

Waste management plan: summary

As required under the Local Government Act 2002, the Council has adopted a waste management plan. It comprises of two parts: solid waste and liquid waste. Both plans take into account the New Zealand Waste Strategy 2002. Since then, there have been some significant changes in this area that will shape the next decade in managing our waste. These changes include:

The Waste Minimisation Act 2008

- Introduces a waste levy to discourage the production of waste and provide funds to promote and achieve waste minimisation.
- Places additional responsibility on local authorities to manage and minimise waste in their district.
- Places responsibility on businesses to look after their products from cradle to grave – i.e. manage through the products' lifecycles, motivating manufacturers to reduce packaging and design products to avoid waste from the outset.
- The creation of a Waste Advisory Board to provide advice to the Minister for the Environment on initiatives to help the Act achieve its goal of reducing waste.
- Requires Councils to review their Waste Management and Minimisation Plans and bylaws by 1st July 2012. The Plan must set out objectives, policies, and methods for waste management and minimisation, as well as funding for implementation of the plan.

Biosolids

In December 2008 the Council ceased composting biosolids (sludge made from the solid component of sewage). This decision was taken because:

- The market for compost did not develop as was anticipated when the compost plant was planned.
- The operating cost of the plant was significantly higher than had originally been expected.
- Odour emanating from the processing of sewage sludge caused significant anxiety in the local community.

Biosolids are currently disposed of in the landfill. Methane gas created by the landfill is captured and converted into electricity. Alternative technologies are available, but they are expensive and can be energy-intensive. All Councils are struggling to find alternatives to landfilling of biosolids.

Kerbside Recycling

The markets for products collected kerbside have all but disappeared. These markets, in South East Asia and China, have caused some disquiet because of the environmental impacts of our waste being processed in these parts of the world. Ideally we would process our waste here in New Zealand - the collapse of the markets means we now have no choice. If we want to keep recycling, we will need to think about processing at home, this will be more expensive than sending our waste offshore. Councils will need to provide leadership in this area.

Regional Approach

These challenges cannot be overcome by individual Councils. The Waste Minimisation Act provides for regional approaches to waste management and minimisation, and the Councils of the Greater Wellington Region have already commenced working towards common goals in this regard. It is likely that the Council's next iteration of the Solid Waste Minimisation and Management Plan will be a Regional Plan.

Solid Waste Management Plan (2003)

Our existing plan needs to be updated in light of these changes. The existing plan is based on these aspirational principles:

- working towards zero waste disposal – Council believes the reuse of all wastes is achievable but recognises it is a long term goal to work towards
- responsibility for waste – individuals or businesses that produce or pass on waste have direct responsibility its disposal, however, Council will intervene until barriers which make it difficult to reduce waste are removed
- developing an independent sustainable local and regional 'waste reduction economy' – Council has a very long term goal withdrawing from direct involvement in waste reduction activities when they are provided by the private sector (taking into consideration issues such as public health and strategic benefits)
- partnerships with the community and business sector – Council considers that this is an important means to achieving waste reduction strategies and targets.

These principles have now been largely incorporated into the new legislation, and the Council now has more obligations around compliance, auditing and reporting on waste minimisation and management.

The existing plan also contained some challenging targets, most of which have been beyond the ability of the Council to achieve:

WASTE	TARGET	COMMENT
Tyres	100% diverted for other use by 2006	Partly achieved. The volume of tyres into our landfill has greatly reduced. Although it is likely some tyres have gone to alternate landfills. The residual has been used in the gas collection system at the landfill.
Whiteware, car batteries	100% diversion by 2006	Partly achieved. Strong markets for scrap metal and spare parts have seen private businesses take most cars; whiteware is diverted away from the landfill by Council staff but some batteries still enter the landfill.
Garden waste	80% diversion by 2010	Already achieved. This material is separated and passed to a contractor for composting.
Glass	100% diversion by 2006	Not achieved. A large quantity of glass is landfilled, mixed with general waste.
Kitchen waste	Regional action plan by 2006	Not achieved. We were not able to secure a consensus for a regional plan due to high cost estimates for the activity. The proposed regional wide plan may revisit this target. This will require a collection system that is likely to cost several million dollars per annum.
Paper/cardboard	50% diversion by 2010	Unknown. The Council has no way of knowing how much paper and cardboard is recycled as most of this is undertaken commercially.
Metals	100% diversion by 2006	Not achieved. Some metal is still landfilled, mixed with general waste.
Plastics	100% of recyclable plastics by 2010	Unlikely to be achieved. The market for plastics type 1 and 2 is marginal, for others it has disappeared. Plastic is difficult to sort and

WASTE	TARGET	COMMENT
		transport and there is no commercial or financial incentive to increase plastics recycling.
Wood	Identify targets by 2006	Not achieved. The Council has no control over construction and demolition waste, and cannot measure or manage this waste stream.
Construction & Demolition	Identify targets by 2006	

New targets will be incorporated in the Solid Waste Minimisation and Management Plan – likely to be regional – to be completed in the next couple of years. The Plan will require public consultation.

Liquid Waste Management Plan (2005)

For the Council, liquid wastes relates to sewage and stormwater. While waste reduction is the primary objective, given the nature of the waste, a secondary objective is to ensure we manage liquid waste in an environmentally, economically, socially and culturally sustainable manner.

Guiding principles for the management of liquid waste

- Sustainable development – all members of society are responsible for the impact of wastes they produce
- Liquid waste is a resource – there are beneficial reuse opportunities for both sewage and stormwater
- Integrated solutions – potential solutions will take into account natural catchment areas, other developments and community plans and views
- Maori and iwi values are incorporated – recognise and provide for the kaitiakitanga or guardianship role of local iwi
- Partnerships – where appropriate, a co-operative approach will be taken to achieve joint priorities
- Polluter pays – this is currently only relevant for trade wastes.

The tables below summarise the objectives and main required actions for the management of sewage and stormwater.

SEWAGE	
Objectives	Required actions
Sewage treatment: All treatment to comply with Resource Management Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake preparatory works for new resource consents for Western (2006) and Moa Point (2008) treatment plants, includes options to decrease inflow and infiltration rates. ▪ Renegotiate Porirua Treatment Plant contract with Porirua City Council.
Trade Waste: Reduce quantity of trade waste, its pollutant load and ensure safe disposal methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine appropriate fees and charges for trade waste discharges. ▪ Ensure trade waste consent holders (with high volume, fast flow or with complex discharges) have waste management and minimisation programmes by 2009. ▪ Consider requiring small and medium sized trade waste consent holders to have waste management and minimisation programmes.
Biosolids: Ensure adoption of sustainable, long term and beneficial reuse options for biosolids disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review current disposal process, evaluate alternative options and establish implementation.

STORMWATER	
Objectives	Required actions
<p>Flooding: Manage the effects of flooding by meeting agreed levels of service, as set out in Stormwater Asset Management Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue with flood protection programme, as set out in the Asset Management Plan. ▪ Investigate planning methods to limit or decrease use of hard surfaces.
<p>Sewage Overflows: To increase or preserve amenity of the city and preserve public health standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate options and costs to reduce environmental effects of overflows, including the preparation of an inflow and infiltration plan.
<p>Sediment and Silt: To decrease the quantity reaching city waterways</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to work with Greater Wellington to ensure best practice sediment controls are identified and implemented. ▪ Review of Council's Earthworks Bylaw and Code of Practice for Land Development to address best practice and management of sediment.