

# Environment Southland



environment  
SOUTHLAND

*Te Taiao Tonga*

# Where are We Going with Water Quality?

One of the biggest challenges we face as a Council and as a region is to balance the need to maintain and improve water quality while recognizing the need for our economy to grow.

These two are equally important, and they're closely linked. We all rely on a strong economy for our jobs and standard of living, and we need clean water to support our economy and maintain our quality of life.

That's why a significant chunk of your rates is spent on projects that are designed to monitor and improve water quality across our region. They range from scientific monitoring and resource planning to on-farm advice, a thorough resource consenting process and our compliance team.

As a regional council, we are responsible for managing water quality and we know from our annual survey that nine out of every ten Southlanders think this is an important issue to them personally.

Water quality is still very good in many areas, but we can't ignore the impacts of increased nutrients, sediment and bacteria from farming, industry and human waste. The lower reaches of many rivers, some aquifers and most of our estuaries are showing the adverse effects of cumulative human activity. There is no quick fix for this,

and improvement will only be possible if we are prepared to change long-established ways of doing things. There will be a cost to this, just as there would be a cost if we did nothing – and that's not an option.

We've already been working with a steering group representing farmers, iwi, industry and the community, to look at the kinds of good management practices that will meet the challenge of improving water quality while at the same time enabling production to increase. Some changes can be made very easily and quickly.

We're also talking to the other councils in Southland about the quality of discharges from stormwater drains and sewerage plants. And we expect every industry to comply fully with the terms of its resource consents.

The Government has introduced a National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management that requires Councils to set objectives and establish catchment limits for nutrients. The Resource Management Act is also being amended to introduce a new option to share the decision-making on freshwater by involving the community



Rob Phillips, CEO, Environment Southland

at a much earlier stage. Our Councillors will be discussing whether to move to a fully collaborative way of planning for changes before we start setting catchment limits.

In the meantime, we've begun a new series of scientific programmes designed to inform the process of setting catchment limits. We're also looking at what we can learn from other regions which are further down the track of setting catchment limits than we are in Southland. We're very interested in the work that the Government has been doing to model what the economic impacts of different planning options would be. That will all have an influence on how we finally decide to do things to manage our water here in Southland.

It's an exciting and challenging time. The good news is that we have the chance to work together for the common goal of a prosperous economy supported by a healthy environment.

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Cover – Viv Shaw, winner of the Councillors' Special Award.

## Southland Environment and Conservation Awards

Southland's environmental champions were acknowledged at the 18th Southland Environment and Conservation Awards earlier this month. From school children to businesses, community groups to innovators, their efforts were celebrated at a special function in Invercargill.

Our front cover shows Viv Shaw, one of the winners at this year's awards, about to release a kiwi on Pomona Island in Lake Manapouri. Viv was one of ten winners, with another nine nominees highly commended for their efforts.

For the second year, Environment Southland partnered with the Department of Conservation, which presented its own Conservation Award.

You'll find the full list of winners plus photographs on pages 9-11.

# Businesses Doing Their Part for the Environment

Environment Southland is always looking for opportunities to help businesses become more environmentally friendly. Leonie Grace from Environment Southland's Pollution Prevention team has been visiting Firth Concrete to help the company manage the collection and disposal of concrete wastewater and sediment on its site.

"The main concern was cement waste and washwater reaching stormwater drains," Leonie says. Concrete wash water is very alkaline with a high pH of 12-13. This acts similar to an acid and will burn and kill fish if it gets into waterways.

Eighteen months ago, Firth Concrete replaced its old batching plant and added a wastewater recycling system with five storage ponds and catchment areas for washwater and sediments. The washwater filters through the series of ponds and is then reused in the cement making process.

Operations Manager Mark Dempsey explains that the pond system has created five opportunities to catch sediment before it gets into the water recycle system. "For us it means we can make more concrete with recycled water and produce less waste."

Firth's yards and trucks are washed down daily with fresh water which is collected in the catchment ponds for recycling.

Leonie has visited Firth Concrete several times to follow up on progress in the Pollution Prevention Programme, which is a free self-assessment tool Environment

Southland provides for businesses to help identify and manage pollution risks.

Mark says he's happy to work with Environment Southland because he sees both the environmental and financial benefits of managing waste streams. "If you identify areas where waste is being created you can change your processes or re-engineer your plant to manage that waste out of your business or reuse it."

Leonie would like to see more businesses join the programme. "At the moment, few business owners are aware that even small changes they can make to manage their yards will make huge improvements to the environment," she says.

Fact sheets with easy to implement solutions for managing hazardous substances and containing waste materials are available on the Environment Southland website [www.es.govt.nz](http://www.es.govt.nz).

***If you would like more information or to arrange a visit by one of our Pollution Prevention team, call 0800 76 88 45 or send an email to [service@es.govt.nz](mailto:service@es.govt.nz).***



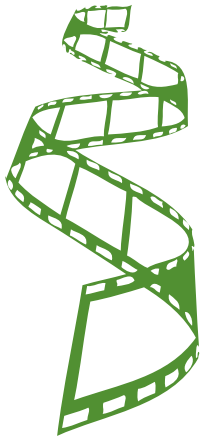
Environment Southland Pollution Prevention Officer, Leonie Grace with the Pollution Prevention Guide.

Below – Mark Dempsey from Firth Concrete is working with Environment Southland Pollution Prevention Officer Leonie Grace to prevent cement waste from reaching stormwater drains.



Look online for our brochures about best practice procedures for storing and disposing industry wastes including:

- Automotive Painting and Panelbeating
- Fuel and Oil
- Painting and Plastering
- Concrete Waste Water and Concrete Cutting
- Abrasive Blasting
- Vehicles and Equipment Washing
- Old Vehicles
- Directional Drilling



# THE GREEN SCREEN

## ENVIRONMENTAL SHORT FILM AWARDS

### Second time lucky for rural school

**S**econd place last year became first place this year for Lumsden Primary School, winners of the Green Screen Environmental Short Film awards in the Year 1-8 category.

