excited by the possibilities of the programme and eager to get started. The school's technology staff were there and identified ways their activities could incorporate *Take Action*'s themes and curriculum components. There is a stream at the back of the school which is an obvious target for the school to attack throughout the rest of the year and into the future. We have been discussing these possibilities with Upper Hutt City Council, which is keen to assist.

Totara Park, a first term guided school, has been completing its action projects, having commenced the programme later in the term. The school is taking a waste reduction and recycling approach, putting in a compost bin and developing a recycling system. Students are also policing their school's water use, finding leaking taps and promoting saving water.

1.2 Silverstream school's action projects

Children from Silverstream school, one of our first term self-guided schools, have been active in promoting their environmental messages to their community. Some of the children created information for the local community about the need for dog owners to clean up after their pets. This was covered by the Upper Hutt Leader, with the children noting an improvement after the information went out. Three classes also contributed to the work of the Silverstream Straight care group, removing weeds and rubbish from the wetland on Fergusson Drive. The teachers are keen to maintain this link with the care group and will continue in this way with smaller groups of students in the future.

The students sent us descriptions of their activities, two of which are attached to this report for information, along with the relevant newspaper report.

1.3 Self-guided schools

This term's three self-guided schools (St Josephs, Birchville, and St Brendans) have had the multi-media presentation and are working in their classrooms on the programme. All three are in Upper Hutt. Their trails will take place in late May and early June. The number of students from each school ranges from approximately 90 at Birchville and St Josephs, to 160 at St Brendans.

1.4 Emergency Water

As part of the multi-media presentation, we promote to children the need to store water at home for use in an emergency. It is interesting to observe the extent to which this is happening, as reported by the students. While perhaps a less than scientific way of assessing this, on average thirty to forty per cent of children say their homes have some emergency water. The need for emergency water is stressed and discussed in several parts of the presentation. We also give the students Greater Wellington's information sheets about this to take home and instruct them to talk with the families about it.

1.5 *Take Action* and the teaching of science in primary schools

On 27th of April Richard Morgan delivered a workshop for teachers from around New Zealand attending the Awe and Wonder in Science Conference at the Wellington College of Education. The teaching of science in New Zealand primary schools seems to be in a long term decline and this conference constituted part of a response to changing this situation. As *Take Action* is at its core a science programme, we were keen to speak with the teachers who do have an interest in science and promote the programme. The response to Richard's practical demonstration of *Take Action* was very positive. We have also been discussing with the College ways in which *Take Action* can be promoted and taught to its trainee teachers.

1.6 On-going environmental education in schools

In my previous reports to the Committee I have referred to trends and events that illustrate a growing interest in environmental education in Wellington region schools. The number of schools and students that do *Take Action* has increased significantly this year; schools are signing up to repeat the programme having found it works for them; the action projects schools choose are now more likely to be of an on-going nature rather than “one-off”s”, thereby committing the school to a longer lasting programme; we are receiving an increasing number of requests for information and assistance; the number of EnviroSchools in the region is small (seven) but important; schools are showing a growing interest in the EnviroSchools Awards, and so on. A great deal of this can be attributed to the Council’s efforts with *Take Action* over the last five years, but we can do even more to promote and cement these trends.

One of the aims of *Take Action* is to have schools incorporate environmental education into their ongoing teaching, so that learning about the environment is available to successive intakes of students. To this end we are promoting the idea of local clusters of teachers and schools teaching or developing environmental education. Schools in the Porirua and Masterton areas will soon be invited to workshops to consider forming local groups to support their environmental journeys and share successes and experiences. The EnviroSchools in these two areas (Pukerua Bay School and Douglas Park School) and the New Zealand Association of Environment will be working with us to put this into practice.

1.7 Partners Porirua

Partners Porirua is an organisation which facilitates partnerships between Porirua businesses and educational bodies. Partners Porirua was instrumental in connecting Titahi Bay Intermediate School’s water monitoring project (commenced when they did *Take Action* last year) with ESR, who work with students on detailed data analysis of their stream health test results.

The Partners Porirua staff are this year promoting a water and science focus to Porirua schools Year 7 and 8 students and are encouraging schools to sign up for *Take Action* this year and next.

2. Restoration Day

This annual event for community groups working with us in the *Take Care* programme and others interested in ecological restoration will be held on May 21. It is being organised by staff from this Department and Parks and Forests. The event is being held in Queen Elizabeth Park, and has a coastal restoration theme. In previous years the event has been well attended and serves as a practical reminder of just how many people in the region are dedicated to this sort of work.

3. Take Care

3.1 Care group progress

Care groups are continuing with their work, with most groups gearing up for planting in the winter months ahead. This is a busy time for staff with the groups meeting regularly at night and on the weekends. As usual, it is difficult to update the Committee on the activities of all 35 groups over the last six weeks. However, some highlights are:

