

DISTRICT-WIDE MATTERS

# HS – Hazardous Substances

## Issues

GEN-14

## Objectives

Refer also: GEN-01 and GEN-02

<p><b>HS-01</b></p>	<p>To minimise the risk to people and the <i>environment</i> from the use, transport and storage of hazardous substances and from contaminated <i>sites</i>.</p>
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## Policies

<p><b>HS-P1</b></p>	<p>To ensure that hazardous substance use, transport and storage is sufficiently isolated from incompatible uses such as residential areas, hospitals or <i>natural areas</i>.</p>
<p><b>HS-P2</b></p>	<p>To ensure appropriate separation between hazardous installations and property boundaries.</p>
<p><b>HS-P3</b></p>	<p>To ensure that appropriate safety features are built into the design of installations which use or store hazardous substances.</p>
<p><b>HS-P4</b></p>	<p>To assist in ensuring that hazardous waste is properly disposed of.</p>
<p><b>HS-P5</b></p>	<p>To help improve the state of knowledge about contaminated <i>sites</i> in the District, and to notify the <i>Regional Council</i> and other responsible agencies.</p>
<p><b>HS-P6</b></p>	<p>To limit future land uses in or around contaminated <i>sites</i>, if necessary to protect human health.</p>
<p><b>HS-P7</b></p>	<p>To reduce the risk of <i>sites</i> being contaminated in the future.</p>

# Explanation

District and *Regional Councils* are responsible under *the Act* for preventing or mitigating “any adverse *effects* of the storage, use, disposal or transportation of hazardous substances” (s30 and s31 RMA). Hazardous substances include those which are explosive, flammable, oxidising, toxic, carcinogenic, radioactive, corrosive or environmentally persistent. There are also “harmless” materials which can sometimes be dangerous (e.g. dust explosions from sawdust or flour).

The Regional Policy Statement spells out the respective roles of District and *Regional Councils* for hazardous substances. The *Regional Council* is responsible for controlling the use of land to prevent or mitigate any adverse *effects* of the disposal of hazardous substances. It is also responsible for preventing or mitigating the *effects* of the discharge of such substances to the *environment*.

District Councils have the task of controlling the use of land to prevent or mitigate any adverse *effects* of the use, storage and transport of hazardous substances. The main ways of doing this are firstly to ensure adequate buffer distances between the facility and “sensitive” neighbours. These include housing areas, places where people are less mobile, and areas where the environmental consequences of an accident would be especially high, e.g. estuaries and streams. Secondly the facility itself can be made more accident-proof or be designed to reduce the consequences if an accident does occur. *Council* may put conditions like this on land use consents for hazardous facilities. This is one means of ensuring that new contaminated *sites* do not develop.

As operator of a refuse disposal *site*, *Council* has some control over which waste is permitted to be dumped there and whether hazardous waste is sent to more suitable disposal facilities. The Feilding *site* does not have resource consent at present for hazardous material disposal.

An initial overview indicates that a number of *sites* in the District might be seriously contaminated with various chemicals. The *Regional Council* has accepted responsibility for investigating specific *sites*, for assessing the likely *effects* of contamination and for seeking remediation of those *effects*.

*Council* has a particular role in passing on information about contaminated *sites* to prospective property purchasers and to the public generally, through the LIM process. In a few cases the contamination may be bad enough to warrant Plan controls which prevent land uses such as housing or schools being built on or next to the polluted *site*. The need for such controls in the future will be assessed on the merits of the particular case.

# Methods

## District Plan Methods

- District Rules and land use consent conditions in the following chapters: General Residential Zone, Settlement Zone, General Rural Zone, Commercial Zone, Open Space Zone, Natural Hazards, Manfeild Park Zone, Special Development Zone.

## Other Methods

- Land Information Memoranda for contaminated *sites*.
- Refuse Disposal Site policies.
- Emergency response role.
- Assisting *Regional Council* and landowners where appropriate.
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.