This year, the students chose to tackle the topic of how to protect our waterways, taking a humorous look at the past, present and future states of their local river.

Winners of the Year 9-13 category were no strangers to success at these awards, taking out their category for the third year in a row. Jean-Martin Fabre and Liam van Eeden chose to focus their film on the plight of New Zealand's native sea lions in 'Nearly LOST'.

'Detritus', a film by Tapani Maka and Travis Oudhoff, was commended in the Year 9-13 category for its creative take on littering.

Otatara School was highly commended in the Year 1-8 category with 'What is Happening to our Estuary?'

In the Open category the judges commended 'Pest!' by the Rogers-Foran family.

It was the third year that the awards have been organised by Environment Southland and the winners received cash from a prize pool of \$3000.

Some of the films will be screened to a national audience on Cue TV, and were featured at the Southland Environment and Conservation Awards on 3 July. All films can be viewed via our website and youtube page.



Lumsden Primary School filmmakers accept their award for winning the Year 1-8 category from More FM's Gretchen and Andy.



*The Green Screen Environmental Short Film Awards are organised by Environment Southland with sponsorship and support from Cue TV and More FM.*

*You can view this and previous years' entries on Environment Southland's youtube page, [www.youtube.com/environmentsouthland](http://www.youtube.com/environmentsouthland).*

# Emergency Planning: Is Your Business Prepared?

**H**ow do you prepare your business for an unplanned emergency caused by a natural event? Emergency Management Advisor Craig Sinclair says there are two key parts to emergency planning that can help business owners survive financially.

"The Christchurch quakes highlighted the unpreparedness of businesses in a major emergency," Craig says. "Most business owners think about the effects on the buildings, but what often gets forgotten is records management and staff retention."

Relying on business records stored on hard drives alone is risky. Craig explains: "Due to safety concerns, Christchurch business owners in the red zone were completely shut out after the quakes. Even if the building was fine, they couldn't get into it to retrieve anything." He notes that businesses that had data stored in the cloud did significantly better than businesses that relied on data stored on external devices.

Inability to trade also meant many business owners were struggling to keep their business afloat while they rebuilt. "There need to be contingencies regarding wages and staffing levels in case staff cannot get to work", Craig says. The government provided some assistance, but business interruption insurance is essential, and can be a saviour for small businesses in particular.

Overall, Craig says that business resilience is a pretty straightforward matter: "It's about looking at what your business needs to run, and to minimise the impacts of an emergency in order to make your business as resilient as possible."

It pays to have a look at the bigger picture, too. "If your business is reliant on a supplier, you have to have contingencies in place to keep the business running in case that supplier is also affected."

Not every business is hit the same way by emergencies. Craig's tip is to "look at the hazards in your area based on the probability of them becoming a problem."



Environment Southland Emergency Management Advisor, Craig Sinclair.

*To find out about what risks your business could be facing, and to learn more about what you can do to protect your business, look on the Emergency Management Southland website – [www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz](http://www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz) and [www.resilientbusiness.co.nz](http://www.resilientbusiness.co.nz).*

## Fact or Fiction?

**W**e asked our scientists about some of the common misconceptions about Southland's environment.

**Myth:** All groundwater in Southland comes from Lake Wakatipu.

**Fact:** Groundwater consists of rain, snow and hail that falls on the ground and moves through the soil until it reaches a layer that is saturated. A large quantity of groundwater that is easily extractable is called an aquifer. Groundwater naturally discharges as springs and is accessed by wells to provide towns and farms with water.

**What if...?** If we had to rely on the water from Lake Wakatipu to cover our water needs, the levels in the lake would have been drastically reduced during the January drought.



# Soil and Groundwater Mapping a Game Changer

A lot of the work Environment Southland's groundwater scientists carry out involves measuring things at a microscopic level. To the naked eye, many pollution problems remain elusive, and until recently, sampling methods sometimes provided them with only a glimpse of the big picture.

Dr Clint Rissmann and his team have a new piece of technology to help them visualise substances in soil and aquifers without disturbing the earth above.

The new terrain conductivity meter uses electromagnetic induction (EMI) to map areas of high and low conductivity in the soil and groundwater, and the recorded data can be used to establish an image of the subsurface. "It's kind of like ground penetrating radar," Dr Rissmann says. The conductivity meter allows scientists to detect items such as buried drums and wastes as well as non-metals like effluent, offal holes and contaminated substances to a depth of six metres.

It will help scientists answer key questions about how contaminants move through soils and enter Southland's groundwater systems. "The technology is already in use around the world, and is regarded as a cost-effective solution for assessing contaminant losses to groundwater,



The new conductivity meter enables scientists to take a look beneath the surface.

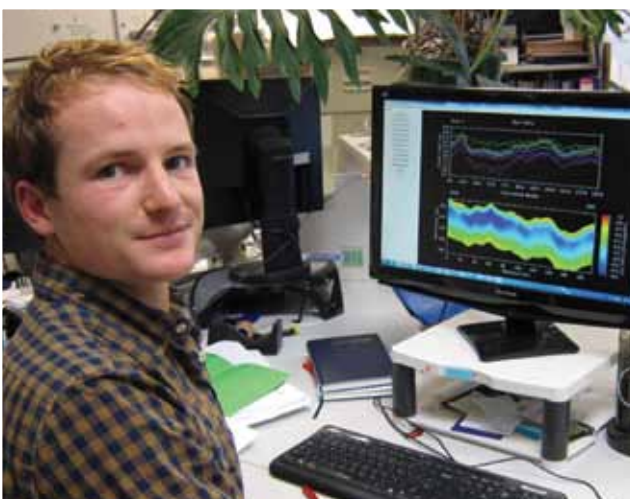
detecting leaking effluent ponds or septic tanks, finding buried waste and even mapping soils," Dr Rissmann says. Having cost about \$70,000, the conductivity meter is expected to make good on its investment after only three to seven uses.