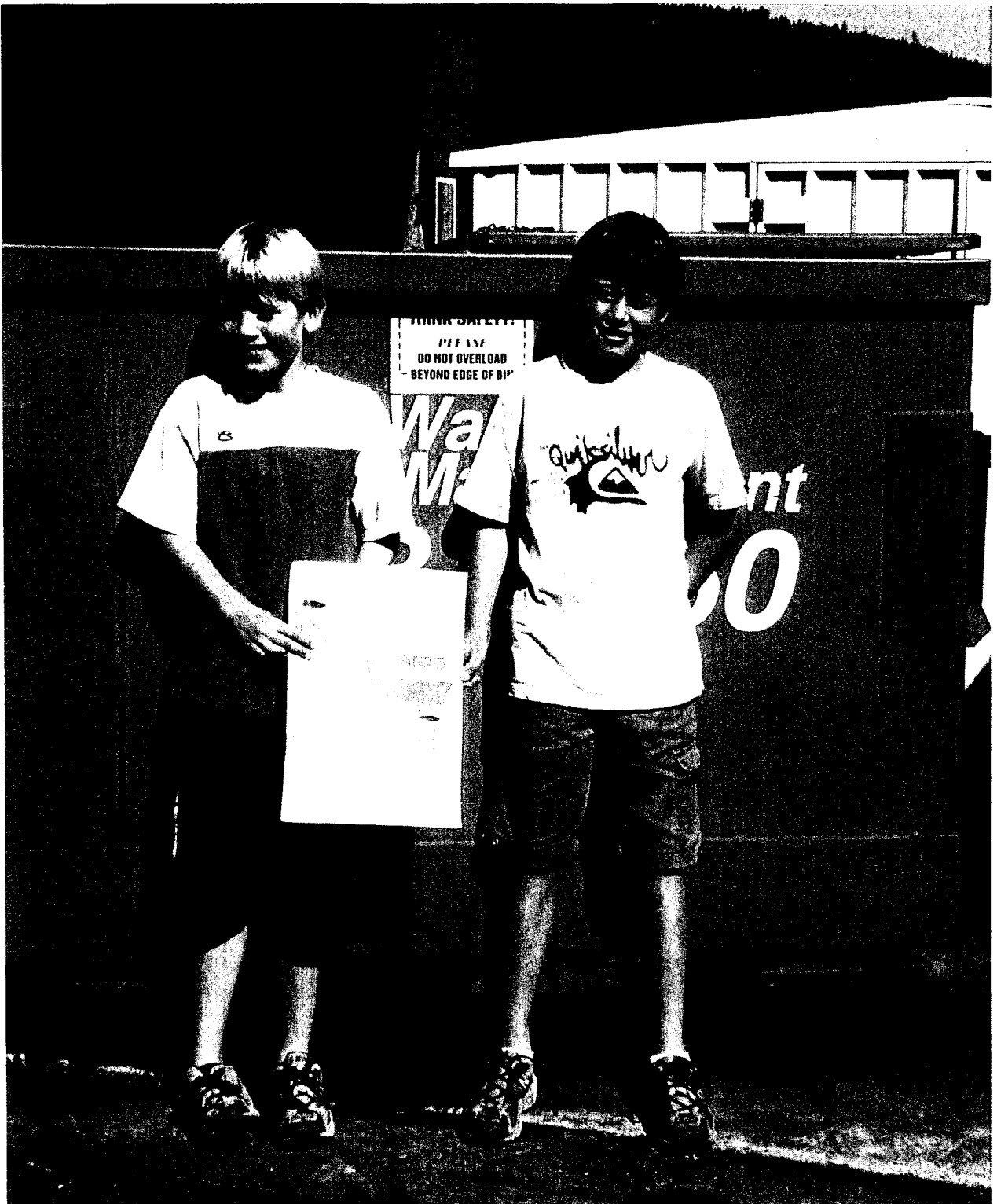
- At the Manuka Reserve (Masterton), the new paths and bollards have been completed. The group has plants for planting later in the year. This is the last year of support for this group from Greater Wellington.
- The Waikanae Estuary group has just finished constructing a shade house on land near the estuary and has plants to grow on for planting next season. It is very pleasing to see the group moving so rapidly to this point; the building of a nursery being an important step towards long term sustainability.
- At Greendale the flood damage at the entrance to the reserve has been repaired by Kapiti Coast District Council and the group will undertake a planting later in the year to stabilise this area (using the group's *Take Care* funds for next year). Kapiti Coast District Council has also paid for a large plant order for the group to be planted this season.
- The Oku Coast Care Group's Island Bay dune project is making good progress. Wellington City Council will spend about \$5000 over the next six weeks improving access to the beach and fencing off areas. The city council has also agreed to remove from the site any of the weeds the group clears at their regular working bees.
- The Eastbourne Dunes Protection Group has commenced work on signage for its project. The signage will be part funded by Hutt City Council and will use the Greater Wellington colours and style similar to our other signs at Day's Bay, Glenside, and the Kaiwharawhara stream. Keena Gibbs, a member of the group, has been issued a permit to collect spinifex seed for propagation. Keena has collected and prepared 10,000 viable seeds for planting!

3.2 Evaluating *Take Care*

As it has been five years since the *Take Care* programme was initiated, it is an opportune time to review its effectiveness in meeting its objectives. These are set out in *A Better Environment: An Education and Communication Strategy* (the Council's Environmental Education Strategy, 1999) and the subsequent policies for *Take Care* approved by the Committee.

In particular, we should be looking at how well the programme is giving effect to its educational and social objectives. When the *Take Care* programme was established it was intended that people participating in the programme would not only be supported to restore some aspect of the environment (such as a wetland, stream, dune etc), but they would gain knowledge and skills. It was also anticipated that there would be benefits to their communities of a social nature (e.g., community cohesion, pride, sense of ownership). The environmental outcomes from the programme also need to be assessed.

We have commenced this work and I expect to be able to appoint a consultant to undertake the social and educational investigation very shortly.



Oliver and Sam talked to Mr Schaab about separating the paper rubbish from the plastic and food rubbish around the school. If we did this our paper rubbish could be taken to the recyclers and the school would save money because the big red bin wouldn't need emptied so often. The school is investigating this idea.



We did our project on asking people to pick up their dog poo because we were sick of standing in it during our cross country training. We made fridge magnets and fliers to send out to people asking them to pick up your dog poo . A member of the community rang up the Leader because she liked it so much and asked the lady from the paper to take a picture of us with our dog poo flier and magnet.

Waging war on dog poo

by ROSEMARY McLENNAN

BECOMING SICK of putting their feet in dog poo while cross country training prompted two Silverstream School pupils to put pen to paper and write to many local householders.

Year six pupils Ethan Mills and Evan Carter, both 10, in their letter addressed to all Silverstream householders said children from the school have been training for their cross country over the past few weeks.

“We are concerned about the amount of dog poo on the footpath outside the houses near the school.

“We have learnt from our water topic that when it rains the dog poo goes down the stormwater drain, into the river and out to sea.

“If it is your dog can you please pick it up because it is bad for the environment and our shoes stink.

“Sorry to waste your time if it isn't your dog.”

“The boys say they wrote the letter because they were sick of getting dog poo on their shoes and carrying it into classrooms.

Evan got it all over his new shoes just the third time he wore them.

At school the boys have also been studying waterways and learned that dog poo is often swept into gutters and ends up in the river.

“I've seen dog poo floating down the Hutt River,” says Evan.

The boys made a special fridge magnet they delivered with the letters, put in mailbox around several Silverstream streets when they were out running.

Before they did their letterbox drop they said the worst streets were Gard and Gloucester and Chatsworth Road.

Their cross country was last Wednesday and the boys report the situation has improved in Gard Street “but Chatsworth Road is still the same”.



Ethan Mills and Evan Carter with the letter and fridge magnet they delivered to many Silverstream homes to complain about dog poo on the footpaths.

Nicola Shorten
Manager, Resource Policy

Resource Policy Department Report – May 2005

1. Maintaining Regional Policies and Plans

1.1 Regional Plan Changes

An appeal by Transit NZ on Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan has been resolved by Consent Order. This leaves only one outstanding matter on the plan change. This is the appeal by Mr Barton on the “stopbank” rule that was included in the plan change. The new rule requires resource consents to drive heavy vehicles on a stopbank. We have appealed the decision of the Environment Court to the High Court. The appeal has been heard and we are awaiting the result.

Progress is being made on Plan Change 2 to the Regional Freshwater Plan that establishes minimum flows and allocation for the Mangaterere Catchment. Following a pre-hearing meeting we have collected some additional information that has now been sent to the five submitters. A further meeting with submitters is to be held on 7 June.

Comments have been received on draft changes to the Regional Coastal Plan for port noise and coastal occupation charges. These changes stem from a commitment in the Regional Coastal Plan to align its port noise provisions with Wellington City Council’s District Plan. To ensure integrated management across the coastal boundary, we are making progress jointly with the Wellington City Council. The Resource Management Act also requires us to make a statement on coastal occupation charges when changing the Regional Coastal Plan, and the draft change included a statement that there would be no charges.

The comments are being summarised and a report will be prepared for the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee on the draft plan changes.

