

Environmental Policy on Dioxins

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Outline

- What the law says
- Managing risks from dioxins in soil
- Managing risks from dioxins in air
- Responding to public concern
- The Stockholm Convention



What the law says

- The Resource Management Act 1991
- Primary NZ environmental legislation
- Local government controls discharges and land use
- Central government makes regulations and guidelines
- Dioxins not specifically identified – but dioxins are a “contaminant”



Managing risks from dioxins in soil

- Timber Treatment Guidelines (MfE/MoH 1997)
- Dioxin present as a contaminant in pentachlorophenol (PCP) wood preservative
- Site-specific soil acceptance criteria developed based on Waipa Mill study



TTG Soil Acceptance Criteria

Land use	SAC ($\mu\text{g/kg}$ I-TEQ)
Agricultural	0.01
Residential	1.5
Unpaved industrial	18
Paved industrial	90 to unlimited
Maintenance	21



Managing risks from dioxins in soil

- SAC are (mostly) based on
 - ADI of 10 pg/kg bw/day
 - residential produce consumption
- Understanding of assumptions behind SAC is critical to their application



Managing risks from dioxins in soil

- Investigation of SAC based on revised WHO tolerable daily intake
- Potential review of SAC in the future following the development of National Environmental Standards for contaminated land
- Monitoring Australian initiatives e.g. National Dioxins Programme



Managing risks from dioxins in air

- National Environmental Standards under the RMA
- Bans on:
 - Landfill fires, burning tyres, bitumen, coated wire, oil in the open
 - New hazardous waste incinerators
 - Unconsented school/health care incinerators



Managing risks from dioxins in air

- Majority of standards came into force in October 2004
- Ban on unconsented school and healthcare incinerators October 2006
- Local government implements standards through resource consents
- Local controls can be more strict
- Existing activities are not affected



Responding to public concern

- Public are concerned about risks from:
 - Historic contamination of soil with timber treatment chemicals and waste, pesticides (e.g. 2,4,5-T)
 - Industrial discharges of dioxin (e.g. chlorine pulp bleaching, metallurgical processes)
 - Waste incineration



Responding to public concern

- Ministry for the Environment actions:
 - Nationwide agrichemical collections
 - Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund
 - Whole of Government approach to organochlorines
 - Ratification of the Stockholm Convention



The Stockholm Convention

- International agreement to protect human health and environment from the most toxic chemicals incl. dioxin
- NZ ratified in September 2004, entered into force 23 December 2004
- MfE is preparing a National Implementation Plan by December 2006



The Stockholm Convention

- Draft NIP includes measures to further reduce and eliminate dioxin releases
- NZ is already well-placed to meet its obligations under Stockholm
- Providing leadership and support to developing Pacific Island Nations
 - Waste management planning
 - BAT/BEP



Questions?

Further information and reports can be found on our website:

www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/hazardous/contaminated/dioxins.html



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