Groundwater scientist Pierre Chanut is working on three pilot studies; one about leaking ponds containing human sewage or farm dairy effluent, another on septic tanks, buried offal and tile farm rubbish pits and a third one on hidden tile drains. The data he gets from the conductivity meter shows how contaminants are moving through the soil to groundwater. Pierre explains it this way: "We can produce a three-dimensional picture of a contamination plume and overlay it on a map to see what exactly is happening without having to dig

expensive holes or put down monitoring bores."

Although the conductivity meter is being used for research, rural householders who suspect they have problems with leaking septic tanks may also be able to get a helping hand from the groundwater research team. "At the moment we are researching the various uses of the device in regards to leaching of contaminants into groundwater," Dr Rissmann says. "If it fits with our research aims, we may be able to help out in certain cases." So far, there's no room in the programme for the equipment to be hired out for private use, although that's not being ruled out for the future.

The conductivity meter will not be used for compliance monitoring. "It is a scientific assessment tool that allows us to help people in the community," Dr Rissmann says. Future uses could include soil analysis on large farms, in order to improve efficiency of farm dairy effluent and water irrigation systems.



A three-dimensional image enables groundwater scientist Pierre Chanut to analyse underground nutrient flows.

# Innovation in the Field

**I**nnovation is all part of the job for Environment Southland's technical field staff whose 'Bob' bottle invention attracted admiration at a recent industry conference.

"This is just one of our many innovations," says Principal Technical Officer Karl Erikson. "We are always looking for anything that can help make our work easier and more effective."

Technical staff spend a large percentage of their time out in the field monitoring river conditions and water quality throughout the region. The 'Bob' bottle – so named because of the way it bobs about in water – was an answer to both a technical and a safety issue for staff trying to capture water samples from the unstable banks of Waituna Lagoon.

An intense monitoring programme has been underway in and around Waituna Lagoon for the past 18 months to help scientists make informed recommendations to restore its health and resiliency. Monitoring equipment is set up at various shore-side locations and on the monitoring platform in the lagoon. However, securing a sample from well out in the lagoon without any contamination by sediment present on the lagoon floor and its shores, was difficult.

Environmental Technical Officer, Doug Keith, put his thinking cap on and came up with the 'Bob' sampling bottle. The bottle was bought off the shelf from the local Kathmandu store due to its ideal size and shape. It has been fitted with a nonreturnable valve that lets the water in and stops it from leaking back out. The bottle is attached to a fishing rod and cast well out into the lagoon.

"It is really good from a safety perspective because the ground near the water where we go cracks easily and falls away and there are cliffs up behind you that crumble and slump without warning. With the surf-caster we can stand well back from all that and still get the bottle right out into the lagoon," says Karl.

Staff took the bottle to the Hydrological Society conference in Palmerston North earlier in the year where it received the Charlie Thurgood award for innovation. "It generated a lot of interest. People hadn't seen anything like it and these are industry people," says Karl.



Doug Keith and one of his 'Bob' sampling bottles.

Two Environment Southland technical officers presented at the conference: Hamish Ogilvie on the work being done on the Waituna Lagoon monitoring platform, and Dianne Elliotte on the soil moisture network. Both were well received and Dianne won the award for best presentation and a trip to present at the Australian Hydrographers Association Conference later this year.

Back at Environment Southland there are now three of Doug's innovative 'Bob' bottles in active use, each has its own name – Sideshow Bob, Bobby Sue and Ricky Bobby.



Environment Southland Technical officer Diane Elliotte casts a 'Bob' sampling bottle into Waituna Lagoon.

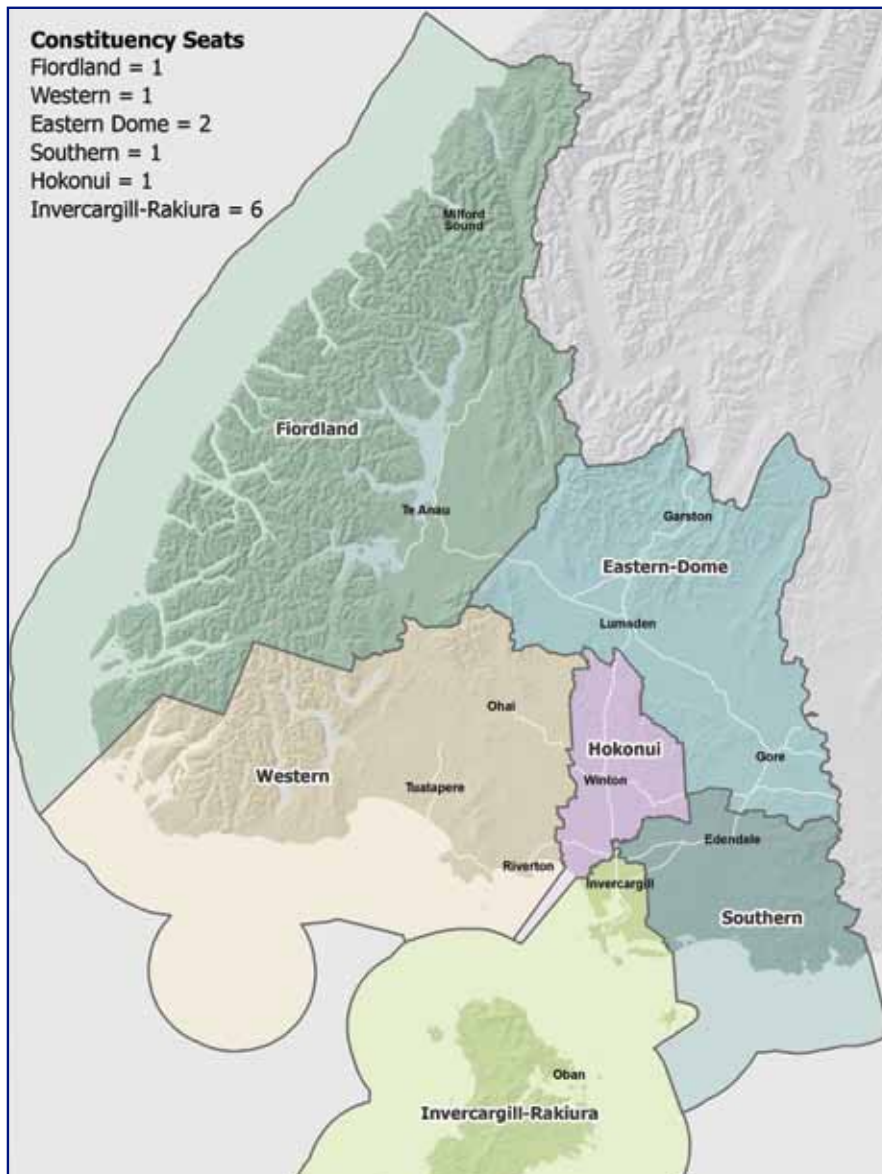
# Becoming a Councillor

Nominations have just opened for the twelve seats on Environment Southland. If you're interested in standing as a Councillor, here's what you need to know:

