

the state of our environment



Published by Gisborne District Council

Gisborne 2009 and 2010

Waste, recycling and air

Principal findings

- Gisborne residents have achieved favourable reductions in solid waste; better than most other cities
- "E Days" resulted in the collection of 58 tonnes of electronic goods for recycling
- Sixteen recycling bins have been installed in Gisborne's CBD
- There are now eight *Enviroschools* in Gisborne District
- Council staff responded to 84 pollution incidents
- Air quality in Gisborne remains good; well within MfE air quality guidelines
- Environmental health requirements are now typically included in resource consents, and are monitored; the reactive approach, of responding to complaints, is no longer adequate.

The Environment Court has made it clear that Councils should monitor conditions included in Resource Consents to ensure compliance. In 2009 and 2010, Environmental Health had input into 169 resource consent applications, 107 applications for wastewater systems and 18 consents for discharges to air. In the same period, 71 abatement notices were issued for incidents such as excessive noise (60), dust, smoke and odour.

Why monitor?

It's essential to monitor the effects of humans and our activities on the environment to enable us to identify concerns and improve our performance. However, monitoring the environment is not easy: natural systems are complex, taking measurements can be challenging, and some impacts are long term and cumulative.

The Resource Management Act requires local authorities to monitor the effects of policy statements and plans, resource consents, and the state of the environment, and take action where necessary. It's no longer enough for councils to just respond to public complaints.



Both Gisborne District's Regional Plan for Discharges to Land and Water, Waste Management and Hazardous Substances and the Regional Air Quality Management Plan became operative in 2008. These Plans, developed in consultation with the community, reflect the community's aspirations regarding environmental quality. To this end, the Environmental Health Division of Council monitors waste, hazardous substances, contaminated sites, septic tank waste, recreational waters, air quality, noise and general environmental health.



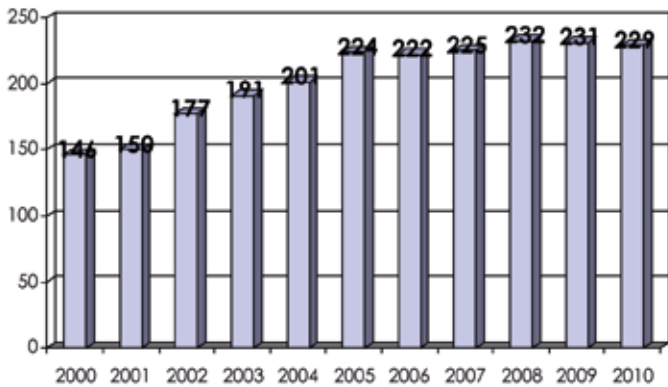
The revised New Zealand waste strategy was launched in October 2010, with the overarching goals of reducing the harmful effects of waste on the environment and human health, and to improve efficiency in resource use. This includes the vision of "towards zero waste to landfill", which a number of councils, including our own, aspire to.

Solid waste management

Gisborne residents generate on average 301kg total waste per annum, compared to 500kg plus in some other cities. Our kerbside recycling and waste-to-landfill figures are therefore very favourable compared to other cities, though they appear to have reached a plateau over the past three years. To achieve further reductions in waste-to-landfill would require huge additional changes that are currently neither cost effective nor efficient. The public will get a chance to have their say on how we move forward when a new Waste Management and Minimisation Plan goes out for consultation in 2012.

The Council continues to recycle its own paper, glass, plastic bottles and cans; they are separated in the recycling bins in individual office and staff cafeteria.

Average monthly kerbside recycling tonnages for Gisborne City over the past 11 years



Rural transfer stations

There are nine rural waste transfer stations in the district, open for set hours and managed by caretakers. Rural transfer station caretakers had a training day in October 2010, to encourage them to work with their local communities to minimise waste. In 2010, 528 tonnes of recyclables were collected from the rural transfer stations, a slight increase over 2009.

Second Hand Sundays

Second Hand Sundays are an opportunity for people to place unwanted items at their gate for others to come and take away for reuse. They were held in February and October of both 2009 and 2010, and on the first Sunday of each month thereafter. It is estimated 60 tonnes of waste was diverted from landfill each year.