2. Regional Policy Statement and Plan Implementation

2.1 Freshwater Ecosystem Programme

The Council has constructed a fish pass in the Taupo Stream at the Taupo Swamp weir. It will assist the upstream movement of two freshwater fish species that are presently found below the weir but not above it. The project was supported by The Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (the owners of the swamp), Porirua City Council, the Department of Conservation and Ngati Toa.

We designed and obtained a resource consent for the new fish pass, and co-ordinated the building works. The new fish pass was paid for by Transit NZ.

2.2 Wetlands

The wetland hydrology guidelines have been completed and are currently being printed. The guidelines are a simple introduction to wetland hydrology for people wanting to restore wetlands, and they provide information about how to establish a more natural wetland regime in wetlands that have been affected by human activity. The publication compliments the information that we have provided on wetland ecology. Its development is being part funded by the Department of Conservation National Biodiversity Advice Fund.

2.3 District Plans

Statutory resource management work is the subject of a separate report to the Committee.

2.4 Kaiwharawhara Project

Work to upgrade the streamside environment of the Kaiwharawhara Stream will commence on the School Road site in the next week. The project includes removing willows and wattles, replacement with native riparian species, and landscaping works to improve parking and the look of the area for local businesses. A Newsletter was delivered by hand to all the adjoining premises. There was considerable interest in the work, as well as offers of support with the preliminary clean-up and the planting session (in June/July).

There will also be a meeting of the voluntary groups in the catchment in June/July to get feedback on the priorities for projects to be undertaken by the Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington. There will also be discussion of a public “launch” of Project Kaiwharawhara.

2.5 Waitohu Stream Project

The series of technical reports on the Waitohu Stream have been summarised for inclusion in a document for community consultation about management of the stream. The document includes both environmental management and flood management options for the stream in the future, and is being developed jointly with the Flood Protection Department. Agreement has also been reached with landowners about when and where stream mouth cutting will take place. It will be presented to the next meetings of the Environment and Landcare Committees before being released for consultation with the community.

2.6 Waiwhetu Stream Project

Contracts have been let for four studies of the Waiwhetu Stream and will be commencing shortly. The studies are:

- The extraction and analysis of sediment cores from the contaminated reach of the stream to determine the extent and nature of the contaminants;

- The digging of a number of test pits adjacent to the stream to determine the chemical and geotechnical characteristics of this land;
- Water quality sampling and flow monitoring to establish the relative significance of contaminant inputs from historic in-stream sediments and those currently entering the stream via stormwater from the Gracefield area; and
- An investigation to establish the significance of contaminated groundwater infiltration as a source of contaminant export to the Waiwhetu Stream.

This work is 60% funded by the Ministry for the Environment's Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund, with the balance of costs shared with Hutt City Council.

2.7 Pauatahanui Project

Two inter-related studies designed to quantify and understand the impacts that land use has had, and continues to have, on sedimentation rates in Pauatahanui Inlet have been completed. A draft report on the results has been presented to Porirua City Council and Greater Wellington staff and members of the Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust and Guardians of the Inlet. Feedback has been provided and a final report is expected at the end of May. The report will be presented to the next meeting of the Environment Committee.

John Sherriff
Manager, Resource Investigations

Resource Investigations Department Report – May 2005

1. Resource Information

1.1 Flood warning

The Resource Investigations Department provides a flood warning and monitoring service for the western part of the Wellington Region. Rainfall and river level recorders around the Region automatically relay information to the Regional Council Centre. When specified rainfall intensities or river levels are reached the system automatically alerts staff who implement response procedures.

Details of alarms received are provided to the Committee to fulfil reporting requirements set out in the Annual Plan.

Since the last meeting of the Committee the following rainfall and water level alarms were received and responded to:

30 March 2005	Rainfall: Centre Ridge Water level: Te Marua, Birchville,
31 March 2005	Rainfall: Orongorongo Swamp, Wainui Reservoir. Water level: Leonard Wood Park
14 April 2005	Water level: Waitohu
24 April 2005	Rainfall: TVL
29 April 2005	Rainfall: Kaitoke
2 May 2005	Rainfall: Wayne's Mistake, Regional Council Centre, Seton Nossiter Park, Horokiri, Orongorongo, Wainui Reservoir, Transmission Lines, Kapakapanui. Water level: Porirua Town
3 May 2005	Water level: Waiwhetu

2. Resource analysis

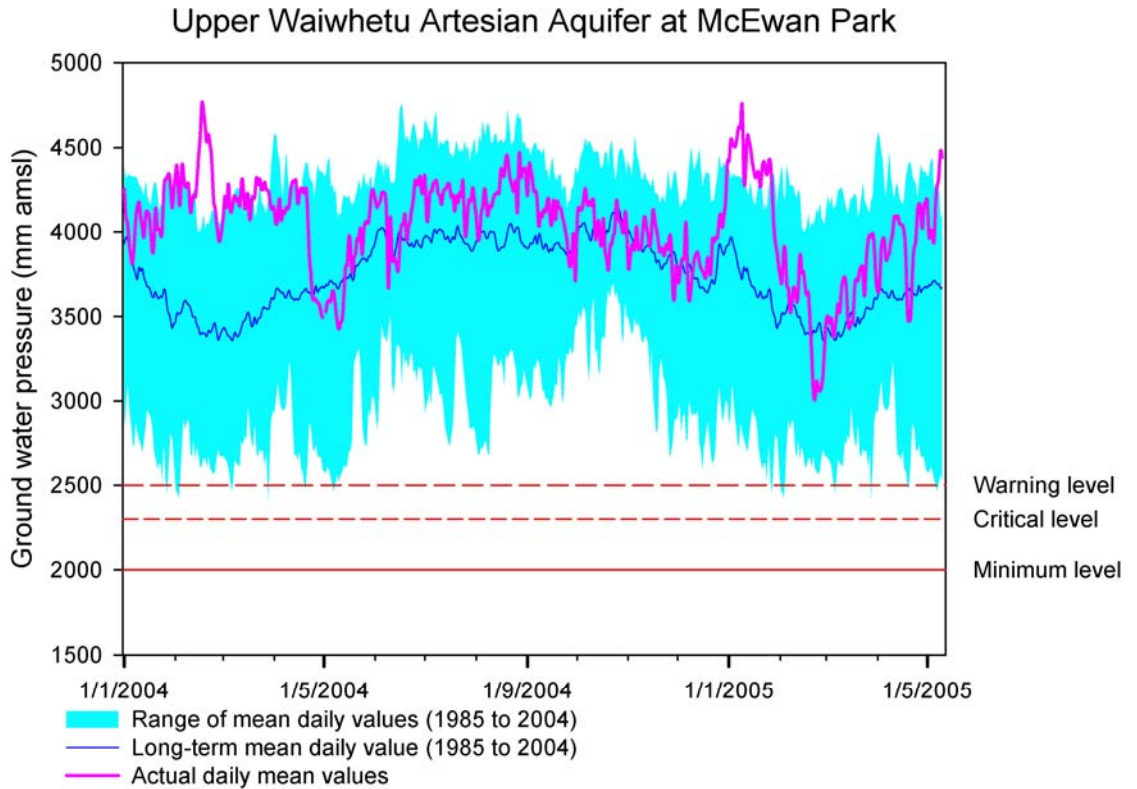
2.1 Groundwater levels

The Department monitors groundwater levels at 46 sites around the western Region. We use two of these bores, McEwan Park at Petone and Hautere Plain on the Kapiti Coast as general indicators of the state of groundwater resources

in these areas. Records from these two bores and a synopsis of the situation are provided to the Committee at each meeting.