- Nominations opened on Friday 19 July
- Nominations close 12 noon on Friday 16 August
- All Southland councils use postal voting, and voting papers will be posted to all enrolled voters
- Voting closes at 12 noon on Saturday 12 October
- Nomination papers and Candidate Information Packs for Environment Southland are available from the Southland District Council, which acts as our returning officer.

There are six constituencies, which together elect 12 Councillors (see map). Due to the recent review of representative arrangements there will be a number of small changes to constituency boundaries. These have no significant impact on the population to membership ratios of constituencies.

**You will find more details about the elections, including who's eligible to stand as a candidate on our website, along with information about Environment Southland.**



## Are You Enrolled to Vote?

*With the local body elections coming up in October, it pays to spend a minute or two to check that you are enrolled to vote.*

*By now all enrolled voters will have been sent an enrolment update pack, to confirm that the electoral office has your correct details. This enables your voting papers to be posted to you.*

*Those enrolling after 16 August can cast a special vote.*

*Voting in the local elections is by postal vote from 20 September to 12 October 2013, and is only open to those who are correctly enrolled to vote. So make sure that when it comes time to cast your vote, nothing stands in your way.*

*To get an enrolment pack, jump online at [www.elections.org.nz](http://www.elections.org.nz), free-text your name and address to 3676, call 0800 36 76 56, or visit any Post Shop.*

*More information about enrolling to vote is available at [www.elections.org.nz](http://www.elections.org.nz).*



# Southland Environment and Conservation Awards

The 18th annual Southland Environment and Conservation Awards took place at the Ascot Park Hotel in Invercargill on Wednesday 3 July 2013. This is the second year they have been held in partnership with the Department of Conservation to incorporate the Southland Conservation Awards.

Bringing these two significant events together created an opportunity to celebrate the activities of those who are passionate about the environment and the welfare of our indigenous wildlife.

It was a full house with 37 nominees across nine categories. The standard

of nominees was very impressive and reflected the amount of work being done spontaneously, as well as in an organised way to benefit the environment.

The judges had a hard task choosing between the many "unsung heroes" of our community that have been

doing something worthwhile for our environment without ever seeking or expecting reward.

Thanks go to our sponsors who have once again continued with their generous support of these awards.

## and the winners are...

### Individual

(Sponsored by Forsyth Barr)

Winner – Adam Lilley

Highly Commended – Nick Humphries

### Community Group

(Sponsored by NZAS)

Winner – South Catlins Development & Environment Charitable Trust

Highly Commended – Otatara Pestbusters

### Farming

(Sponsored by AWS Legal)

Winner – Roger and Alison Thomas

Highly Commended – David and Joanne Diprose

### Commercial

(Sponsored by Landcorp Farming Ltd)

Winner – Mainfreight Invercargill

Highly Commended – Peregrine Wines

### Schools

(Sponsored by Milligan Seeds and Department of Conservation)

Winners – St Teresa's School, Bluff

Highly Commended – Longbush Rural Kindergarten

Highly Commended – Akoranga Preschool

### Environmental Achiever

(Sponsored by Real Journeys)

Winner – Deep Cove Education Trust

Highly Commended – Mary Ryan

Highly Commended – Evan Smith

### Environmental Innovator

(Sponsored by Invercargill Licensing Trust)

Winner – John Purey-Cust

Highly Commended – Ascot Park Hotel

### Councillors' Special Award

(Sponsored by Environment Southland Councillors)

Winner – Viv Shaw

### Emerging Environmentalist Award

(Sponsored by Environment Southland Councillors)

Winner – Ben & Blake Weston

### Conservation Award

(Sponsored by Department of Conservation)

Winner – Morgan Foundation



Milligan Seeds



Your City. Your Trust.  
Invercargill Licensing Trust

# SOUTHLAND ENVIRONMENT



Farming Award Winners, Roger and Alison Thomas (left) are presented with their award by Rachel Lindsay of AWS Legal.



Environmental Innovator Winner John Purey-Cust (left) and Neville Cook, of the Invercargill Licensing Trust.



Community Group Award Winners, South Catlins Development & Environment Charitable Trust, receive their award from Stewart Hamilton (right), the acting General Manager of the Tiwai Point Aluminium Smelter.



Commercial Award Winner, Stephen Monaghan of Mainfreight, Invercargill, accepts the award.



Individual Award Winner Adam Lilley receives his award from Paul Tuckey of Forsyth Barr.

# AND CONSERVATION AWARDS



Environmental Achiever Award Winner – Deep Cove Education Trust. Paul Gay accepts the award on behalf of the Trust.



Councillors' Special Award Winner, Viv Shaw.



Emerging Environmentalist Award Winners, Ben and Blake Weston with Councillor Marion Miller from Environment Southland.



Conservation Award Winners, Gareth and Jo Morgan accept the award on behalf of the Morgan Foundation from Dave Taylor (right), Department of Conservation.



Schools Award Winners – presented by Sarah Murray, Community Support Manager, Department of Conservation, to St Teresa's School in Bluff.

# Keeping *Warm* and Breathing *Easy*

**I**t's winter time and keeping warm is a priority. We love our home fires in Southland; they do the trick, beautifully. The problem is those same fires are a major cause of air pollution, which means that in the urban areas of Invercargill and Gore we're not meeting the government's standards for air quality.