New initiative: Computer and E-waste recycling

Literally tonnes (25 in 2009 and 33 in 2010) of computers and other electronic goods were accepted for recycling at "E Days" held annually in Gisborne.

E-waste, especially cathode ray tube monitors, contains hazardous substances like lead, cadmium and beryllium. Collected, e-waste material is exported for recycling, and must have appropriate international consents, called Basel Permits, that govern the transfer of hazardous waste between nations.

Recycling at events

Rhythm and Vines is Gisborne's largest summer festival, and generates a great deal of waste. For the 2009/10 event R&V partnered with Coke to introduce a recycling bin system used at similar large events elsewhere. Festival-goers successfully sorted material into the bins during the day, but at night not enough care was taken. This was addressed at R&V 2010-11 by having extra staff on site who sorted the recyclables before the material was taken to Transpacific AllBrites. The directors of the BW festival campsites organised similar recycling facilities.



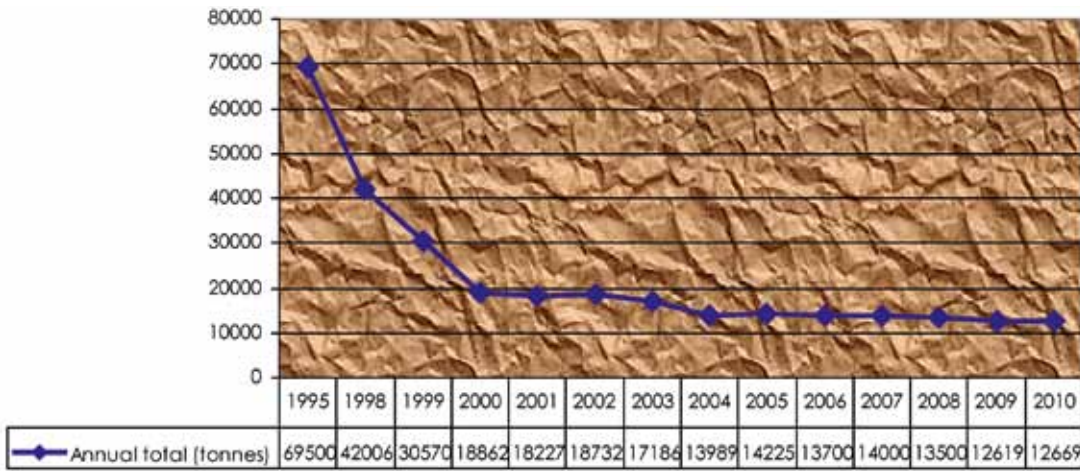
Refuse collection and disposal

Residual solid waste that isn't reused, recovered or recycled totals around 12,640 tonnes a year, or 575 truck-and-trailer loads. It is transported out of the district to Tirohia landfill at Paeroa. In addition around 1,100 tonnes of waste generated north of Tolaga Bay is landfilled at Waiapu landfill, Ruatoria.

Two private businesses, Trevor Jukes (Tonlyn, Ormond Valley Road) and Fulton Hogan (Matokitoki Valley Road), operate restricted waste disposal facilities and accept materials such as concrete, bricks, ceramics, soil, gravel, plasterboard, glass and green waste (however no domestic, municipal, liquid or hazardous waste).



Refuse disposed to landfill – figures from Transpacific AllBrites



Education on waste matters

Every year, Ilminster Intermediate School's "Green Team" puts on a superb stage performance with an environmental theme. In 2009 "Cleanup Your Act" promoted having pride in 'Our Place' and not trashing it. The 2010 performance, "Want it, Have it", explored reducing consumption and saving resources. Around 4,000 students attended the performances each year.

Council, in conjunction with TPI/AllBrites, operates the educational Rethink Centre at Innes Street in Gisborne. In 2009 25 classes of year 4 students attended educational sessions at Rethink, learning about waste, litter, recycling and composting. In 2010, 21 Year 4 classes and 21 year 6 classes came to Rethink for a specific programme on waste, designed to build on the Green



Team's performance. Many other classes came for a session when they were studying waste. Groups of interested adults also took advantage of the facility.

Enviroschools, a facilitated environmental education programme, grew from 6 to 8 local schools during the period. Council coordinates this programme locally.

