

## 21 Hazardous Substances

### 21.1 Significant Issues

Release of hazardous substances has the potential to contaminate water, soil and air, thus reducing the life-supporting capacity of these natural and physical resources and creating risks to health and safety.

Fire or explosion caused by hazardous substances has the potential to adversely affect the environment, as well as endanger people's health and safety.

The lack of appropriate disposal facilities within the District for hazardous substances increases the threat of contamination by these wastes.

### 21.2 Overview

Hazardous substances are used in many industries and activities in the District. Activities involving hazardous substances have positive effects by providing products and services, but also create risks to those who use them and the surrounding environment. The risks arise from the possible accidental release, fire or explosion of these hazardous substances.

Inadequate storage and location of hazardous substances are the main areas of concern. Where hazardous facilities are located next to coastal waters, waterways, above aquifers, or close to environmentally sensitive areas such as indigenous wetlands or residential areas, the issue of unintentional release of hazardous substances is of special concern. Possible adverse effects of hazardous substances upon the environment include:

- Contamination of water, soil and air;
- Short and long-term damage to ecosystems;
- Accumulation of persistent substances in the bodies of humans and animals, resulting in damage to their health and well-being, including spiritual values held by tangata whenua.
- This Plan will control the use, development or protection of land so as to prevent adverse effects from facilities using, storing, transporting or disposing of hazardous substances. Management of the hazardous substances in a wider sense is the function of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.

### 21.3 Objectives

#### 21.3.1

Protection of the environment from the adverse effects and risks, from activities involving the use, storage, manufacture, transport and disposal of hazardous substances.

*Explanation and Reasons: Maintenance of the quality of the environment is a paramount concern under the Resource Management Act 1991. Contamination by hazardous substances and waste has the potential to impact on values and activities, both within and outside the District.*

## 21.4 Policies

### 21.4.1 Location

To ensure that hazardous substances are stored and used in locations where any adverse effects on human health, the surrounding natural and physical resources, and ecosystems, and surrounding land use activities are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

*Explanation and Reasons: Hazardous facilities do provide benefits for the community, but they also represent a risk to the surrounding environment. In some cases, this risk may be of particular concern because of the proximity of sensitive ecological areas or residential land uses. When assessing consent applications these considerations are necessary so as to determine whether the activity is appropriate in a particular location, given the potential adverse effects.*

### 21.4.2 Design of Facilities

To ensure that activities involving the use or storage of hazardous substances are designed, constructed and managed to avoid the risk of fire and explosion, and to protect human and environmental health.

*Explanation and Reasons: The greatest risk of contamination from hazardous facilities comes from inadequate storage and operational procedures resulting in accidental spills and leaks. The design, construction and management of a facility are important components in avoiding this risk of contamination.*

### 21.4.3 Transportation

To ensure that the transportation of hazardous substances is undertaken in a manner that reduces the risk of accidental leaks and spills.

*Explanation and Reasons: Transportation of hazardous substances needs to be undertaken in a way that avoids putting the environment at risk.*

### 21.4.4 Disposal

To dispose of hazardous substances waste at specialised facilities to avoid inappropriate release into the environment.

*Explanation and Reasons: To avoid the further contamination of land, water or air, hazardous substances waste must be disposed of appropriately. Currently there is no hazardous substances waste disposal facility available in the District, therefore disposal must be arranged outside the District.*

## 21.5 Methods

### 21.5.1 Regulatory Methods

- Environment rules relating to activities involving hazardous substances, based on the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Resource consent conditions (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).

### 21.5.2 Other Plans and Legislation

- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and Hazardous Substances Regulations 2001, 2003 and 2004 (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Transport Act 1962 (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Health and Safety In Employment (Asbestos) Regulation 1998 (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- The Regional Policy Statement for Northland (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Regional Water and Soil Plan for Northland (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).

### 21.5.3 Information, Education and Advocacy

- Liaison with the Northland Regional Council (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Liaison with the Environmental Risk Management Agency (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Liaison with the Ministry of Transport (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Liaison with the Northland Hazardous Substances Technical Liaison Committee (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Promote and support appropriate voluntary, self-regulating codes of practice (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Provide information on other legislation that affects the use and transport of hazardous substances (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).
- Provide information on the benefits of hazardous substances use minimisation techniques and waste minimisation (Policies 21.4.1 to 21.4.4).

### 21.5.4 Council Works and Services

- Works and services relating to hazardous substances disposal (Policy 21.4.4).
- Provide assistance to the New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Fire Service at accidents and spillages associated with the transport of hazardous substances (Policy 21.4.3).

## 21.6 Anticipated Environmental Results

The following results are expected to be achieved by the foregoing Objectives, Policies and Methods. The means of monitoring whether the Plan achieves the expected outcomes are set out in the Whangarei District Council Monitoring Strategy.

- The use, storage, manufacture, transport and disposal of hazardous substances will have no adverse effects on the environment.
- The use, storage, manufacture, transport and disposal of hazardous substances will have no adverse effects on the health and safety of people and communities.