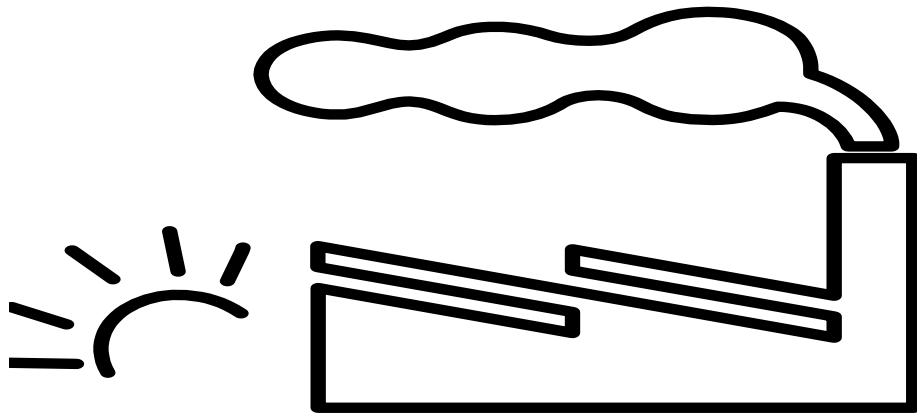


AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT



4.1 INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES, CAR EXHAUSTS AND HTE COMBINED DISCHARGES OF A COMMUNITY TO THE ATMOSPHERE CAN RESULT IN ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE COMMUNITY AND THE WIDER ENVIRONMENT

Explanation

Air is a collection of gases resulting from natural and human activities. Air pollutants are similarly caused.

The Gisborne District Council currently has good air quality which could be degraded by increased industrial and commercial activities. Some current activities cause unacceptable air pollution such as spray drift, odour and smoke.

Poor transport planning and poorly maintained vehicles can produce localised problems.

Natural air pollutants could be linked to the high level of asthma and allergenic reactions in the district.

Greenhouse gases such as Carbon dioxide and methane are produced by landfills, vehicles and combustion processes. Ruminating animals also contribute. However as vegetation absorbs such gases the Gisborne district is probably a net sink rather than a source.

Ozone layer protection is of local as well as global concern with the district experiencing one of the highest number of sunshine hours in New Zealand. Ozone depleting substances require careful control.

Data is lacking on air quality and sources of emission in the region.

4.1.1 Objective

Air quality will be enhanced and maintained where necessary to protect human health, fauna, flora, and aesthetic values.

4.1.2 Policies

1. To set and administer air quality standards for protection of the environment.
2. To promote the development of control technology which will minimise the adverse effects of air discharges on the environment.

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3. To develop and promote practices which improve air quality and reduce adverse effects.
4. To discourage practices which have the potential to result in adverse effects on the air environment.
5. As a precautionary measure to promote reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by promoting alternative practices, increased energy efficiency, conservation, carbon sinks and an integrated national approach to guide regional and local responses.
6. In accordance with the Ozone Layer Protection Act, 1990, to promote a reduction in ozone depleting substances which may be released into the environment.
7. To provide for tangata whenua input to the processes of setting air quality standards and developing plans.
8. To recognise that the maintenance of high quality air and the discharge of contaminants to air are culturally and spiritually significant to tangata whenua.
9. To utilise, wherever possible and appropriate, national policies, standards and guidelines to manage air quality, except where these would lead to a reduction in existing air quality.
10. To limit open burning to circumstances where it is the best practicable option, and can be carried out without creating nuisance or other adverse effects.

4.1.3 Methods of Implementation

The Gisborne District Council will:

1. Prepare and administer a statutory regional plan containing rules and other methods for air quality management.
2. Where it will best meet the purpose of the Resource Management Act to do so to develop Codes of Practice for specific air discharges.
3. Utilise resource consent, monitoring and enforcement provisions of legislation.
4. To recommend the best practicable option for discharges to air where it is impracticable to determine environmental effects and there are no relevant standards or guidelines.
5. Investigate, develop, actively publicise and promote methods for improving air quality.
6. Consider air quality issues in all land transport planning matters.
7. Carry out an inventory of air emissions in the region and update every five years.
8. Carry out monitoring of the air environment.
9. To use buffer zones to mitigate adverse effects from air pollutants with a potential to cause nuisance.

4.1.4 Reasons

The existing high air quality of the region must at least be maintained at a quality which protects human health, fauna, flora and aesthetic values. Where there is existing contamination causing deterioration of any of these values measures need to be taken to address this. (Objective)

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New discharges must be controlled so that these values are protected. (Policy 1-)

The use of technological solutions to air emission problems is supported. (Policy 2)

In some instances certain practices may give rise to air contamination which is difficult to clearly identify and adverse effects difficult if not impossible to prove. (Method 4)

Efforts must be made to identify better options which result in lower levels of contamination and actively promote these. Even where levels of contaminants are below any national guidelines levels if practicable options are available which result in improved air quality these should be pursued. (Policy 3)

Some nuisance problems can only be practically dealt with by separating the source from the more sensitive environment. This is particularly the case with odour. In these cases buffer zones can be used as a planning tool to prevent adverse effects.

Pesticide spraying may also fit into this category in relation to compatibility with biogro/organic farming activities, although improved practices need to be promoted as well. (Policy 4)

There is a need for action at all levels to address the global issues of greenhouse gas emissions and ozone depleting substances. The Gisborne region should play its part by encouraging a correct balance

of greenhouse gas production and uptake as well as correctly dealing with ozone depleting substances. (Policies 5 & 6-7)

Before burning of vegetation or rubbish can be approved, this method of removal or disposal must be seen as being the best practicable option. If so it must be carried on in a nuisance free manner which causes no adverse effects. Burning of some materials can release toxic fumes and result in more concentrated contaminants in the ash residue. Policy 10)

The methods are chosen to implement the policies.

There is very little information on air quality in regions such as Gisborne. Base-line information will therefore be gathered so that informed decisions can be made on consent applications, planning rules and to address problems.(Method 8)

Alternatives

1. Do nothing

All industrial or trade premises would require a resource consent if discharging any contaminants to air, however minor. This would create costs and delays to the community and Council without the corresponding benefits of a more targeted approach.

2. Allow all discharges to occur without consent.

This could cause adverse effects and would be contrary to the Resource Management Act.

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4.1.5 Integrated Management

This issue relates to other issues discussed in Part 2 of this Regional Policy Statement in particular Chapter 8, Waste Management and Hazardous Substances.

4.1.6 Environmental Results Anticipated

1. No adverse effects on human health, fauna, flora or aesthetic values.
2. The understanding and knowledge of air quality in the region is increased.
3. Management of the regions air resource takes into account the values of the tangata whenua.
4. No new nuisance effects from new discharges to air and a reduction in current nuisance causing discharges.
5. A reduction in net emissions of greenhouse gases and CFC's.

4.1.7 Monitoring

1. Trends in air quality.
2. Air pollutant levels.
3. Effects of specific emissions.
4. Compliance.