

Breathe Easy...

Rural living – Change is in the air



The review of Southland's air quality plan is underway. If you live or work in rural Southland, any changes will almost certainly affect you. This is because smoke from both indoor and outdoor fires, spray drift and fertiliser use are important focuses of the review.

Please read on to find out more about the issues that face us and the opportunities you will have to contribute to any decisions.

Why make changes?

We all have the right to breathe clean air. That is the motivation behind the Government's National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES). The NES aims to provide a guaranteed level of protection for the health of all New Zealanders.

Environment Southland is legally obliged to make sure that air quality in Southland meets the NES. To do this Environment Southland needs to update the Air Plan in consultation with the community so that it reflects new legislation and community health values.

What are the issues and options?

There are specific activities that affect rural air quality. Some of the issues and options currently being grappled with in Southland's air plan review include:

- **The burning of agricultural plastics**

Now that there are recycling options such as the Agrecovery Programme for containers, and Plasback for baleage wrap, other plastics and containers – should the burning of these plastics be prohibited?

Burning baleage wrap, used agrichemical containers and other agricultural plastics produces hazardous air pollutants. Recycling these products gets them off the farm, allows the materials to be re-used and prevents air pollution.

- **Outdoor burning**

Outdoor burning is a significant source of dioxins and other contaminants – should the range of materials that can be burnt outdoors be reduced?

Being able to burn hedge trimmings, stubble, carcasses and offal on-farm is an important farming activity. Reducing the allowable range to specific materials such as these, would mean fewer air quality problems.

Your one-stop-shop for
information about air quality
in Southland



environment
SOUTHLAND

Te Taiao Tonga

• Home fires

Any new wood burner being installed on a property under two hectares has to meet national emissions standards – should anyone with any type of home fire be required to take responsibility for ensuring it burns as cleanly as possible?

Smoke from open fires, wood, coal and multi-fuel burners in our homes is the biggest source of air pollution in Southland. While it is a particular problem in the built up areas of Gore and Invercargill, it affects householders and neighbours everywhere.

• Agrichemical and fertiliser use

Agrichemical and fertiliser drift beyond target areas can cause problems and is not good practice – should users be required to prevent drift from affecting neighbouring properties, public places and other sensitive areas? And, in high risk situations, should it be compulsory to comply with New Zealand Standards and hold certification from an organisation such as GROWSAFE®?

Next steps in the air plan review

Southland's air plan review is currently considering domestic heating, urban and rural outdoor burning, agrichemical use and fertiliser use.

Once all the options have been formulated on the issues mentioned above, they will go out for public consultation, which could be as early as this year. At that time people will have an opportunity to tell us what they think and to contribute to the final decisions.

We know that making changes to help improve air quality won't be easy. So, we're working with the Government and other Southland councils and agencies to look for ways to offer useful information and practical help to those who need it.

For more information
on good management
practices

Recycling Agrichemical Containers

Phone: 0800 247 326
Website: www.agrecovery.co.nz

Recycling Baleage Wrap

Phone: 0508 338 240
Website: www.plasback.co.nz



Get a copy of *Warm Up Wisely*
– *Getting the best out of your wood burner.* Phone 0800 76 88 45 or download it from www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz



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Private Bag 90116, Invercargill
Phone: 03 211 6115
Toll free: 0800 76 88 45
Fax: 03 211 5252
Email: service@es.govt.nz
Website: www.es.govt.nz