

## **18. Air Quality**

### **18.1 Introduction**

18.1.1 Under the Resource Management Act 1991 the primary responsibility for air quality rests with the Regional Council. Section 30(1)(f) of the Resource Management Act sets out the following as one of the functions of regional councils:

*"The control of discharges or contaminants into or onto land, air or water and discharges of water into water."*

18.1.2 However the Act also sets out the following responsibilities for district councils in Section 31:

*"... to achieve integrated management of the effects of the use, development or protection of land and associated resources."*

*"... to control ... any actual or potential effects of the use, development or protection of land."*

18.1.3 Therefore air quality is a district council issue to the extent that the use of land may lead to emissions into the air that could affect others. This responsibility needs to be integrated with the direct responsibilities of the regional council which deals with resource consents for discharges to the air. The Regional Council have recognised this in the Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Air Quality module which contains expectations that territorial authorities will recognise and provide for their responsibilities with regard to the integrated management of air discharges

18.1.4 The Regional Council is intending to monitor air quality at Te Kuiti to assess the extent of pollution from wood-burning fires which has been identified as an issue by that Council. The District Council is not able to take any action on that issue until fuller information is available.

There is also some concern about increased public use of significant cave systems leading to changes in air quality and effects on the cave ecosystems. Changes to air flows in caves are one of the matters that would be considered for karst related resource consents required by Section 11 of this Plan.

18.1.5 The Proposed Regional Plan contains rules controlling air discharges. In order to avoid duplication and inappropriate overlap of functions the District Plan does not contain specific rules relating to air discharges. However to fulfil the District Council's obligations in relation to the effects of land use on air quality this District Plan includes controls on the location of various activities, including the implementation of zones and a policy area and the inclusion of separation distances in the Rural zone. The objectives and policies in this section of the Plan are intended to provide guidance to the consent authority when it is considering an application for a discharge permit, a land use consent or a subdivision consent, that has potential effects on air quality. The District Council may impose conditions on any such consent it has jurisdiction over, to ensure the objectives and policies of this section of the Plan are achieved.

The Ministry for the Environment has prepared "Air Quality Guidelines" which can be used as the basis for assessing the suitability of activities in relation to air quality. Similarly they can be used to set standards for air quality relating to various activities.

### **18.2 Issues**

The following air quality issues, objectives and policy are limited to those that are consistent with District Council responsibilities as discussed in 18.1.5 above, or by specific transfer of powers to the District Council from the Regional Council.

18.2.1 The loss of air quality as a result of emissions of dust, odour and other contaminants into the air.

18.2.2 The potential for air emissions to adversely affect the health and well-being of people.

18.2.3 The detraction to amenities as a result of emission of odour and other contaminants to the air.

### **18.3 Objectives**

18.3.1 To maintain and enhance air quality. *Issue 18.2.1*

18.3.2 To avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of emissions to the air. *Issues 18.2.2, 18.2.3*

- 18.3.3 Air quality within the Waitomo District is to be: *Issues*  
18.2.1, 18.2.2, 18.2.3
- ♦ Protected where it is high.
  - ♦ Enhanced where it is degraded.
  - ♦ Otherwise maintained.
- 18.3.4 To ensure that there are no significant adverse effects from individual site sources on air quality beyond the property boundary. *Issues*  
18.2.1, 18.2.2, 18.2.3
- 18.3.5 To ensure that cumulative adverse effects of discharges on ambient air quality are reduced so that there is: *Issues*  
18.2.1, 18.2.2, 18.2.3
- ♦ No or low threat to the health of humans, flora and fauna;
  - ♦ No objectionable effects from odour;
  - ♦ No objectionable effects from suspended or deposited particulate matter;
  - ♦ No significant adverse effects to visibility;
  - ♦ No accelerated corrosion of structures;
  - ♦ No significant adverse effects on the relationship tangata whenua as Kaitiaki have with their identified taonga such as air, ancestral lands, water and waahi tapu.

#### **18.4 Policies**

- 18.4.1 To ensure that minimum standards of emissions to the air are achieved by all activities. *Objectives 18.3.1, 18.3.2*
- 18.4.2 To locate activities that have potential adverse effects from air emissions so as to minimise their effects on sensitive land uses, particularly residential areas. *Objective 18.3.2*
- 18.4.3 To take into account the potential for adverse effects from air emissions when considering resource consents. *Objectives 18.3.2, 18.3.3, 18.3.4*

#### **18.5 Methods**

Where an application for land use consent or subdivision consent is received by the Council and it is considered to have implications for air quality it will be referred to the Regional Council for comment on air quality issues and to establish the degree of liaison between the Councils that is needed to process it.

#### **18.6 Anticipated Environmental Outcomes**

An environment where:

- (a) Air emissions do not adversely affect neighbouring properties or activities
- (b) Air quality is maintained or enhanced.