

OUR CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We have an obligation to act sustainably, both as an organisation and in our role of providing services to the community.

We want to be a leader in both regards and to make Wellington one of the most sustainable cities in the world.

This section focuses on our corporate “environmental footprint” and gives an assessment of our performance in trying to reduce it.

The key corporate sustainability indicators we have used to measure performance follow Global Reporting Initiative Sustainability Reporting Guidelines¹.

The indicators are:

- greenhouse gas emissions
- energy use
- water use
- paper use
- waste produced and recycled.

We have improved the way we report on sustainability.

For the first time we are reporting the full results of the Council's corporate greenhouse gas inventory for emissions and energy use. This inventory covers all of the activities of the Council and its Council Controlled Organisations².

It includes emissions arising from electricity used by the pumps and treatment works that form an integral part of the Council's water supply, storm water and waste water/sewage reticulation networks. It also includes methane emissions generated by the community's waste collected and disposed of in the landfills used by the Council. Neither of these sources were captured and reported previously³.

Our target is to stabilise our corporate emissions in the coming year and reduce them by 40 percent by 2020.

The emission reduction targets adopted by the Council relate to reductions in *all* corporate emissions, not just those arising from energy use. They are:

CORPORATE EMISSION REDUCTION TARGETS	BASE YEAR	2010	2020	2050
Against base year	2003	Stabilise	-40%	-80%

This year we strengthened our stance regarding adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon neutrality remains an aspirational goal, but achieving this by 2012 is no longer our target. This change is in response to the uncertainty and concern that prevails internationally around what and how carbon neutrality is defined and managed. Our focus will be on emissions, as we think this is where real value can be added in Wellington⁴.

We also aim to achieve a year on year reduction in the amount of energy, water and paper that we use and the amount of corporate waste that we produce. An additional aim is to achieve a year on year increase in the amount of corporate waste that we recycle.

We're on target.

Our 2008 inventory is more comprehensive than that we undertook in our base measurement year, 2003, making a direct comparison of emissions levels difficult. However, matching the sources that are common to both years shows that our corporate emissions have fallen by 25% between 2003 (22,959 tonnes) and 2008 (17,246 tonnes). On this basis, our target to stabilise emissions at their 2003 level by 2010 has already been achieved and it appears to be well on the way towards meeting its 2020 40% reduction target.

We reduced the organisation's carbon emissions by 2.5 percent this year.

Our total corporate emissions have fallen by approximately 1,000 tonnes (2.5%) compared to the same period last year. The major reduction (approx. 2,000 tonnes) has occurred in our waste operations where, despite an increase in the volume of community waste sent to landfill, the amount of methane being released into the atmosphere has fallen. This is due to the combination of a decision to landfill sewage sludge rather than compost it and more efficient gas extraction for electricity generation.

This reduction was offset by an increase in emissions arising from our energy use (approx. 1,000 tonnes), due to an increase in the scale of our operations and to the impact of additional service provision.

We have undertaken a range of projects aimed at improving the energy efficiency of our operations. However, despite our efforts – our use of electricity and gas has increased.

Weather is a key variable in our electricity and gas usage and is believed to have been a factor behind these increases over the past year. For example, above average rainfall or more episodes of intense rainfall can mean storm water pumps having to operate for longer than is typical.

¹ See www.globalreporting.org.

² In line with the reporting requirements of ICLEI's International Local Government Emissions Analysis Protocol.

³ Past years are restated here.

⁴ As part of the Emissions Trading Scheme, the Council received carbon credits from the Central Government for the first time this year in recognition of the carbon absorbed by a portion of our green belt. The Council received 784 credits for the 2008 calendar year.

Conversely drier weather in summer can mean having to pump more fresh water to our reservoirs to compensate for increased use (e.g. for watering gardens). Unseasonably cold weather can result in more gas being used to heat swimming pools to an acceptable temperature.

We have also greatly expanded the range of facilities that we operate at the Regional Aquatic Centre, which is a major energy user. This has increased both electricity and gas usage at this location.

There is no clear explanation for the increase in vehicle use that has resulted in the increase in petrol usage. The position will be monitored next year, particularly in light of proposed changes to the size and configuration of the Council's vehicle fleet.

Diesel use continues to decline. This has been helped this year by the introduction of alternative fleet management arrangements, which mean that Council trucks are no longer used for employee home to work travel.

We have made changes to the way we measure data for total waste generated by the organisation. For 2008/09 the organisation produced 263.91 tonnes of waste of which 140.62 tonnes was recycled (53.3%).

NEW CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

We have a range of projects in progress that will help us achieve our targets.

It is almost two years since the Council adopted its first climate change action plan and the majority of the actions it contained have been implemented. We are in the process of drafting a new plan that will reflect the next steps in our strategy to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. A new set of actions will be determined for adoption by the Council later this year to enable us to continue our drive towards achieving our 2020 target of having reduced all corporate emissions by 40%.

To date we have:

- introduced automated lighting systems for office and stairwells in the Civic Building
- created a database to provide real-time record of the Council's energy use to help us isolate problem areas
- upgraded the Central Library boiler system to improve efficiency resulting in reduced gas consumption (15-20% per year)
- upgraded Wellington Town Hall non-event lighting resulting in reduced energy consumption (75,000kWh/year)
- introduced car pool initiative as well as a bicycle pool for staff; and we are looking at reconfiguring the Council's computer servers using newer, more energy efficient technology.



OUR INDICATORS

ENERGY USE AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENERGY USE	ACTUAL			PER STAFF MEMBER		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
Electricity (kWh)	n/a	58,992,730	61,522,335	n/a	37,864	39,564
Gas (kWh)	n/a	18,905,913	20,024,876	n/a	12,135	12,878
Petrol (litres)	n/a	226,903	299,713	n/a	146	193
Diesel (litres)	n/a	1,079,932	936,633	n/a	693	602

Source: WCC Climate Change Office

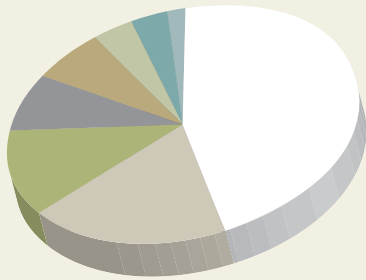
TOTAL CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS (TONNES OF CO2 EQUIVALENT)	ACTUAL			PER STAFF MEMBER		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
Electricity	n/a	10,812	11,288	n/a	6.9	7.3
Gas	n/a	4,207	4,455	n/a	2.7	2.9
Petrol	n/a	505	525	n/a	0.3	0.3
Diesel	n/a	2,268	2,088	n/a	1.5	1.3
ALL EMISSIONS	n/a	41,780	40,747	n/a	26.8	26.2

Source: WCC Climate Change Office

RESOURCE USE	ACTUAL			PER STAFF MEMBER		
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Water-use (m ³)	542,209	520,767	468,859	353.23	334.3	301.5
A4 paper (reams)	19,485	18,659	19,666	13.1	12.2	12.6

Source: Wellington City Council

2008 GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY



TONNES CO ₂ EQUIVALENT	
BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES	7,738
STREET LIGHTING AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS	1,412
WATER AND WASTE WATER PUMPING ETC	5,125
WASTE	18,762
COMPOST	3,032
VEHICLE FLEET	2,615
EMPLOYEE TRAVEL	596
OTHER	1,467
TOTAL EMISSIONS	40,747

Source: WCC Climate Change Office

