

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Environmental Services group is primarily the regulatory arm of Council. It is closely linked to the community and the achievement of Community Outcomes through activities like animal and building control, resource management and consents planning, environmental health and liquor licensing.

Key Projects*

- To complete the review of the Waikato District Plan.
- Targeted monitoring of environmental issues and related enforcement proceedings.
- Annual reviews of the 2005 State of the Environment Report.

* All projects post 2008/09 will be reviewed in detail for the LTCCP 2009-19, and any costs and timings are indicative only at this stage.

Significant Negative Effects on Community Well-being

There are no identified significant negative effects on community well-being arising from this group of activities. In saying that, planning may increase development costs as a result of the resource consent framework, through compliance costs, development levies or financial contributions. However, benefits flow back to developers and the wider community from the subsequent improved environmental quality. Therefore, any net negative effect is not significant. At times the effects on the environment from activities are considered non-sustainable and resource consent is declined. This is a negative effect to the individual applying but inherently a positive outcome for the wider community and environment.

Key Assets

There are no strategic assets relating to this group of activities.



Building Control

Overview of the Activity

The Building Control Activity is responsible for issuing consents to allow building development in the district, as well as conducting inspections to ensure that building consent conditions are met and relevant legislation is complied with.

This activity is also responsible for ensuring swimming pools are effectively fenced, administering building warrants of fitness for public buildings and ensuring earthquake prone and dangerous buildings are identified.

Rationale for Activity

The Building Act 2004 requires that Council performs the function of a Building Consent Authority as detailed in Section 12 of the Act.

The overriding reason for compliance with the Building Act is public safety.

Through regulation and the promotion of building standards Council seeks to safeguard its heritage sites and buildings. This contributes to protecting and safeguarding our environment.

What We Plan To Do

Project	2006/07\$	2007/08\$	2008/09\$
Waikato-Wide Building Consent Process	20,000	21,000	21,000

How will we know we are on track

Demand for planning services is dynamic and dependent on a number of externalities, which Council cannot influence or control. These include population growth, market stability, political confidence, demand and supply and the social evolution of communities. Consideration of efficient levels in terms of the number of relevant suitably trained staff employed and improvements in efficiency, consistency and customer service will allow Council to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to the building control area within Council to maintain and improve service levels.

Service Level	Checking Progress	Target 2006/7 to 2008/9	Target 2009/10 to 2015/16
Building Consents All applications for building consents are processed in accordance with statutory requirements and the provisions of the New Zealand Building Code.	All building consents required by statute are processed and issued with an average of 10 working days. (Note: the processing time allowed by the Building Act is 20 days)	100% within 10 working days	√
Building warrants of fitness Annually monitor and audit buildings in the Waikato District that hold Compliance Schedules.	50 of the 230 buildings are annually monitored and audited on a rotating basis.	50 buildings annually	√
	Annually audit all buildings with Compliance Schedules that provide sleeping care or paid accommodation. Confirm that property owners and their contractors are conducting regular maintenance on, and inspections of, these buildings.	100%	√
Earthquake-prone buildings Monitoring of earthquake prone buildings is undertaken.	Implement Council's policy on Earthquake Prone Buildings.	Policy fully implemented	√
Swimming Pools Inspect all swimming pools in the district for legislative compliance.	Annually check 50 of the swimming pools currently on the Council's Swimming Pool Register, for compliance with the provisions of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987.	50 pools checked annually	√
	Inspect all new pools for compliance.	100%	√

Primary Contribution to Community Outcomes

The Building Control Activity contributes to five of the nine Community Outcomes, namely Educated, Green, Sustainable, Safe and Well Waikato.

Where We Want To Go

The focus of this activity over the next 10 years will be to ensure that the quality of new buildings within the district is at a level that meets the community's needs in regard to the provision of healthy and safe housing. Our aim is also to eliminate all accidental drowning of pre-school children in private swimming pools. We will aim to ensure that the users and occupants of all public and commercial buildings enjoy a suitable level of amenity, receive prompt warning in the event of fire or emergency and are able to exit buildings in a safe and orderly manner.

