

**From:** [REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 September 2022 12:10 pm  
**To:** Official Information <official.information@wellingtonwater.co.nz>  
**Subject:** FW: Houghton Bay Discharge

Hi [REDACTED] / [REDACTED],

Can you record this one as an OIA please?

It was asked informally, but the question comes up regularly, so best to track it in the OIA system so we have a better record than my memory.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 September 2022 12:05 pm  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED].com>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gw.govt.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@xtra.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Houghton Bay Discharge

Hi [REDACTED],

I had the team dig out the raw monitoring data for the water sampling and diversion weir monitoring from our data systems. Please find attached the files.

The first file is water quality. The water monitoring changed in Feb 2020 and data before that is more difficult to access, but there is monthly metals monitoring over two and a half years so a reasonable period. The e.coli and enterococci gets repeated daily if results are over a certain threshold as you will see from the dates.

The second file is from the weir monitoring. I asked for five years of monitoring data sorted on council financial year.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 21 September 2022 9:42 am  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gw.govt.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@xtra.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Houghton Bay Discharge

Kia ora koutou

Just checking whether I've missed any follow up emails from the team as nothing in my inbox as yet!

Keen to see the monitoring data and better understand that, and I haven't heard back from GW on the consent conditions either.

Fyi, I have been recommended to get the EPA in the loop in their new role too.

I've also met a few more concerned neighbours and thinking about getting a community gathering together to update everyone together.

It would be great to have an update and some missing info, thank you!

Best wishes, [REDACTED]

On 5/09/2022, at 8:57 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com> wrote:

Oops sorry people - now the notes are attached!  
<Houghton Bay leachate meeting September 2022.docx>

On 5/09/2022, at 8:53 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com> wrote:

Kia ora [REDACTED]

Thanks so much for making the time with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to meet with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and myself this morning.

Attached are my rough notes plus earlier questions - more a series of prompts for me than a meeting record, but feel free to send any corrections/additions as you see fit.

The main follow up is for the team to provide me with monitoring information, in particular details on how often the diversion of leachate to the wastewater system is being overtopped.

I'm also interested in any plans to undertake more sampling of the leachate and the odour given it has been 9-10 years since these were undertaken and we are experiencing inconsistent but sometimes very strong hydrocarbon odour. [REDACTED] noted that she thought it had been getting worse in recent times too, so the theory of an old landfill leachate lessening over time may not be happening here, or at least not yet.

[REDACTED], I think it would be for you/your colleagues to help us understand whether it is time to reconsider options for landfill management such as the mycoremediation that was mentioned in an earlier options paper as being potentially suitable as time passed. [REDACTED] has been leading conversations around the wider Lift the Creek proposal, which could be fantastic longer term. I think getting a handle on what's happening right now would be useful for these longer term, holistic solutions too.

Fyi, one of the points we discussed this morning is that we hold concerns that there may be drums of dangerous materials in the old landfill that have been disturbed and are creating new additional risk to residents, animals and the natural environment.

I am also unsure how to report environmental pollution events to GW at the beach or outside my house and not have them dismissed as being related to the known leachate without further investigation. There could of course be additional incidents occurring when there is the type of odour we are experiencing or the visible colouration and foam on the beach we are seeing. We really need monitoring that is not a one-off from 10 years ago.

As mentioned, I am following up with GW around the consent conditions regarding the stormwater global consent as I was surprised no reporting at all on Houghton Bay was included in the annual report. If this isn't in error, I would like to make sure there are reporting requirements in the new consent.

I'd like to be involved in the new consent process as an affected neighbour. With a stormwater drain right outside my house, I am regularly exposed to quite powerful hydrocarbon smells on the bad days - and I think the WW team were interested to learn that the smell, when present strongly, is noticeable even on windy and rainy days.

■■■■ just copying you in to keep you in the loop, and to let you know I haven't yet heard from your colleague ■■■■ as yet about the consent conditions. I'm meeting with councillors on Thursday so it would be great to know by then whether the missing monitoring is in error or by design. Also, it would be good to have it included in the latest annual report which is due with you in October I believe.

With thanks, ■■■■

On 1/09/2022, at 5:24 PM, ■■■■ <■■■■@■■■■.com> wrote:

That would be really helpful thanks ■■■■.

I often work from home so meeting 9.30am Monday is fine - we can meet at my house, 65 Hungerford Rd, and then walk down to the beach if we want to.

It would be great to get any info in dribs and drabs, or maybe after our conversation on Monday I can be more refined with what I'm asking for.

