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Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa
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Wairarapa Landfills

1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with an overview of Wairarapa landfills.

2. Background

Landfills in the Wairarapa were historically widespread, often utilising former gravel pits, riverbeds and other waste ground for rubbish disposal. There was no control as to what was deposited and the “dumps” were both a health and fire hazard, and discharged odour and gas. No provisions were made for control of leachate or runoff, and at several sites there was direct contact with flowing water.

Former dumps constitute contaminated or potentially contaminated sites with some 50 sites listed on the Council’s selected land use register.

With the passing of the Resource Management Act in 1991, both active and closed landfills require consents for discharge impacts on land water and air.

Since 1996, the three District Councils have operated a joint Committee – “Waste Management Wairarapa” established to develop waste management options for the Wairarapa. They have produced a Wairarapa Waste management Plan.

3. Current Position

Landfills

There are four consented landfills and six transfer stations in the Wairarapa.

These are summarised in the following table:

<i>Wairarapa Landfill Consents</i>				
<i>Consent No</i>	<i>Land fill</i>	<i>Consent Granted</i>	<i>Consent Expires</i>	<i>Annual Waste Stream</i>
WAR 930100	Masterton	27/10/97	1/10/06	12,055 m ³
WAR 010118	Castlepoint Transfer Station	30/4/03	30/10/38	
WAR 010117	Mauriceville Transfer Station	30/4/03	30/10/38	
WAR 010116	Riversdale Transfer Station	29/4/03	30/10/38	
WAR 940057	Tinui	16/5/96	23/4/06	Unknown
WAR 940047	Carterton	13/2/96	13/2/16	5,500 m ³
WAR 950016	Martinborough	21/6/01	30/9/10	7280 m ³
	Greytown Transfer Station	Consent not required		
	Featherston Transfer Station	Consent not required		
	Pirinoa Transfer Station	Consent requirement under review		
<i>Annual Wairarapa Waste Stream from Consent Applications</i>				<i>24,835 m³</i>

The Masterton Landfill bounds the Ruamahanga River, on a former river course and overlies free draining gravels with both unconfined and confined aquifers.

It receives Masterton's domestic and industrial waste as well as waste transferred from Mauriceville, Castlepoint and Riversdale. A recent survey identified that some 12% of its waste stream comes from the other two Districts.

An adjacent composting plant processes green waste. Along with recycling, this has reduced waste streams considerably. Individuals dump at the tip face and hazardous materials are received that are not accepted at the other District landfills. The consent expires in three years time and a "Closure and Aftercare" plan has been prepared and submitted as required by consent condition.

The Mauriceville transfer station is unsupervised and open at only set times. The Riversdale and Castlepoint transfer stations are unsupervised with open public access. They all provide for recycling.

The Tinui landfill is located on argillite soils, occupying slopes that drain towards the nearby Whareama River. It is not supervised and there is 24-hour public access to the tip face.

The Carterton landfill is located in a raised river terrace comprising gravels with underlying aquifers. The current landfill area is lined, with leachate collected and discharged into the sewage ponds. Public do not have free access to the tip face. After recycling, all material is dumped into a concrete receiving area for later transfer and consolidation. The consent expires in 13 years time.

The Martinborough landfill is the most recently consented, expiring in seven years time. It is located on impervious clays adjacent to the Ruamahanga River flood plain, at a considerable distance from the river itself. It receives collected urban waste from the three towns and coastal communities. Individuals can dump at the tip face at set times. The Greytown, Featherston and Pirinoa transfer stations receive only recyclable materials and green waste, which is taken to Martinborough. The transfer stations are supervised and open at set times.

Ministry for Environment Review

Ministry for Environment undertook a national review of landfills last year. Comments on Wairarapa landfills were as follows:

Masterton

The site is substandard (no engineered containment, high permeability underlying geology, and adjacent waterbody)

Tinui

The site is substandard (no engineered containment, high permeability underlying geology, and adjacent waterbody)

Carterton

The site is badly located with respect to underlying geology and nearby residential properties but has an engineered containment system.

Martinborough

The site is relatively well located (underlying geology and surrounding land use) but lacks an engineered liner system.

Given the lack of leachate management and the “bathtub” effect of the low permeability clay, management of surface water at the site is an important tool in managing leachate problems.

Compliance

Details of compliance of the main landfills for 2001/02 are summarised as follows:

Masterton Landfill

Masterton did not comply with agreed reporting timeframes and could not be included in the 2002 Annual Compliance Report. The report was subsequently received.

Elevated levels of several contaminants have been detected in adjacent monitoring bores. For example, ammoniacal nitrogen consent limits were exceeded for 25% to 100% of the time and are seen as “likely to be affecting downstream groundwater quality”.

River monitoring, as required by consent conditions, has not detected any effects on river water quality in terms of chemistry or aquatic life.

Carterton Landfill

Two consents were fully complying and one non-complying. Leachate contamination was detected in monitoring bores that exceeded the levels set in consent conditions. As the current landfill is lined with collected leachate discharged to the sewage treatment ponds, this contamination is thought to come from the filled and closed section of the landfill.

Martinborough Landfill

Four consents were fully complying and one non-complying. Non compliance related to late installation of one monitoring bore. This was subsequently installed.

Waste Management Wairarapa

In 1996 a committee was formed by the three Wairarapa district councils to work together and develop waste management options for the Wairarapa. Establishment of one ‘regional’ landfill was the initial main goal, driven by the expiry dates of consents and the enhanced requirements for landfills. Iwi and a Regional Council staff member are also on the Committee.

Through a consultation process, Waste Management Wairarapa produced a Wairarapa Waste Management Plan in 2000. However since that time recycling has increased, zero waste philosophies developed, and private waste operations increased. This has necessitated revisions of the plan and raised questions as to the risks associated with developing a “regional’ landfill.

The committee has sought to be given the governance and decision making powers on Wairarapa waste by the three Councils. This issue has yet to be resolved. These discussions have involved whether committee control of the waste stream should be given before or at the transfer stations.

Currently, the committee is seeking possible regional landfill sites and this has been publicised, asking landowners to come forward with possibilities. The alternative of exporting waste out of the Wairarapa is also being considered.

With Masterton landfill taking some 50% of the waste stream and its consent expiring in three years time, clear decisions and rapid progress needs to be made for a 'regional' landfill or a suitable alternative to be operative by October 2006.

4. Communications

As this is an overview paper, no additional publicity is proposed.

5. Recommendation

That the Committee receives this report and note its contents.

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