In May 2006, Waikato District Council made an application to the Department of Building and Housing to be registered as a Building Consent Authority. This application must be approved by November 2007 for Council to continue to operate as a Building Consent Authority.

Council will use the Waikato Building Consent Forum to provide consistent management and application of the Building Act 2004 to all buildings, contractors and property owners in the Waikato region.



Animal Control

Overview of the Activity

The Animal Control activity is a community safety service mainly focused on the control of dogs in the community, the registration of all dogs, and the enforcement of relevant legislation and bylaws. Council's Animal Control Officers also respond to reports of stray stock obstructing public roads. The activity is concerned with promoting the social and environmental well-beings.

Rationale for Activity

The Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to adopt a dog control policy in order to minimise danger, distress and nuisance to the community and to avoid the inherent danger in allowing dogs to have uncontrolled access to public places that are frequented by children.

The Impounding Act 1955 makes provision for the Council to remove wandering livestock in order to prevent harm or damage to property.

Primary Contribution to Community Outcomes

This activity contributes to three of the nine Community Outcomes, namely Active, Educated and Safe Waikato.

Where We Want To Go

The long-term focus for this activity is to encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and to minimise the danger that is posed to the community from uncontrolled dogs. The registration of dogs is one tool used to achieve this.

The legislative requirements to microchip dogs come into force on 1 July 2006. In preparation for this Council has introduced a new charge of \$30.00 to provide this service.

How will we know we are on track

Other than the district growth projections, demand for services is not expected to change significantly. To assist in achieving the intended service levels, Council will be using a comprehensive database, which is linked to the National Database.

Service Level	Checking Progress	Target 2006/7 to 2008/9	Target 2009/10 to 2015/16
Unregistered Dogs Conduct regular routine patrols to detect unregistered dogs and to identify their owners.	Maintain a database of all registered dogs in the district.	100%	√
	Annual registration is undertaken for all dogs on the database, with registration fees collected.	100%	√
Dog Runs Dog owners are provided with sufficient public domain to meet their recreational needs.	Fenced dog exercise areas are clearly marked and maintained.	100%	√
	Dog exercise areas are monitored on a weekly basis.	Weekly monitoring	√
Community Safety Minimise the intimidation of the community by uncontrolled dogs.	Urban areas, parks, playgrounds and recreational areas are patrolled on a weekly basis.	Weekly Patrols	√
	Fully investigate at least 95% of complaints regarding dog control within 10 working days of notification.	95%	√
	A declining trend in the number of dog attacks.	Declining trend	√
Stray Stock Motor vehicle accidents that are caused by stock straying onto roads are prevented.	Respond to all complaints of straying stock immediately, and ensure stray animals are located and contained.	100%	√

Resource Management

Overview of the Activity

The Resource Management Activity is split into three functions; Policy, Consents Planning and Monitoring.

Policy

This activity is principally about providing advice and facilitating land use in a structured and logical way. The purpose of this activity is to carry out Council's planning functions under the Resource Management Act 1991. The District Plan identifies resource management issues in the Waikato District, states objectives, policies and methods to address the issues. The Act prescribes a detailed Plan-making process.

Consents Planning

Consents planning is primarily concerned with implementation of the District Plan. Through administration of the District Plan and other broader legalisation such as the Resource Management Act 1991 and Local Government Act 2002, the primary emphasis of consents planning is sustainable management of the environment. In order to achieve this outcome, consents planning encompasses the regulation of the utilisation of natural and physical resources for the social, cultural and economic well being of individuals and communities whilst ensuring there are no long-term adverse effects on the environment.

Consents planning requires processing resource consents for subdivision and the use of land, balancing development opportunities with effects on the environment as a whole.

Monitoring

The purpose of the Monitoring function is to develop, maintain and implement a strategic monitoring framework to enable the consistent review and reporting on the suitability and effectiveness of the District Plan and its provisions; and the state of the environment and the consequences for future policy development for the Waikato District Council.

