

Health, Safety and Environment Summary Report: Issues & Actions Arising

Note: When the Health, Safety and Environment Summary Report was received, two further reports were pending: a Landfill Gas Assessment Report, and a Contaminated Land and Landfill Gas Management Plan. They have since been provided and can be received from the school office. The summary actions below include a response to their recommendations.

Issue 1: Health and Safety Management at Western Springs College (WSC).

Problem: Policies and procedures require management, direction and implementation by WSC in order to foster a sound health and safety culture. Specialist advice is also necessary for specific risks such as hazardous materials (Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs)/polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)/landfill gas/contaminated land).

Action/resolution: A revised Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures have been prepared with staff and management. The policy has been reviewed and agreed by the Board and procedures are currently being executed. An external contractor agreement has been prepared for ratification by the Board. A hazardous materials survey (ACMs, PCBs and lead paint) and landfill gas survey have been undertaken. The landfill gas survey found general school users are not considered at risk. WSC is advised that undisturbed asbestos, in sound condition, in enclosed spaces, poses no risk to health. Specific management plans for dealing with risks are being put in place.

Issue 2: Ground settlement around WSC buildings and fields.

Problem: Differential ground settlement has caused ponding of water on fields and grounds around WSC and resulted in uneven surfaces on walkways and paved outdoor areas, which gives rise to potential trip/slip hazards.

Action/resolution: A site survey has been completed to identify trip/slip hazards. Slip/trip hazards at the site have been rectified and ponding of water on major pathways has been prevented. Ongoing site monitoring and maintenance is being undertaken. Staff responsibilities for monitoring and acting on hazard notifications have been clarified.

Issue 3: Landfill gas at WSC site.

Problem: Landfill underlying WSC continues to generate landfill gas. Exposure to landfill can be harmful to site users. No comprehensive landfill gas monitoring and survey had been undertaken previously to fully assess risk.

Action/resolution: Since the summary was produced, a Landfill Gas Assessment Report has been provided (in mid-December) which finds that general school users (students, staff and visitors undertaking routine activities) are not considered at risk from landfill gas.

A Contaminated Land and Landfill Gas Management Plan also provided then, outlines procedures for managing risks associated with maintenance (eg confined space entry, ground breaking and hot

works) at the site. A portable gas monitor has been purchased for use by trained staff. Two additional gas monitors are to be purchased for permanent use in the whare and on-site residence. A register of confined spaces is being developed. A contractors' agreement has been prepared for ratification by the Board and other procedures to meet the recommendations are in place or being effected.

Issue 4: Presence of asbestos containing materials (ACMs), lead paint and PCBs at WSC site.

Problem: Hazardous materials are present in the buildings at WSC (in construction materials, finishings and light fittings) and need to be managed to eliminate and minimise any associated risks.

Action/resolution: An asbestos register and management plan has been produced for WSC. A broken entry-screen and under-roof cladding have been removed from the changing rooms and the area re-opened for use after tests produced safe results. WSC is advised that if asbestos is left undisturbed and is in sound condition and not exposed, then it poses no risk to health. Remaining asbestos will be inspected regularly and the register updated. A programme of removal of PCBs (largely in old light fittings) is underway. The lead paint in the administration block is being removed in the term break and the area is being repainted. Review and removal of areas of lead paint will be part of regular maintenance.

Issue 5: Soil contamination at WSC

Problem: There is limited information available regarding the nature or depth of the capping layer overlying landfill material at the site. Landfill materials and groundwater leachate regime are not well understood.

Action/resolution: Since the report was written the Contaminated Land and Landfill Gas Assessment Report and Management Plan have been received (See Issue 3 above.) The report characterises the landfill materials and capping materials and finds that users of the fields are not considered at risk. The original Health, Safety and Environmental Summary Report recommended that footwear be required on the WSC fields and that additional health and safety precautions be adopted for any activities involving ecological restoration works on the Meola Creek banks.

Staff from the Sports and the Physical Education Departments report no known incidents of sharp objects surfacing on the fields, or infection attributable to leachate during the last decade. The fields are regularly inspected by staff and aerated by City Parks (works which would not be possible if the field contained sharp objects).

Issue 6: Weather-tightness of parts of three buildings at WSC (TAPAC, Library additions, Administration Block additions)

Problem: Weather-tightness and associated moisture in buildings giving rise to non-compliance with Building Code and the need to manage any potential health risks associated with moulds.

Action/resolution: Specialist cleaning has occurred and air quality testing has been undertaken to ensure buildings are safe for occupation. The Ministry has instigated an ongoing air quality monitoring regime.

Other Action Currently Being Undertaken

- Traffic management plan development – including work with an external consultancy
- Emergency fire and evacuation procedures – including external audit and training of wardens
- Revised visitor sign-in procedures
- First Aid Kits: Audit, Register, EOTC Provision, Replenishments, the Assignment of Staff Responsibilities, After-Hours Provision
- New Staff Health & Safety Induction Procedures
- New Contractor Induction Procedures and Contractor Register
- Staff Health & Safety Survey