2.1.1 Lower Hutt groundwater zone – Upper Waiwhetu artesian aquifer

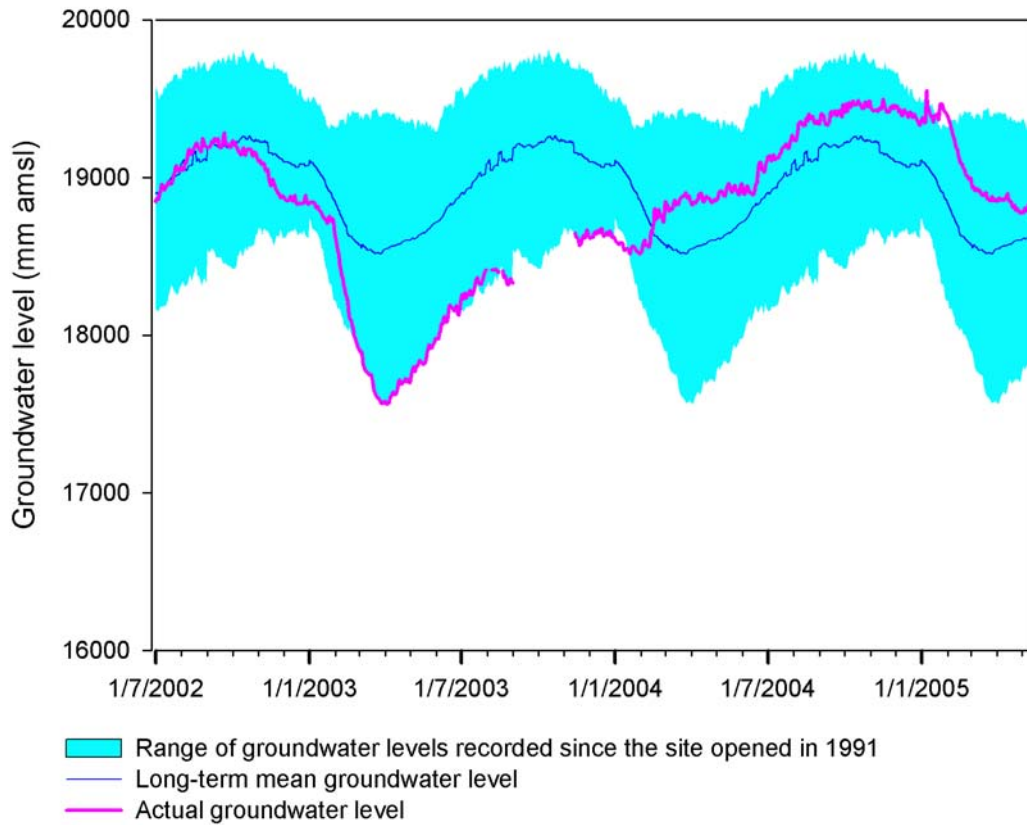
Aquifer pressure at our McEwan Park monitoring bore is currently well above the long-term mean value. The pressure has recovered after the decline in February caused by increased pumping by the Utility Services Division.



2.1.2 Kapiti Coast

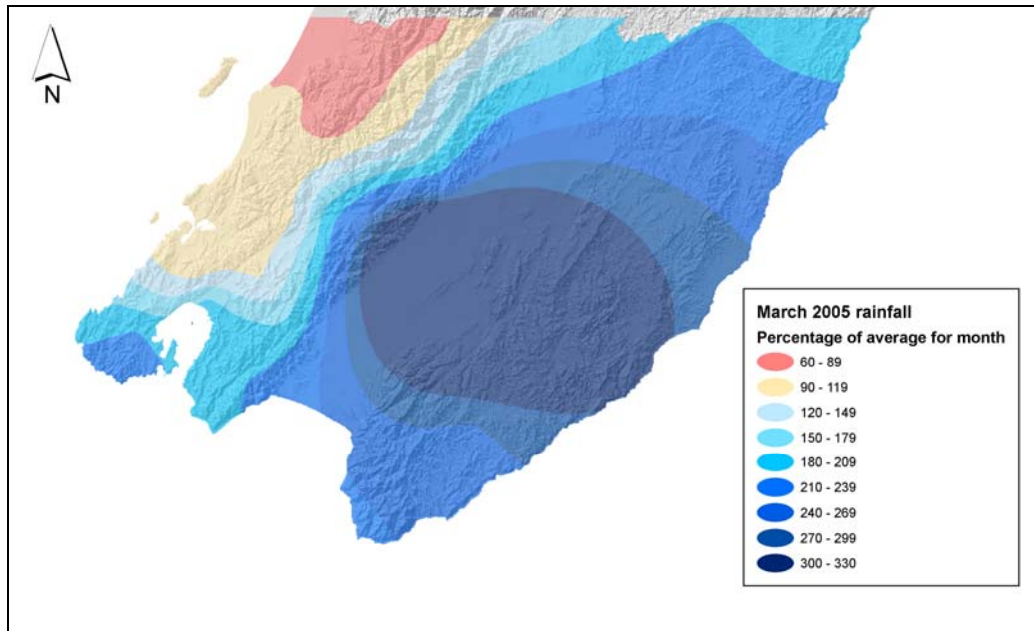
Kapiti aquifers have also benefited from the above average January rainfall and groundwater levels are high for this time of year. The hydrograph below shows the record from monitoring bore S25/5208 on the Hautere Plain, which intercepts a deep rainfall recharged aquifer. Although the water pressure is undergoing its usual seasonal decline, it is still above the long-term mean value.