Rationale for Activity

Resource management is fundamental to fulfilling Council's planning responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991. It promotes and contributes to the sustainable management, use, development and protection of natural and physical resources, both now and for future generations.

The District Plan is Council's main tool for implementing the Resource Management Act 1991. Bylaws also provide Council with an enforcement mechanism to require compliance with the relevant statutory provisions.

What We Plan To Do

Project	2006/07\$	2007/08\$	2008/09\$
Cultural Heritage	25,000	25,000	25,000
Waikato Biodiversity Forum	3,000	3,000	3,000
Free Vehicle Disposal	5,000	5,000	5,000
Conservation Fund Grants	50,000	50,000	100,000

Cultural Heritage

Project to provide non-regulatory protection for privately owned historic buildings and structures, promote quality outcomes, and provide design and project management advice when building work is planned for heritage buildings.

Biodiversity Forum

Inter-agency initiative to promote and deliver best practice in environmental protection.

Free Vehicle Disposal

The project aims to provide incentives to the owners of dis-used cars to deliver these vehicles to disposal depots.

Conservation Fund Grants

These funds provide assistance to private landowners who wish to protect areas of significant native vegetation.

Primary Contribution to Community Outcomes

The Resource Management activity contributes to six of the nine Community Outcomes. This is a logical result given that this activity is a significant component of the governance and direction for Council. The relevant Outcomes are Educated, Green, Sustainable, Thriving, Vibrant and Well Waikato.

Where We Want To Go

To meet the community's aspirations our focus over the next 10 years will be:

- to sustainably manage the natural and physical resources of the district.
- to make the proposed Waikato District Plan operative, and to ensure that it reflects and remains responsive to the community's needs.
- to provide easy access to, and understanding of, information (including rules), and assistance with resources needed by people to undertake various activities.

Resource Management continued

How will we know we are on track

Council cannot manage demand for planning services, apart from its ability to influence and moderate public opinion. Demand for planning services is dynamic and dependent on a number of externalities, which Council cannot influence or control. These include population growth, market stability, political confidence, demand and supply and the social evolution of communities. However, Council can choose the extent to which it promotes items onto the public policy agenda. Consideration of efficient levels in terms of the number of relevant suitably trained staff employed and improvements in efficiency, consistency and customer service will allow Council to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to the resource management area within Council to maintain and improve service levels.

Service Level	Checking Progress	Target 2006/7 to 2008/9	Target 2009/10 to 2015/16
Review of the District Plan The District Plan review commenced in 2002 and is expected to be largely concluded in 2006-07, subject to appeals.	Provide the community with the opportunity of formal input into the review by way of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public hearing process - opportunity to present their views - written advice of Council's decisions on their submission. 	100% compliance	√
District Plan Undertake Plan Changes over the life of the plan to address specific resource management issues as they arise.	Plan Changes are undertaken when required. Improvement in the effectiveness of the Plan is achieved through reporting via the three-yearly State of the Environment Report.	As required Improvement demonstrated in three-year Report	√ √
Resource Consents Process resource consents in accordance with the provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991.	Achieve 95% compliance with statutory timeframes for all consents.	95%	√
Grant robust resource consents.	The effectiveness of all consents issued are monitored by ensuring conditions are adhered to and there are no adverse effects.	100%	√
Consents planning processes are robust.	Council gains a satisfactory result from the Ministry for the Environment's Annual Statutory Audit.	Satisfactory audit result	√
Monitoring Resource consents are inspected and effectively monitored.	Inspect and effectively monitor at least 20 resource consents per month.	20 per month monitored	√
Audit the District Plan implementation and progress towards achievement of stated environmental outcomes.	Report every three years on the results of State of the Environment monitoring.	Three-yearly report	Annual Updates

Environmental Health

Overview of the Activity

All activities and functions carried out by Environmental Health Officers are fundamental to Council achieving and maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

The Environmental Health activity is responsible for improving, promoting and protecting the public health of the district, along with the provision and monitoring of all liquor licences and hazardous substances.