The National Environmental Standards (NES) stipulate that the average daily levels of PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter) should not exceed 50 micrograms/m<sup>3</sup>.

More than 90% of the human-caused PM<sub>10</sub> comes from home heating fires fuelled by coal and wood; an issue made worse by the use of wet wood and dampening down of fires. This statistic is the key issue and it's a challenge to us as a community because it means we have to change the way we heat our homes.

Policy and Planning Manager Ken Swinney says the government's primary motivation in setting the standard is the health of communities, including the elderly. "Public Health South has indicated that while they don't necessarily have deaths, they do have quite a number of admissions of people with breathing difficulties in the middle of winter. Most are elderly people who have been exposed since they were young and it has evolved into a health problem," he says.

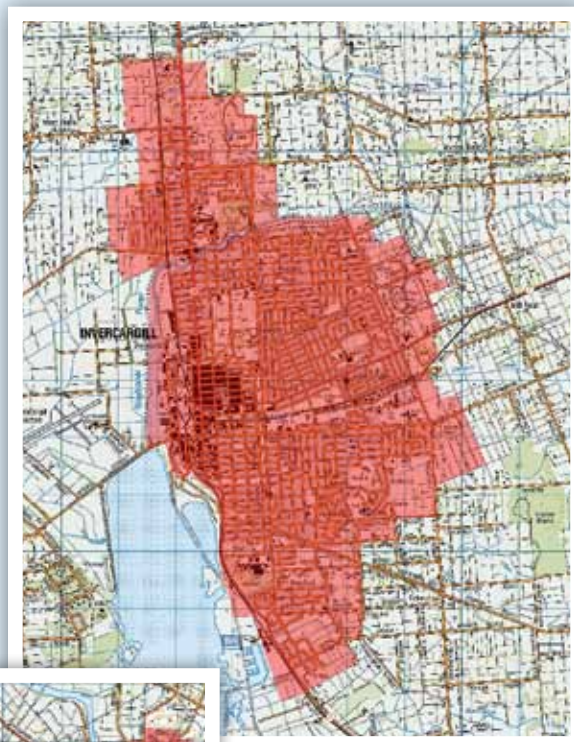
The Invercargill and Gore airsheds are defined urban areas, which have been gazetted because they regularly exceed the PM<sub>10</sub> standard each year. Invercargill has previously had more than 20 exceedances, while Gore usually has less than 10.

The NES allows for only one exceedance a year and Gore has until 2016 to achieve this, while Invercargill needs to be down to three or less by 2016, and one by 2020.

"Southland is unique with a cooler climate, which is why we need to look at a range of options to improve air quality. A 'good wood'-type programme could work, and when people replace their fires and old burners they can choose a compliant wood burner from the approved list, which is held by the Ministry for the Environment", Ken says.

Southland's Regional Air Quality Plan is currently under review and domestic burners are likely to become regulated via this process, which began earlier this year and is expected to be notified for public submissions by early 2014.

A government-initiated ban stopping the installation of new open fires in homes came into effect on 4 June 2013 for the Invercargill airshed and 29 June 2013 for the Gore airshed.



The Invercargill and Gore airsheds are monitored daily for levels of air quality.

## Getting it straight on the open fire ban

*New open fires can no longer be installed in homes in the **Invercargill and Gore airsheds.***

*The Government-initiated ban came into effect on 4 June 2013 in Invercargill and 29 June 2013 in Gore.*

**The ban applies only to the installation of new open fires.** It does not apply to existing open fires, nor does it apply to gas fires, wood burners or multi-fuel burners.

*However, restrictions for wood/multi-fuel burners are likely to be introduced in the future to help Southland meet the Ministry for the Environment's strict National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES).*



## Weekly winter air results

Environment Southland monitors air quality in Invercargill, Winton and Gore, and reports the results each week during winter.

The quality of the air is established by measuring particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>). PM<sub>10</sub> is the most widespread air quality problem in Southland and is caused predominantly by burning coal and wood in domestic fires.

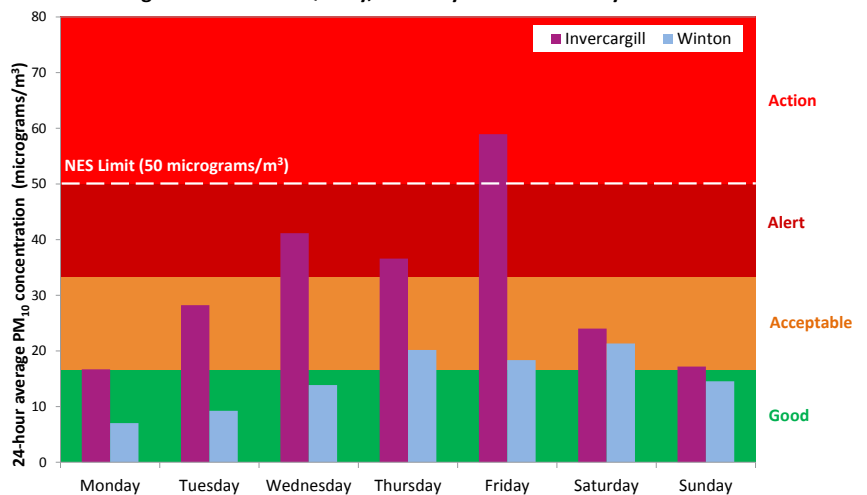
High levels of PM<sub>10</sub> are associated with poor health, especially breathing difficulties, so the Ministry for the Environment has set strict National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES): Average daily levels of PM<sub>10</sub> should not exceed 50 micrograms/m<sup>3</sup>.

The weekly results are available on our website and Facebook page. They are also published in community newspapers: Gore in The Ensign; Invercargill and Winton in The Eye.