Monitoring bore S25/5208 at Te Horo, Kapiti



2.2 Rainfall and river flows

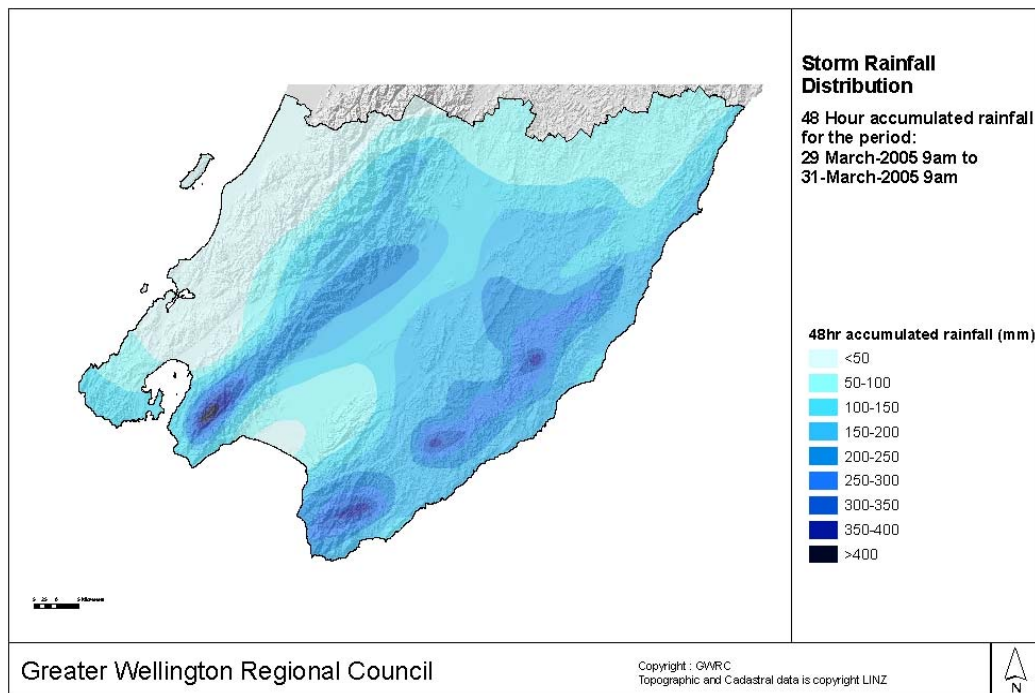
After a dry February, March 2005 was a relatively wet month due to unsettled weather bringing frequent rainfall. Much of the Region received above average rainfall, particularly in the Wairarapa, Wellington City, and Wainuiomata. However, the Kapiti Coast and Tararua range received average to slightly below average rainfall due to the predominance of southerly and south-easterly weather patterns.



Rainfall during March 2005 as a percentage of average for the month

Due to the regular rainfall, river flows in the region tended to stay above normal for the month. The exception was on the Kapiti coast, where low river flows – slightly below the long-term averages for March – were experienced. The Waikanae River fell to a low of 921 l/s, which is below average for March but still significantly above the minimum flow of 750 l/s.

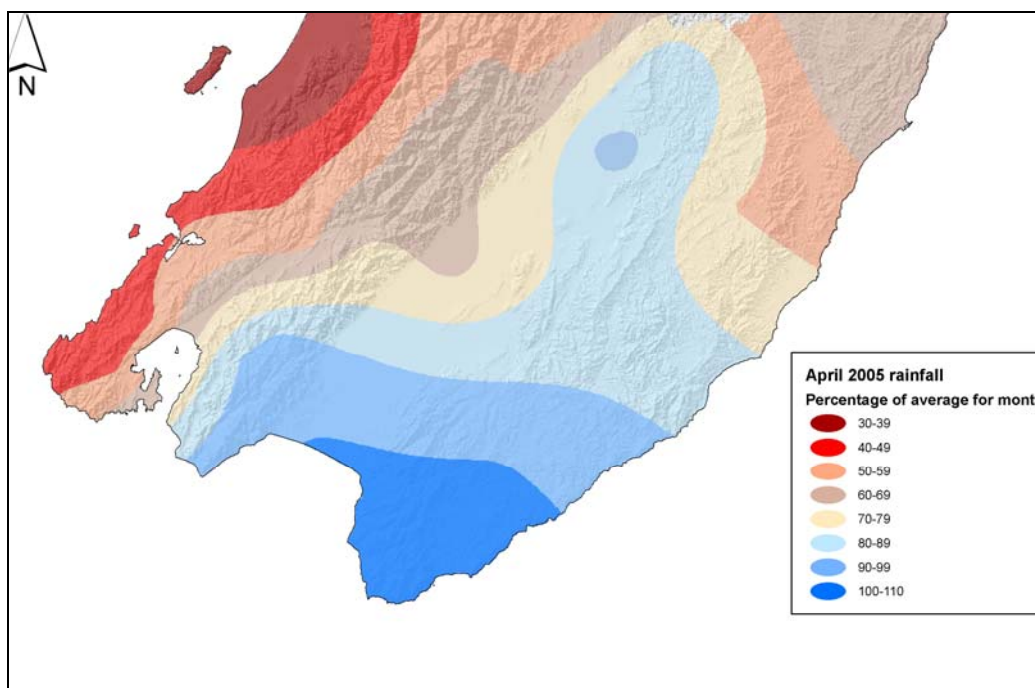
The high rainfall totals in the east and south of the region during March 2005 were partly due to a storm at the end of the month (30-31 March). A depression lying in an east-west orientation across the lower North Island brought a south-easterly flow over the region causing widespread rain across the eastern and southern hills (see map below). Within this storm there were localised areas of very heavy rain, such as in the lower Orongorongo catchment. The unconfirmed 48-hour rainfall total at the Rimutaka Forest Park gauge is a staggering 444 mm, which is probably in exceedance of a 100-year return period rainfall depth. The resulting damage in the lower Orongorongo River catchment was severe.



48-hour rainfall totals for the 31-31 March 2005 storm

Following a wet March, April 2005 was exceptionally dry (see map below). Only the south east Wairarapa recorded about normal rainfall, with the rest of the region having well below average rainfall for the month. The Kapiti coast was the driest area, receiving only about one-third of the average rainfall for the April, while Wellington, Hutt Valley and Tararua range had 50-70% of the average monthly total. The dry weather was due to depressions being centred well away to the south or east of the country; however, a cold southerly front brought rain to the region toward the end of the month.

As a result of the below average rainfall, river flows also tended to be below average for the month. The average flow in the Hutt River was about 70% of normal for the time of the year, and streams and rivers on the Kapiti coast had river flows only 30-40% of average. The Waikanae River dropped to about 810 l/s – its lowest level during 2005 to date; however, autumn temperatures mean that demand for water is not high. Regular rainfall during May has since increased flows in the rivers.



Rainfall during April 2005 as a percentage of average for the month

2.3 Air quality monitoring

2.3.1 Ambient air quality monitoring

We currently monitor ambient air quality at three sites in Lower Hutt (Birch Street Reserve), Upper Hutt (Trentham Fire Station) and Masterton (Wairarapa College). The effects of transport emissions are monitored at the corner of Vivian and Victoria Streets. We also monitor carbon monoxide emissions at Te Aro.

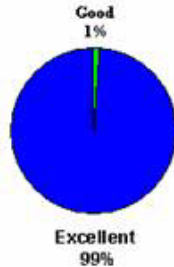
The graphs below represent air quality at the location indicated when the monitoring results are compared to ambient air quality guidelines. The assessment categories are as follows:

Category	Maximum Measured Value	Comment
Action	Exceeds Guideline	Completely unacceptable by national and international standards.
Alert	Between 66% and 100% of the guideline	A warning level which can lead to guidelines being exceeded if trends are not curbed.
Acceptable	Between 33% and 66% of the guideline	A broad category, where maximum values might be of concern in some sensitive locations, but are generally at a level that does not warrant dramatic action.
Good	Between 10% and 33% of the guideline	Peak measurements in this range are unlikely to affect air quality.
Excellent	Less than 10% of the guideline	Of little concern.

