

Compliance Snapshot report

Dairy effluent

2023/2024 monitoring season



Bay of Plenty Regional Council checked compliance against 217 dairy discharge consents during the reporting period 1 Oct 2023 – 5 December 2023.

Results reported in this snapshot relate to compliance at the first visit. Subsequent visits for sites rated moderate or significant non-compliance are carried out until full compliance is achieved.

What was checked?

Staff inspected all aspects of the effluent treatment and/or disposal systems against the specific consent requirements during their visits. This included inspecting effluent sumps, pipework and ponds/tanks/bladders; inspecting the location of stormwater diversions and, where possible, viewing the irrigation system and location of irrigators to waterways.

What was found during the inspections?

Only 50% of farms were rated as compliant on the first visit. This compares to 61% last year. Further, 28% of farms were rated with low risk non-compliances (22% previous season). These non-compliance were mostly made up of poor general maintenance (ponds, sand traps and irrigators) or not supplying required records. There seems to be a growing number of farmers who do not know about, or check, consent requirements around providing effluent upgrade information and annual irrigator calibration results (if required by their resource consent).

Moderate and significant risk non-compliances made up for 20% of visits (15% moderate, 5% significant). This was an increase on the previous year where 17% were rated moderate or significant. Feed pads and stockholding areas that don't meet National Environmental Standards for Freshwater 2020 requirements default to a moderate risk non-compliance. These will continue to be dealt with as we conduct our inspections. The remaining moderate and significant risk non-compliance were either deliberate or due to accidental discharge of effluent to land where it may enter water.

Enforcement undertaken

In total, 11 infringement notices and 14 abatement notices were issued to the 12 farms that were rated with significant non-compliances. One farm is under active prosecution and two investigations are still in progress. One prosecution from the previous season resulted in a fine of \$40,000 with another farm convicted and awaiting the judges sentencing decision.

N-CAP reporting

This monitoring period marks the second year under the NES-F 2020 legislation that farmers are required to report synthetic nitrogen usage into the national portal. Second year figures have the Bay of Plenty as approx. 80% successfully completed. Going forward, compliance will now be conducted with penalty fees issued to farms that have not met their requirement to report their data to Regional Council via Te Uru Kahika, Ballance or Ravensdown. It was encouraging that of those who did successfully report these figures they didn't exceed the 190kg per hectare per year limit.

The portal is now open for farmers who are not fertilising again this season to enter data for the 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 period. All dairy farms are required to have this information reported by 31 July 2024.



Compliance levels at first visit

