

Bay of Plenty District Health Board is committed to improving and protecting the health of the communities in the Bay of Plenty district.

Position Statement – Waste Management and Minimisation

Waste disposal and waste minimisation practices have a significant effect on the health of communities.

Bay of Plenty District Health Board supports and advocates for waste management practices which are protective of health and for waste minimisation practices which do not increase the risk to health.

Waste management includes waste minimisation, treatment and disposal. Waste minimisation is the reduction of waste and the reuse, recycling, and recovery of waste and any material diverted from landfill sites.

Waste is anything disposed of or discarded. This includes a type of waste that is defined by its composition or source (for example, organic, electronic, construction or demolition waste) and includes any material or component.

Waste that is not properly disposed of can contaminate land, water and air. This can then be a health hazard for communicable disease, chemical poisoning and physical injury. Improperly disposed of waste may cause blockages in stormwater management systems, create odour and visual pollution, encourage vermin and may create fly and mosquito breeding habitats. It is therefore very important that waste is disposed of properly to reduce the risk of disease and to minimise aesthetic and environmental impacts of waste.

Waste minimisation practices promote the effective and efficient use of resources by reducing, reusing, recycling, recovering waste and diverting material. Waste minimisation practices can reduce the health hazards of waste by reducing the amount of waste generated and therefore disposed, and by encouraging resource sustainability practices.

Waste minimisation practices such as reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery, treatment, and disposal practices must be carried out in a manner which do not increase the health risk or pose a nuisance¹ to the public. For example, composting that involves human or animal excreta and grey water reuse practices need to be managed to reduce the risk of disease and nuisance.

Good waste management and minimisation practices reduce the occurrence of environmental contamination and the need for remediation, and safeguard the health of existing and future populations. Contaminated sites are a legacy of past waste management practices which have resulted in the contamination of land with substances which are potentially hazardous to human health. Human exposure may occur through contact with contaminated soil, dust, food and water.

¹ Nuisance is defined in [Section 29 of the New Zealand Health Act 1956](#)



Bay of Plenty District Health Board advocates and supports the following:

- Waste disposal practices which minimise the risks to health
- The provision of accessible and affordable waste disposal including the safe transport of such waste
- Waste minimisation practices which do not increase the health risk or pose a nuisance to the health of the public
- The *New Zealand Waste Strategy (2010)* which aims to reduce the harmful effects of waste and to improve the efficiency of resource use
- Initiatives which support the implementation of the Waste Minimisation and Health Acts
- Identification and implementation of waste management and minimisation practices at all levels of Council planning
- Active administration of relevant legislation, policies and bylaws by local government in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts
- Initiatives by businesses and industries to minimise the creation of waste at source
- Implementation of waste management and minimisation initiatives by resource users.

References and Further Information

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Ministry for the Environment (2010). *New Zealand Waste Strategy*. [The New Zealand Waste Strategy: Ministry for the Environment - Manatu Mo Te Taiao](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/our-work/environmental-health/waste/)

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New Zealand Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

World Health Organisation. *Fact Sheets on Sanitation*

http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/envsanfactsheets/en/index2.html

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| Adopted by: the Bay of Plenty District Health Board at its 17 October 2018 meeting. |
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