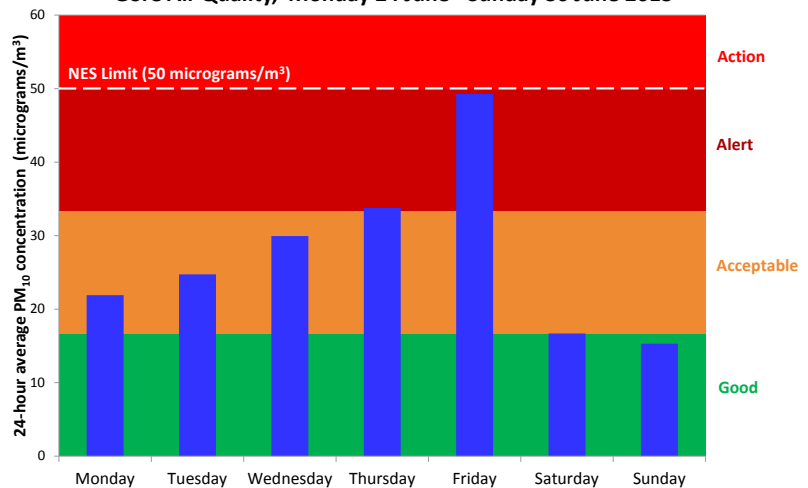
[www.es.govt.nz/environment/air](http://www.es.govt.nz/environment/air)

[www.facebook.com/enviromentsouthland](https://www.facebook.com/enviromentsouthland)

Invercargill & Winton Air Quality, Monday 24 June - Sunday 30 June 2013



Gore Air Quality, Monday 24 June - Sunday 30 June 2013



## Burn smarter

For helpful tips on getting the best out of your wood burner so that it's more efficient, saving you money and burning clean, get a copy of our Warm Up Wisely brochure. It's available from our office on North Road, Invercargill and on our website.

For information on air quality please visit [www.es.govt.nz/environment/air](http://www.es.govt.nz/environment/air)

**WARM UP WISELY**  
Getting the best out of your wood burner

**Air Pollution**  
Air pollution is a problem in both Invercargill and Gore during winter. At times it reaches alert levels, which means the level of small particles (PM<sub>10</sub>) exceeds the national standards designed to protect human health. More than 90 percent of human-caused PM<sub>10</sub> is a result of burning wood and coal in domestic burners. The Government has set target deadlines for meeting the national standards for PM<sub>10</sub>. For Gore it is 1 September 2016 and for Invercargill it is 1 September 2020. As a community we need to find ways to reduce our levels of PM<sub>10</sub> to meet these targets. It is important to ban all wood burners, but we can change how we use them. By operating our burners in ways that minimise smoke – which contains the harmful PM<sub>10</sub> – we can all contribute to reducing air pollution and improving our air quality.

**Introduction**  
This guide offers key information on how to enjoy your wood burner safely, get the best heat out of your firewood and decrease the amount of smoke being released into the air. Many people burn wood as a source of heat and enjoyment. It's economical, renewable and can heat your home well, when used effectively. The efficiency of wood burners varies. However, they are preferable to open fires, which actually draw heat from your home. A wood burner or open fire that is not being used efficiently can produce excessive smoke, which wastes energy and your money, builds up dangerous creosote and creates air pollution. Poorly maintained wood burners and open fires can also be fire hazards.

**Burning wet or green wood and banking fires are major contributors to the smoke and air pollution in our community.**

**Lighting Your Fire**

- Open the air control.
- Put shavings up Newspaper at the base.
- Criss cross the newspaper with plenty of kindling.
- Add a few smaller pieces of wood.
- Light the newspaper in several places, starting from the back.
- Load wood loosely so air can circulate.
- Always use dry wood.

**Once Alight**

- Keep the fire burning brightly.
- Keep the air control open for at least 30 minutes.
- Burn several smaller logs, rather than a single large log.
- When adding more logs, fully open up the air control for 20-30 minutes.
- Ensure the air supply doesn't become blocked at the base by a badly positioned log.
- Don't bank your fire.
- Don't burn any rubbish.

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# Shared Services

## Doing it together – *the Southland way*

**A** fibre connecting councils within Southland is the new means of improving local government efficiency. It is one of many successful joint initiatives aimed at giving ratepayers better value for their money.

“There has been a long tradition of working together in Southland,” Environment Southland Chief Executive Rob Phillips says. “By not working alone, we are cost-effective and get a better product.”

Shared Services is the approach Southland’s four councils – Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council and Gore District Council, have taken to reduce duplication of functions and increase efficiency. Mr Phillips organised a workshop for Chief Executives and senior staff of the councils to determine the way forward for Shared Services in Southland. With the government clearly signalling it requires increases in efficiency in local government, the options were either reorganisation into larger units, or sharing more services.

The Southland Mayoral Forum also considered Shared Services the best option for Southland. It provides the benefits of amalgamation, while ensuring that Southland’s community retains representation.

*“There has been a long tradition of working together in Southland. By not working alone, we are cost-effective and get a better product.”*

The Chief Executives are strongly committed to giving priority to Shared Services, and identifying the next area to focus on, Mr Phillips says. They have been working on projects that make sure money is being used in the wisest way possible.

Since February, the Southland District Council, Invercargill City Council and Environment Southland have been connected through a Wide Area Network (WAN), with Clutha District Council to join shortly. Environment Southland Information Systems Manager, Jane Carroll, explains: “It will give us the ability to log on to our

own system from anywhere within these councils. The WAN has increased our internet performance whilst saving us money, and we can now look at other projects like a shared service desk.”

In May, Emergency Management Southland coordinated the region’s participation in Exercise Te Ripahapa. It made use of the new fibre connection, with staff from local councils and emergency services being able to share information and work together.

In addition to the benefits of sharing resources, the ‘IT Shared Services Strategy’ will provide centralised backup and disaster recovery capability. “Exercise Te Ripahapa has demonstrated that it is imperative to have the technology available in the event of an emergency”, Mrs Carroll says. “Having reliable access to information is the key to minimising damage and keeping the public informed in these situations.”

Richard King, Chief Executive of the Invercargill City Council, says that his council is collaborating with Environment Southland on a variety of projects concerning environmental issues in Southland. He says the councils “cooperate wherever we can to get the best bang for our buck for all Southland ratepayers.”