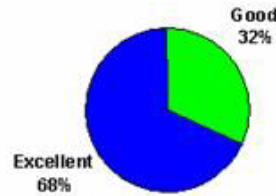
Councillors will be aware that our *Take 10 - Quality of Life* target for air quality is that there will be no recorded instances when air pollution reaches the "alert" level of the national air quality guidelines.

Results for the past two months at Upper Hutt

8-Hour Average CO at Upper Hutt



24-Hour Average NO₂ at Upper Hutt

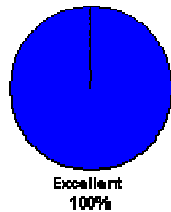


24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Upper Hutt

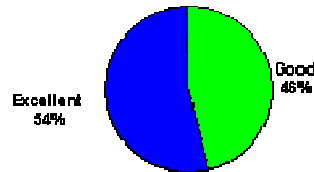


Results for the past two months at Lower Hutt

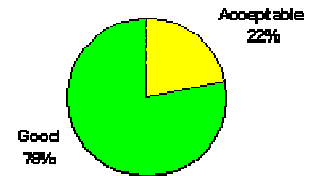
8-Hour Average CO at Lower Hutt



24-Hour Average NO₂ at Lower Hutt



24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Lower Hutt



Results for the past two months at Masterton

8-Hour Average CO at Masterton



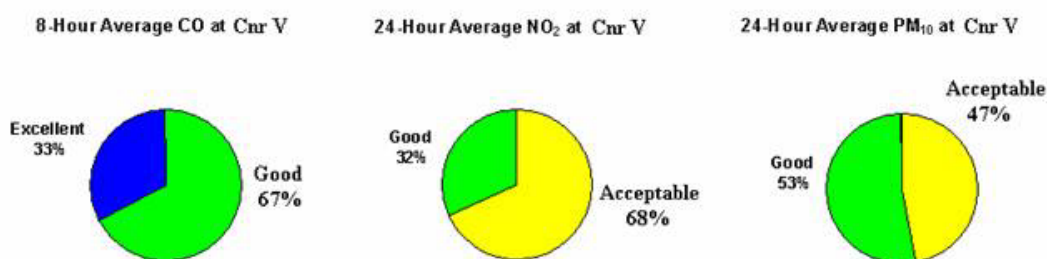
24-Hour Average NO₂ at Masterton



24-Hour Average PM₁₀ at Masterton

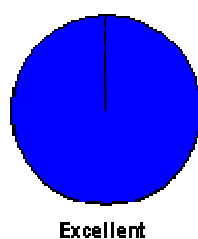


Results for the past two months at Corner Victoria & Vivian Streets



Results for the past two months at Te Aro

8-Hour Average CO at Te Aro



2.4 Stormwater

Several staff attended the 4th South Pacific Stormwater Conference in Auckland. We are currently finalising our draft Issues and Options paper. When it is completed this document will be circulated to territorial authorities for review and comment. A further workshop will be held to receive and discuss feedback. Our current proposal is to then establish a small working group of territorial authority and Greater Wellington staff to oversee the development of a draft regional action plan.

2.5 Contaminated sites management

Contracts have been finalised for the investigation of the Masterton Gasworks site. This work is being undertaken in collaboration with Masterton District Council and has received funding from the Ministry for the Environment's Contaminated Sites Fund. The results of this investigation will be reported to the Committee upon completion.

3. Pollution Control

3.1 Pollution and non-compliance complaints

A summary of pollution complaints, our performance in responding to them and enforcement action taken is reported separately.

4. Staff

Juliet Milne has joined the Department filling the role of Surface Water Quality Scientist. Juliet has previously worked for Otago Regional Council in Water Quality Scientist and Senior Consents Officer roles.

Nigel Corry
Manager, Consents Management

Consents Management Department Report – May 2005

1. Consent statistics

In the period to 12 May 2005 we have received 438 consent applications. This compares with 527 received for the same period last year.

Over the same period, we have processed 358 consents. This compares with 456 last year.

All consents processed since the last Committee meeting have been done so within statutory timeframes, and our median processing time for non-notified consents is sitting comfortably at 10 working days.

A summary of the notified consents we are currently processing is also attached for information.

2. Appeals and objections

There are no appeals or objections outstanding at present.

3. Compliance

3.1 General

3.1.1 Carey's Gully

Since the last Committee meeting, when I provided an update on work that is going on at the Carey's Gully complex, we have continued to receive complaints from members of the public in relation to odour coming from the site. We have also recently met with complainants to discuss this issue. While overall the number of complaints in relation to the Carey's Gully site has been decreasing over the last couple of years, an odour problem still exists for the local community.

In order to address this issue, we are continuing to work with the Wellington City Council through workshops and the community liaison group process required by condition of consent. We will also shortly be commencing a review of our proactive odour monitoring work which we have undertaken over the last 15 months, and will participate with the City Council in their current odour modelling work. While the collection and analysis of this sort of

information is time consuming, and does not necessarily bring any immediate relief for residents, it is important for us to be able to more accurately define a single odour source and the nature of the odours coming from Carey's gully.

3.1.2 End of year compliance monitoring

We are currently well on track to have all our compliance inspections completed by the end of the financial year. As with past years, completing these inspections can place quite a lot of pressure on staff time, but they are managing this well, particularly given that there are a number of new staff and that we have had to reallocate a large number of consents between them while we have been short-staffed.

3.2 Abatement notices

We have served two abatement notices since the last Committee meeting. One of these notices was served on the owner of a dairy farm, and the other on the sharemilker operating on that property. The notices were served to ensure that all discharges cease as of 1 July when we have been informed the farm will no longer operate as a dairy unit.

3.3 Infringement notices

We have not issued any infringement notices since the last Committee meeting.

3.4 Prosecution and enforcement orders

There are currently no prosecution or enforcement order proceedings occurring; however, we are still having ongoing dialogue with Mr Mears in relation to the Mangaroa Metals consent. While his application for an interim enforcement order was rejected by the Courts in late January, Mr Mears is raising some issues in relation to compliance with conditions of the consent order which was resolved by way of mediation in September of last year. We are satisfied that there are currently no issues on non-compliance that we need to address, and have formally informed Mr Mears of our position.

4. Other

4.1 Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Conservation

We have recently been working on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Consents Department and the Community Relations section of the Wellington Conservancy, Department of Conservation (DOC). DOC is an interested or affected party to a number of regional consents. This work is helping to develop a clear joint understanding of when and how GW will consult with DOC, when DOC will be considered an affected or interested party, and what level of information DOC would like to receive in relation to consent applications. While we have always had good relations with DOC, the development of this MOU is a significant step forward in that relationship and has streamlined the way in which we work together. It is possible that we may use this MOU as a template in the future with other

statutory bodies we frequently consult with such as Fish and Game New Zealand.