Monitoring and surveillance

In 2009 fifty infringement notices for littering and illegal dumping were issued, and of 435 incidents reported in 2010, fourteen infringement notices were issued. Incidents range from domestic rubbish illegally dumped to wrappers being tossed from car windows.

Centennial Marine Drive – the city beachfront and beyond – is unfortunately a hot spot for illegal dumping of rubbish, and is monitored weekly.

Hazardous substances

Council maintains a database of 674 premises in Gisborne District having hazardous substances on site, and sites are inspected at intervals appropriate for the types of risks present. Examples are electroplaters, spray painters and horticultural/agricultural chemical suppliers.

Incident response

Council staff responded to 44 pollution incidents in 2009 and 40 in 2010. The majority of these involve fuel spilt onto the road from vehicles (including accidents). In addition there were incidents involving gas cylinders and discharges into the marine environment.

Liquid waste

This category includes point-source discharges (such as sewage and landfill leachate) and diffuse discharges, where contaminants are diluted in rainwater and stormwater runoff (such as faecal bacteria from stock and oily runoff from roads).

Since many residents of Gisborne District live rurally and in remote areas, a large proportion of households rely on septic tanks and on-site treatment systems. Waste from septic tanks on the Poverty Bay flats, Wainui, Makorori and Pouawa is emptied into the city sewage system. Residents close to Te Karaka can have tanks emptied to that system. Four areas on the coast have consents to accept septage, at Te Araroa, Te Puia, Tikitiki (where new pits are shortly to be constructed and the former area remediated) and the Waiapu area landfill (for which consent expired in June 2010, and a consent for a new pit is underway).



Air quality

Because of the rural nature of Gisborne District, air quality is generally good, and

when pollution does occur it is often as a result of natural factors (such as wind picking up dust) rather than industrial pollution. Gisborne District Council responds to complaints about air quality, and also monitors air quality within the city and on the Poverty Bay flats. In 2009 and 2010 air quality was well within MfE guidelines.

Gisborne District has had a Regional Air Quality Management Plan, operative since 2008. The purpose of the Air Plan is to ensure existing air quality is not significantly degraded below the current air quality we enjoy. The Plan stipulates that ambient air quality values may only be exceeded where it is proven that there will be no significant effects on the health of humans, animals and plants, or amenity values.

Some commercial activities require discharge to air consents under the Regional Air Quality Management Plan. There were 65 current discharge to air consents in 2009/10, most of them minor (covering boilers, spray paint booths and one-off permits to burn). More significant consents include discharges from timber and food processing plants, grain drying, bitumen manufacture and waste management).

Odour (most often smoke) is typically the cause of most complaints from the public, and is assessed by Environmental Health staff. Action is required if the odour is deemed as offensive or objectionable.

Complaint	Number	
	2009	2010
Odour	45	56
Smoke	46	109
Dust	32	43
Spray drift	12	11
Total	135	219

Noise

Undesirable noise is environmental pollution, and can have adverse health effects. 'Noise' is somewhat subjective, however 'sound' has physical properties, and by measuring it we can assess the quality of the acoustic environment.

In the past, consent monitoring took the form of responding to complaints, but increasingly consents are now issued with specific conditions relating to noise, and will be monitored to ensure compliance.

Stereo noise is either assessed as excessive or not excessive (excessive is defined in Section 326 of the Resource Management Act 1991).

Around 1,850 complaints were received in each year; as usual stereos were the main cause and 43 were impounded in 2009 and 53 in 2010.



Ongoing activities for 2011 and beyond

- All consented activities with environmental health conditions are to be included in the compliance-monitoring programme.
- Background air particulate monitoring will be carried out continuously from at least one location, and other pollutants as per the Proposed Air Quality Management Plan.
- A background noise survey will also be carried out.
- Complaint statistics will be used to help determine what environmental sources are of the most concern. Monitoring of recreational waters, and investigation of pollution incidents will continue, as will ongoing general monitoring of the waste environment, results will be presented in an annual report.
- Ongoing waste-stream data will be gathered by surveys and audits of source and disposal sites.
- The public can have a say on how we move forward with reducing solid waste further when a new Waste Management and Minimisation Plan goes out for consultation in 2012.