*Check out some of the projects Environment Southland and other councils have been working on.*

## Emergency Management Southland (EMS)

Operating out of the Emergency Operations Centre on the corner of Price Street and North Road, EMS has led and coordinated the region’s emergency planning, training and response capability since May 2010.

Working together to prepare for and respond to emergencies enables councils to keep communities and infrastructure safer across Southland.

*Local authorities involved: Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council*



EMS staff at the Emergency Operations Centre during Exercise Te Ripahapa

## Southland Community WasteBusters Trust

The Trust has been operating since 2000, to encourage, support and educate the people of Southland to minimise waste.

WasteBusters have a ‘Busting Waste’ column in The Southland Times each Thursday. Members have been working with Environment Southland on farm landfill issues and recently supported the Invercargill Environment Centre’s Upcycling Fashion show.

*Local authorities involved: Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council*



WasteBusters Carolyn Dean, Agnes Irwin, Malcolm MacKenzie (Chair) and Gretchen Ledington at the Trust’s Open Day where education of waste issues and recycling were emphasised.

## Te Roopu Taiao

Te Roopu Taiao is a joint management committee established in the 1990's to develop relationships between the local authorities and tangata whenua of Murihiku. The committee primarily deals with higher level decision making concerning environmental resource management.

The group, which meets four times a year, is made up of representatives from councils in Southland and the four Papatipu Runanga in Murihiku.

*Local authorities involved: Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Clutha District Council*

## Southland Heritage Building and Preservation Trust

Established in 1991, the Trust assists the owners of registered and listed historic buildings throughout Southland with low interest secured loans for building preservation and maintenance.

Some districts have more restoration projects than others, but all projects contribute to the preservation of historic significance of Southland. Council collaboration provides a wider range of resources for individual restoration projects.

*Local authorities involved: Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council*

## Review of the Southland Regional Policy Statement and other councils' District Plans

Since 2011, Environment Southland has joined with the other Southland councils to combine the review processes of policy documents. The combination of review processes represents an increase in efficiency and effectiveness, and means Southland is well-prepared for coming changes to local government as proposed earlier this year.

*Local authorities involved: Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council*

# The Stormwater System

**K**eeping our waterways clean is one of the most important things anyone can do to help the environment. If you live in Invercargill, Gore or any of the Southland towns with reticulated drainage systems, it will help if you know the two systems used for managing our water.

We have two systems to manage our water; one for stormwater and one for wastewater.

The drains in our gutters lead straight to natural waterways like rivers, streams and estuaries, while almost all drains inside our houses are connected to the sewerage system, so that the water they carry will be treated for pollutants.



(Image courtesy Auckland Regional Council)

**The aim is to ensure that only clean rainwater is going into the stormwater system.** Sounds simple? Unfortunately it is not. Here is a small list of things people spill into the stormwater system everyday:

- Detergents – including biodegradable products
- Fuels and oil
- Cement wash water
- Paint
- Rubbish – including food and drink
- Toxic chemicals
- Cigarette butts
- Mud and dirt
- Cooking oil and fat.

***Your actions today may mean life or death for organisms in our waterways and oceans now and in the future. Water is priceless, and many pollutants released into it remain in the system for centuries.***

# Gorse and Broom Control – Great Progress!

**E**nvironment Southland’s Biosecurity team will continue the urban gorse and broom inspection programme from August.

Senior Biosecurity Officer Randall Milne says he is happy with the progress many land owners have made, and hopes the trend continues this year. “Responsible landowners have made some great progress in towns around Southland by tidying up their properties of gorse and broom,” Randall says. Biosecurity staff will be carrying out the inspection programme to ensure these gains for gorse and broom are maintained.

Randall says, “All we are asking people to do is to be a good neighbour and control any gorse or broom on their property.”

Environment Southland ultimately wants people to take responsibility for pest plants on their property themselves. Randall says “We only step in if land owners choose not to act.”

However you decide to go about clearing gorse and broom from your property, it will be easier on your wallet if you do it yourself. “It becomes more expensive for landowners if Environment Southland has to enforce compliance with the rules for gorse and broom in urban areas,” Randall says.

If there are only a few plants, it is a good idea to deal with them now, because once gorse and broom get out of hand, it gets more expensive.



Gorse



Broom

Operator	Expenses	Actual Cost
Yourself	Your time Tools Chemicals	\$25+
Environment Southland	Environment Southland time Vehicle cost Organisation and administration External contractor	\$100+

*Cost are rough estimates. Actual costs may be higher or lower on an individual basis*

## All done gardening...really?

When you’ve spent hours working hard in the garden, it’s only natural to want the garden waste out of your sight. But beware of choosing the easy way out by just dumping your garden waste.

Most weeds are hardy, and simply pulling them out of the ground won’t kill them. Many are able to establish in new places from small fragments, or seeds left on the plant.

With so many great uses for garden clippings and other garden materials, Environment Southland Biosecurity Officer, Amy Lagerstedt, says everyone can get more out of their garden waste. “You can compost or mulch it, cut firewood, kindling or woodchips,” she says.

Whatever you decide to do, don’t put your garden wastes in the rubbish bin, as it will only end up in a landfill.

If you choose not to recycle your garden waste, the alternative is to take it to a waste transfer station.

For more information and to find out where your nearest garden waste disposal site is located, go to [www.wastenet.org.nz](http://www.wastenet.org.nz).

Visit [www.weedbusters.co.nz](http://www.weedbusters.co.nz) for tips on how to dispose of weeds or call the Biosecurity team at Environment Southland on 0800 76 88 45.



Illegal or ‘fly’ dumping of garden waste is a common source of weed spread in Southland.



# Weeds to Watch Out For...

## German Ivy (*Delairea odorata*)

German Ivy is a fast growing vine that smothers small trees and shorter vegetation. It is currently only found around Marine Parade in Bluff and around Oban township on Stewart Island, and we'd like to stop it spreading any further.

Environment Southland Biosecurity Officer, Amy Lagerstedt, says it is generally found in areas where garden waste has been illegally dumped.