4.2 Ministry for the Environment Survey

On 12 April, the MfE Survey on the *Resource Management Act: Two-yearly Survey of Local Authorities 2003/04* was released. This survey looks at both territorial and regional council performance in managing the resource consent process. Amongst other things, the survey reports on processing statistics, timeframes, charges, good practice and monitoring and compliance. While much of the information contained in the document is fairly generic in nature (in that it looks at statistics reported at the national or local authority level), there are appendices contained in the document where individual authorities are identified and performance reported.

In general GW processes came out extremely well, most notably in relation to the percentages of resource consents processed within statutory timeframes. Only GW, Horizons and Taranaki were able to report that 100% of consents were processed in compliance with these timeframes; however, when reporting on “good practice” (as defined by the survey), GW appears as the only Regional Council not to adopt the MfE good practice guidelines with regard to checking consent applications for completeness, and for receiving consent applications, within one full working day. This result is a little misleading as we do in fact do these things; however, due to some ambiguity over the phrasing of the question we chose to answer differently than other councils. I have spoken to MfE in relation to this and they have indicated the question will be reworded prior to the next survey in two years time to resolve this ambiguity.

4.3 Exide Technologies Limited

We have initiated the review of the Exide Technologies Limited discharge to air consent. Notice of review was served on the consent holder on 11 April 2005. The primary reason for reviewing the consent is to deal with the adverse effects on the environment resulting from lead and arsenic emissions from the Exide operation, as shown by monitoring data collected since consent was issued in 2001. As allowed under the RMA, we invited Exide to propose new or amended consent conditions within 20 working days of notice being served, and they have taken up this opportunity. Full public notification of the review must now be initiated no later than 23 May 2005, after which time there is the statutory 20 day period for submissions to be lodged with GW.

4.4 Health and Safety Audit

The department had an external health and safety audit undertaken in early May, as part of the broader Divisional audit exercise. While there were a few suggested amendments to some of our processes, we generally received very favourable feedback. This is positive confirmation that we are well placed in the way we approach the health and safety issues associated with consent work, particularly in relation to compliance monitoring and fieldwork.

4.5 Staff issues

For the first time in quite some period, the department is fully staffed. Quite a milestone!

We are also helping out the Wairarapa office with some consent work. Liz Hislop has been undertaking dairy shed compliance inspections as part of the Clean Stream Accord work with Fonterra. Rachael Boisen was to have written the decision on a groundwater application later this month (hearing has been postponed), and we are also starting to process some other one-off consent applications on an as-required basis.

We have also organised a two day Erosion and Sediment Control workshop in mid June which will include staff from GW (including Wairarapa office staff), Wellington City Council, Porirua City Council, Hutt City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council and the Upper Hutt City Council. The workshop will be conducted by Brian Handyside and Claire Feeney who have held a number of similar training sessions for the Auckland Regional Council. This practical workshop represents the first time that all local authorities in the Western side of the region have come together for an intensive training session on erosion and sediment control, and complements the Muddy Waters series of workshops being coordinated by GW.

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Wellington City Council	Change of consent monitoring conditions for the Moa Point Pump Station.	02/11/00	08/12/00	2		On hold for further information in relation to monitoring requirements.	-	-	-
Wharfe Quarry ¹	To undertake a quarrying operation, including discharge of stormwater, dam and diversion of water, taking of water and piping a watercourse.	06/11/03	04/02/04	57 plus 2 late	-	Hearing not yet scheduled - on hold under s92 and s91 of the RMA 1991.	-	-	-
Silverwood Subdivision ²	To undertake a 162 lot residential subdivision and associated earthworks, discharges and reclamation.	07/05/04	03/11/04	17	-	28 February - 1 March and 13 April.	Chris Turver Sally Baber Aka Arthur		Granted – currently still in appeal period.
Ridvan Garden Development ³	To lay culverts and discharge contaminated stormwater as part of a residential subdivision development in Crofton Downs.	23/12/04	25/02/05	51	-	TBC – but in early May	Chris Turver Sally Baber Aka Arthur	-	-
RJM Properties	To discharge contaminants to air from the operation of a composting plant, Seaview.	09/12/04	23/03/05	1	-	Not required – consent conditions successfully negotiated between all parties.	-	-	Granted

¹ This application will be jointly heard with Porirua City Council

²This application will be jointly heard with Porirua City Council

³This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Wellington Waterfront Ltd ⁴	To develop open space areas, divert groundwater and daylight the Kumutoto Stream, North Queens Wharf	16/03/05	28/04/05	31 plus one late – 5 of these relate specifically to GW issues	-	-	-	-	-
Wellington Waterfront Ltd ⁵	Extend the existing lagoon and undertake associated development of the existing Frank Kitts lagoon area.	16/03/05	28/04/05	31 plus one late	-	-	-	-	-
eNZoil Limited	To discharge contaminants to air associated with the operation of a transformer oil regeneration plant.	18/01/05	03/05/05	7	Scheduled for 18 May	-	Terry McDavitt Margaret Shields Liz Mellish	-	-
Shell Oil New Zealand	To discharge contaminants to air from the operation of a plant producing detergent intermediates (such as pastes used in shampoos and dish wash powders).	16/11/04	12/05/05	4	Scheduled for 24 May	-	-	-	-
FC Allen	To undertake a variety of river works including installing a culvert, diverting and reclaiming.	20/8/04	17/05/05	-	-	-	-	-	-

⁴ This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

⁵ This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

Mike Pryce
Manager, Harbours

Harbours Department Report – May 2005

1. Harbour navigation aids

All navigation aids functioned as normal, routine maintenance undertaken.

2. Oil pollution response

- Seven reports of oil spills were received and investigated.
- Tami Woods attended an Oil Spill Response Management Course organised by the MSA in Auckland on 21-23 February 2005.
- Grant Nalder revalidated his Regional On-Scene Commanders Course in Auckland from 16-20 May 2005.

3. Events

- Port and Harbour Risk Assessment

The first “hazard identification” meeting was held on 31 March between Greater Wellington Regional Council/CentrePort and Marico Marine. The risk assessment is well underway and is on schedule to be completed by the end of June 2005.

- Frigate Wellington

On 13 May the decommissioned frigate Wellington was towed from Auckland and berthed at Taranaki Street Wharf next to Te Papa, where over the next six months it will be stripped and prepared as a dive wreck site. She will be scuttled off Island Bay in early November

- New warning signage has been installed on the Hutt River bridge to discourage fishing in the navigation channel
- Warning signage has been installed on the SH1 bridge at Paremata advising swimmers to keep away from the boat launching area.
- Several incidents involving Cook Strait ferries in both Wellington Harbour and the Marlborough Sounds have been reported in the media during the past few months. All are subject to investigations by the Maritime Safety Authority and official reports will be published by them in due course.

Rian van Schalkwyk
Manager, Emergency Management

Emergency Management Department Report – May 2005

1. Civil Defence Emergency Management Group

1.1 CDEM Group Plan

The final CDEM Group Plan was approved by the CDEM Group on 5 May 2005 and became operative immediately. This means that all arrangements and provisions under the Civil Defence Act 1983 ceased to operate on 5 May 2005

1.2 CDEM Training for Group Emergency Operations Centre (GEOC)

More specialised training and exercising for the 30+ volunteer staff took place on 26 April 2005. Volunteer staff received dedicated training in operations management, logistics management, welfare management, lifelines co-ordination management and planning/intelligence management. We are pleased to report that the skill level of our volunteer staff has increased, and should be adequate to operate our Emergency Operations Centre.

