

Fresh Air

The Newsletter of Air Resource Management Ltd

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IANZ Accreditation

We have extended our list of accredited tests to include testing for heavy metals.

Andrew Parkin completed his internal audit during January.

Our full reassessment by IANZ staff and technical assessor will now be in June; we are hoping to have our list of accredited methods extended to include halogens and hydrogen halides during this visit.

Teams (From Woe To Go)

We have engaged a workplace specialist who is running five monthly classes which are intended to raise the efficiency of ARM. Management responsibilities are being delegated and job descriptions revised.

Dust And Fume Control Technologies

Peter attended the course in Wellington sponsored by the Air Pollution Control Equipment Manufacturers' Association of Australia (APCEMA). He found it invaluable in explaining the details of the many different variations on basic themes of air pollution control. We recommend attendance at this course to our clients. It will be run again in 2006.

Ambient Air Quality National Standards—Renewal Of Air Discharge Permits

Our clients are warned of an impediment in the renewal of their air discharge permits when these expire.

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has recently published National Standards.

Amongst the provisions in the document is the proclamation of Local Air Manage-

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ment Areas (LAMAs). The boundaries for these have not yet been set. We suggest that our clients contact their Regional Council for



input on the exact location of the boundaries.

These areas are spotted through each Regional Council area in places of high air pollution. Councils are required to conduct ambient air monitoring and where the results indicate exceedances of the guidelines Councils are required to take steps to reduce the levels of air pollution.

One of the methods of reducing the levels of e.g. particulate is to not renew a Resource Consent air discharge permit where the Consent holder emits particulate. It does not matter if the cause of high levels of particulate is high emissions from motor vehicles rather than the industry which holds an air discharge permit. The rules as presently written simply state that air discharge permits cannot be renewed.

For further information please refer to a guest editorial published in the magazine "Clean Air" by the Clean Air Society of Australia & NZ, February 2005. The author is Louise Wickham who is the Senior Advisor—Air Quality from the Ministry for the Environment, Wellington.

Wood-waste Burning

A good number of our clients use wood waste to generate steam either directly in a boiler, or indirectly by heat exchange, eg hot oil. Potential difficulties arising from the process are:

- non-uniform supply with consequent combustion problems
- widely variable moisture content with consequent combustion problems
- generation of blue haze caused by pinenes in the wood
- high particulate emissions caused by any of the above
- clogging of boiler grates
- aldehyde emissions.

It is our standard practice now to conduct both particulate and aldehyde



Volatile organic monitoring from contaminated soil

emission tests when visiting these sites. Air Resource Management is IANZ-accredited for both these tests.

Clean Air Act (1972)

When the Resource Management Act became law in 1991 the Clean Air Act was rescinded. Fortunately it has refused to die. Transitional provisions whereby CAA licences became RMA Resource Consent air discharge permits are still in force in at least one instance.

Baghouses And Standard Limits

Installation of new baghouses proceeds apace. Many of these (eg at asphalt plants) replace scrubbers.

Some clients experience a disconcerting consequential tightening of limits when the new installation is commissioned; e.g. an asphalt plant limit may be reduced from 150 or 100

mg.m⁻³ to 50 or 30 mg.m⁻³. It seems a peculiar way of rewarding a responsible works for the increase (at significant cost) in environmental standard. Occasionally several asphalt plants are located in the same area. The differing standard is then even harder to swallow when, for example, a neighbouring competitor has a less stringent standard. In a particular case of such a limit being set for one of our clients the original less stringent limit was reinstated after a challenge to the Consent authority.

Another example of an anomalous standard is at the application stage when a decision has yet to be made of the choice of air pollution control device. One of our clients was choosing either a baghouse or an electrostatic precipitator. The Consent authority specified two different limits: 50 mg.m⁻³ for the precipitator and 30 mg.m⁻³ for the baghouse. Since the RMA philosophy is effects-based this does not make sense.