German Ivy grows up to three metres in height, has bright green star-shaped leaves and yellow ragwort-like flowers from May to October. It is easily confused with Common Ivy, but there are a few subtle differences:

- Common Ivy has woody stems and waxy foliage
- German Ivy is thin and fleshy, and has ear-like appendages on its stem.

***If you see it, or think you might have it in your garden, please call our biosecurity team on 0800 76 88 45 and we will remove it for you free of charge.***

*Although called German Ivy, this invasive vine originated in South Africa and is sometimes called Cape Ivy.*



German Ivy in flower

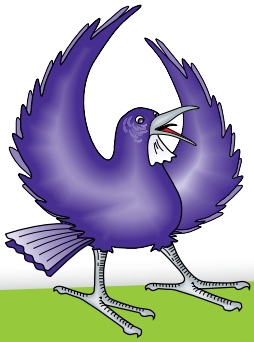


German Ivy



Common Ivy

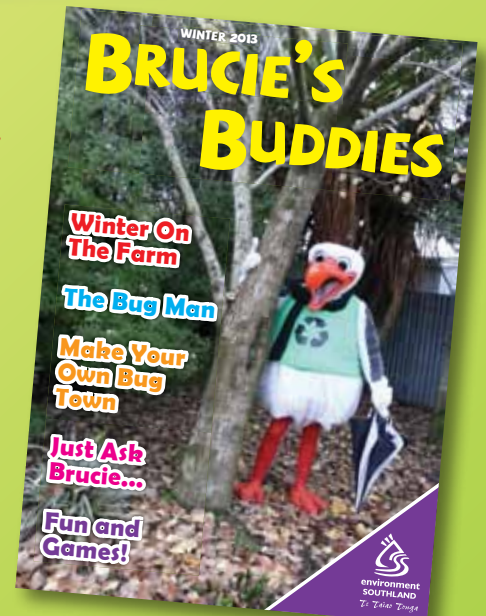




# JOIN BRUCIE'S BUDDIES CLUB

Do you have children or grandchildren who would like to join Brucie's Buddies Club?

Brucie's Buddies Club is an environmental club for 4-14 year olds run by Environment Southland's education team. Four times a year Brucie's buddies receive a magazine packed full of fun environmental learning activities, games and competitions. They also receive a message on their birthday and an invitation to join Brucie at his birthday event each summer.



Yes, I would like to join Brucie's Buddies Club

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to: Brucie's Buddies Club, Environment Southland, Private Bag 90116, Invercargill 9840**

Join online – it's free!



[www.brucecgull.co.nz](http://www.brucecgull.co.nz)



# Environmental Education

## Meet the team

The environmental education team at Environment Southland works with schools and community organisations to further environmental education on a wide range of topics for both children and adults. Pat Hoffmann, Mark Oster and Nikki Tarbutt have years of science, education and field experience between them. If you would like to discuss a visit from one of our team, email [education@es.govt.nz](mailto:education@es.govt.nz)



From top – Nikki Tarbutt, Pat Hoffmann and Mark Oster.

## School grounds support biodiversity

**K**napdale School near Gore has been an Enviroschool since 2008. Students and staff have been working on several environmental projects in their school grounds including planting a native garden, setting up a compost heap, growing vegetables and keeping chickens.

In June, the children invited Environmental Education Officer Pat Hoffmann to help them find out which invertebrates live on their school grounds. Pat showed them how to use aspirators, nets and beating trays to catch invertebrates. Using the traps they made, the children found earwigs, bees, spiders and plenty of slaters and worms. They also learned about the benefits of some invertebrates like ones that pollinate crops and decompose materials to contribute to soil health.

After identifying the invertebrates they had collected, the students discussed ways to increase and support biodiversity by attracting beneficial insects to their school grounds. Ideas included making weta motels, planting butterfly gardens and setting up a beehive.



Using the traps they made, students from Knapdale School found plenty of invertebrates in their school grounds.

## Stream Connections Studies

**S**tream Connections helps Southland schools to learn about freshwater and become more connected to their local waterways. Resources available for schools include classroom activities, instructions and data sheets for a field trip, as well as tools to help take action to protect and enhance a local stream.

The information and activities are designed to meet the needs of level 3 and 4 (Years 5-8) students, but can be adapted to suit other levels.

In 2012, Environment Southland revamped its Stream Connections resource. Since then, the Environmental Education team has worked alongside many schools on discovering and improving nearby waterways.

A free Stream Connections teacher workshop is scheduled for 5 September. If you would like more information or if you want us to let you know about other Stream Connections workshops for teachers, send an email to [education@es.govt.nz](mailto:education@es.govt.nz).



Students from Lumsden Primary School take part in a Stream Connections study.

# OUT IN THE FIELD...

Our staff are no strangers to extraordinary situations. See what they've been up to lately looking after our region's natural resources.



Our coastal scientists have been at Jacobs River Estuary collecting samples of sediment and cockles. The samples are analysed to see if they contain any non-biological contaminants, and the results will be used as baseline data for any future monitoring.



Two of our Environmental Technical Officers braved the wintery conditions to change the battery on a water level recorder in the upper Oreti River catchment, just off the road to the Mavora Lakes. They had to walk about half a kilometre in powdery thigh-deep snow, dragging a trolley with the battery behind them.



One of Environment Southland's roles is providing flood warning for the Southland region. Staff from the Environmental Data team installed a new rain gauge along the upper Oreti River to measure the rainfall that feeds the river and contributes to floods. With plenty of rock breaking it was very hard to dig holes to install the equipment.



During the January floods, Environmental Data staff were out measuring river depth and flow velocity on the Oreti River. They had to watch out for trees travelling down the raging torrents, threatening to catch in the cable carrying the measurement device known as a 'poem'.

Follow us on Facebook to get updated on all the exciting things Environment Southland staff are doing in our region.

## Envirosouth

Envirosouth is published four times a year by Environment Southland. It is delivered to every household in the region. We welcome your comments on anything published in this newsletter, as well as your suggestions for topics you would like to read about in future issues.

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