Rationale for Activity

The Health Act 1956 imposes Council with powers and duties in respect of public health specifying that it shall be the duty of every local authority to improve, promote, and protect public health within its district.

The Sale of Liquor Act 1989 defines the principal functions of District Licensing Agencies with the objective to establish a reasonable system of control over the sale and supply of liquor to the public with the aim of contributing to the reduction of liquor abuse.

Primary Contribution to Community Outcomes

The Environmental Health activity contributes to three of the nine Community Outcomes, namely Educated, Green, and Well Waikato.

Where We Want To Go

It is envisaged that in the future more use of the Environmental Health Officers' technical knowledge and expertise will be made as advisers to Council, auditors in matters pertaining to health of other departments of Council, i.e. water and wastewater; and to provide technical expertise in planning and building consent applications including the monitoring of consents and the environment.

How will we know we are on track

It is difficult for Council to predict the demand for this activity, other than to ensure that provision of services is in line with service demand and district growth projections.

Service Level	Checking Progress	Target 2006/7 to 2008/9	Target 2009/10 to 2015/16
Registered Premises Inspect registered premises within the district to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.	Inspect all registered premises annually.	100% annually	√
Nuisances Any nuisance, or condition likely to be injurious to health or offensive, is investigated by Environmental Health Officers	Respond to all nuisance conditions and complaints within one working day of notification.	100%	√
Infectious diseases Investigate infectious diseases.	Respond to all notifications within one day.	100%	√
	Maintain a register of infectious diseases.	Register maintained	√
	Reports are submitted to the Medical Officer of Health within five days of investigation completion.	100%	√
Liquor Licensing Process all liquor licence applications in accordance with the Sale of Liquor Act 1989.	Issue liquor licences and certificates within ten working days after receipt of all reports and required information, unless subject to objection.	100%	√

Estimated Expenses and Revenue Statement - Environmental Services

A forecast for the 10 years ending 30 June 2016

	2006/07 \$000's	2007/08 \$000's	2008/09 \$000's	2009/10 \$000's	2010/11 \$000's	2011/12 \$000's	2012/13 \$000's	2013/14 \$000's	2014/15 \$000's	2015/16 \$000's
Activity Expenditure										
Animal Control	649	657	672	690	703	721	736	742	753	759
Building Control	1,116	1,201	1,228	1,256	1,277	1,294	1,327	1,399	1,417	1,429
Environmental Health	352	357	366	374	381	388	397	401	408	409
Resource Management	2,406	2,474	2,441	2,482	2,585	2,639	2,691	2,717	2,768	2,766
	4,523	4,689	4,707	4,802	4,946	5,042	5,151	5,259	5,346	5,363
Less:										
Internal Interest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Activity Expenditure	4,523	4,689	4,707	4,802	4,946	5,042	5,151	5,259	5,346	5,363
Activity Revenue										
Fees/Other Income	2,632	2,808	2,878	2,884	2,892	2,895	2,899	3,005	3,009	3,018
	2,632	2,808	2,878	2,884	2,892	2,895	2,899	3,005	3,009	3,018
Less:										
Internal Interest	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Activity Revenue	2,627	2,806	2,877	2,883	2,891	2,894	2,898	3,004	3,008	3,016
Activity Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,896)	(1,883)	(1,830)	(1,919)	(2,055)	(2,148)	(2,253)	(2,255)	(2,338)	(2,347)
Activity Surplus/(Deficit) funded by										
Council Reserves	(70)	(73)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(73)
General Rate	(1,826)	(1,810)	(1,756)	(1,845)	(1,981)	(2,074)	(2,179)	(2,181)	(2,264)	(2,274)
	(1,896)	(1,883)	(1,830)	(1,919)	(2,055)	(2,148)	(2,253)	(2,255)	(2,338)	(2,347)