The acquired knowledge and skills of the volunteer staff were tested in a regional inter-agency exercise that took place on 25 May 2005.

1.3 CDEM Group Work programme

Work has further progressed on the current work programme of emergency water supply, emergency communications, emergency fuel, urban search and rescue, commuter management, supply of external resources, regional reconnaissance, sewerage disposal and medical logistics. Information documents have been prepared for each.

All local CDEM operating procedures have been reviewed and these operating procedures came into effect with the approval of the CDEM group plan on 5 May 2005.

1.4 CDEM Group EOC Communications – satellite system

We are now in the final stages of negotiating with Telecom regarding the implementation of the new *iP-Star 400* satellite system.

An amount of \$95,000 was made available in the 2003/4 budget and another \$100,000 in the 2004/5 budget for upgrading the regional radio

communications network. Due to the satellite not being launched in June 2004, we had to carry the \$95,000 over to the 2004/5 budget.

Telecom, through Bay City Communications, is now ready to accommodate us on their system and we anticipate having the system implemented within the next few months.

2. Marketing and Communications

2.1 Emergency Preparedness

It is imperative that our communities are constantly reminded about the importance of being prepared for emergencies and to be aware of their individual responsibilities.

We do this on an ongoing basis through several public education initiatives such as:

- emergency preparedness information on our web sites (Greater Wellington and CDEM Group)
- information in the Yellow Pages
- booklets, fact sheets, maps, posters, the print media
- public talks
- participating in community events and surveys.

(A community preparedness survey is presently being carried out and the final report is expected by 17 June 2005.)

We were fortunate to be invited to participate in TV One's civil defence documentary. 'Are you ready?' that was screened on 17 April 2005. Greater Wellington provided the information used in the earthquake scenario part of the documentary. The programme raised awareness about individual, family and business preparedness, especially the message that people will need to look after themselves for the first three days after an emergency. We conveyed the message that we can count on the support of other emergency management agencies, but help may not arrive immediately.

We have followed the documentary up with an extensive article on emergency preparedness that has appeared in 'Elements'.

2.2 Emergency Planning Guide

Markat Promotions of Christchurch has offered to produce another booklet for our region.

The emergency managers of the Region as well as GW's communications staff have reviewed the material to ensure that relevant and updated information is provided to the public.

It is anticipated to have the booklet ready for distribution in the first week of October (to coincide with the International Hazard Awareness week).

3. Environment

3.1 Earthquake Reports:

Since preparing the last report for the Environment Committee meeting, 33 reports of earthquakes bigger than 3 on the Richter Scale were received from GNS.

One earthquake was felt in the Wellington Region on 2 May 2005 Magnitude: 3.5, Depth: 30km, 20 km south-west of Featherston

3.2 Special Weather Bulletins

Nine Special Weather Bulletins (4 for heavy rain and 5 for strong wind) were received since the last Committee meeting. The relevant agencies were notified and no problems were experienced.

3.3 Communications

Weekly tests of the radio communications network are being carried out. The system is functioning well and no problems have been experienced.

Richard Waddy
Designation Divisional Accountant
Financial Position: 30 April 2005

1. Operating Results

We are pleased to report the operating results for the 10 month period ended 30 April 2005.

<u>Environment Division</u>				
<u>Summary Income Statement</u>				
<u>For the Period Ended 30 April 2005</u>				
	<u>Actual</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Year to Date</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>\$000s</u>	<u>Full Year</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>\$000s</u>
Rates	6,833	6,833	--	8,199
Other Revenue	1,711	1,752	41 U	2,113
Total Revenue	8,544	8,585	41 U	10,312
Less:				
Direct Expenditure	6,899	7,395	496 F	9,017
Indirect Expenditure	1,065	1,119	54 F	1,354
Total Operating Expenditure	7,964	8,514	550 F	10,371
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	580	71	509 F	(59)

2. Surplus

The Division's finances are in a better than expected position as we approach the last few months of the year. For the period an operating surplus of \$580,000 was recorded, which is significantly above our budget of \$71,000.

The result translates to a net favourable variance of \$509,000, comprising reduced revenue of \$41,000, and offset, to an extent, by lower than expected expenditure of \$550,000.

3. Revenue

Total Revenue at \$8,544,000 is some \$41,000 short of our budget target of \$8,585,000.

The shortfall has been caused by a lower number of notified consents processed in the first half of the year than budgeted and a one-off feature – the remit of costs for a notified consent. In addition, changes to the internal arrangements for the after-hours answering service have resulted in a loss of revenue. Previously Beacon Hill staff provided the service.

However, we received \$84,000 from the Department of Conservation towards our biodiversity initiatives for landowner assistance, and this has helped offset some of that shortfall. This contribution was not specifically included in our budget.

4. Total Expenditure

The Division's total expenditure at \$7,964,000 is some \$550,000 less than our budget.

The main reasons for this variance are:

- **Personnel costs** are now slightly under budget by \$16,000. Staff movements have more than offset any attendant recruiting costs.
- **Materials, Supplies and Services** are less than budget by \$129,000. However, there are significant costs in the pipeline. The Kaiwharawhara Stream project spend has been funded by other agencies with costs yet to be passed onto us. The CDEM Plan is in the process of being printed.

In addition, the reduced number of notified consents and introduction of "limited" notified consents has meant that our call for commissioners to hear applications is less than we expected.

- **Consultant costs were less than budget by \$297,000.**

The take-up of the funding for the iwi projects is lower (\$118,000) than anticipated in our budgets. Our forecasts show an underspend by about this amount for the full year.

In addition, QE11 National Trust work is behind (\$89,000). Although funds have been allocated, farmer reimbursement claims (via the QE11 National Trust) are yet to affect our finances significantly.

Some projects, although underway, are slightly delayed. These include a risk assessment of Wellington Harbour, a marine biodiversity study of Kapiti, Porirua, and Wellington beaches, and the contaminated site investigation at the former Masterton gas works. We anticipate that the budget will be taken up by year end.

Further the hazards internet portal development project has been funded by the IT and Support Service Department (\$20,000).

- **Internal charges** are under budget by \$65,000. Most of the underspend arises because of the changes to the after-hours answering service previously provided by Beacon Hill staff and work yet to be undertaken by the Landcare Division.

5. Capital Expenditure

At the close of the 10 month period, our capital expenditure programme has been underspent by some \$46,000.

The construction of the new air quality stations – a mobile station for traffic emission monitoring and a station based at Upper Hutt - is almost complete. However, this has been offset by a slight delay in some hydrology station work (\$30,000) and modification to the Somes Island light (\$25,000). Also with the replacement of the Voice logger (\$15,000) and upgrade to the Pencarrow navigation aid (\$10,000) deferred, the expected spend on capital has been reduced.