Best wishes, ■■■■

On 1/09/2022, at 4:26 PM, ■■■■ <■■■■@wellingtonwater.co.nz> wrote:

Hi ■■■■,

In brief, I understand from our operations team that the management actions to monitor the pipeline and sewer diversion are in place however I appreciate there may be some residual odour, as this is not practicable to be diverted or treated with the current configuration. By its nature, air flow in a pipe will go over the top of the liquid leachate diversion weir. I understand there was a masking spray installed around 2014 which is still in operation which provides some mitigation of the odour.

Unfortunately I don't have time to get a detailed response to your list of questions together before your meeting next Thursday but [REDACTED] and I could make time to meet you on site Monday morning around 9:30am and talk through the background and operational arrangements if that suits? [REDACTED] k is on leave this week and I don't have any direct involvement in the current or next stage stormwater consent so can't comment on that side of things.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Chief Advisor – Wastewater

<image001.jpg>

DDI 04 912 4579 Mob [REDACTED]

Private Bag 39804, Wellington Mail Centre 5045  
Level 4, 25 Victoria Street, Petone, Lower Hutt

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

Wellington Water is owned by the Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington city councils, South Wairarapa District Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council.  
We manage their drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services.

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

**Sent:** Thursday, 1 September 2022 2:09 pm

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED]  
<[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>

**Subject:** Re: Houghton Bay Discharge

Thanks so much [REDACTED]. I grateful to be connected to the right people!

Fyi, I'm a former regional councillor with a science degree who's worked for DOC, AECOM and now MFE, so happy with technical or bureaucratic info.

Info that I can read before my meeting with WCC and GW councillors next Thursday 3pm would be much appreciated.

On Thu, 1 Sep 2022, 8:08 am [REDACTED], <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz> wrote:  
Good morning [REDACTED],

I am not best placed to be the respondent to these questions as Wellington Water Ltd, operate and manage the Three Waters network. Further the Stormwater Working party is a form of consent condition to the Wellington Water Global Stormwater discharge consent.

I have now added Mr [REDACTED] to this as my last understanding was that he managed the consent condition to the Stormwater Working Party.

I trust that Wellington Water will respond in due course.

Kind regards

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>  
Sent: Wednesday, 31 August 2022 7:58 pm  
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz>  
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wellingtonwater.co.nz>  
Subject: Re: Houghton Bay Discharge

Sorry for the further email, I realised that my initial questions to Jude at GW didn't come through on this chain. Her comments are in red but obviously a few gaps in there too, if you're able to help.

Best wishes, [REDACTED]

1. Stormwater working party - membership? Still meeting annually? Can I see the latest minutes? **The meetings are annual and timed for after the annual report has been submitted to GWRC. The last meeting was held on 8/07/2021 and representatives from GWRC, Upper Hutt City Council, WCC, PCC, Hutt City Council, Regional Public Health, Ngati Toa Rangitira attended. We haven't received minutes from this meeting, you will need to request these from WWL.**
2. Annual stormwater monitoring report - can I see a copy of the latest report? **I haven't tracked down the 2020/21 report yet but have included Dr [REDACTED] technical review that she did for us. The 2021/2022 report is due to be submitted by 1 September 2022.**
3. Manganese sampling - is this now occurring?
4. Level of odour detected on occasions shown in Appendix C.
5. Summary of routine monitoring results and assessment of trends and significance should be in the annual report **see Dr [REDACTED] report**
6. Dr [REDACTED], senior coastal scientist GW - still around? **Dr [REDACTED] is a consultant for GW and provides technical advice on stormwater monitoring results**
7. Five year consent due to expire 30 November 2023. Development of a stormwater management strategy - including leachate? Due by 30 November 2022. Is progress underway? **Yes WWL are developing the stormwater management strategy at present. GW are providing pre-application advice to WWL and their consultants on the stage 2 consent application.**
8. How often is the leachate overflowing into the stormwater system? Is that associated with the occurrences of odour? If so, this is very regular.
9. Who are the iwi connections for Houghton Bay? **Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika and Ngati Toa Rangitira**
10. Treatment and management options to minimise inputs to the stormwater culvert via Capacity (consultancy? Contractor?) as part of previous global stormwater consent
11. Investigated a number of times since 1990 - discharges of contaminants from landfill via the stormwater system with various actions initiated
12. State of the environment in receiving waters adjacent to stormwater outfall - in annual compliance report
13. Detailed assessment of options to prevent or minimise leachate in stormwater from closed landfill - only in extreme wet weather conditions (how has extreme been defined? how many times a year?), effect of discharge no more than minor as mean concentrations of heavy metals from sediment and water samples below the levels for recreational and health issues (how often are the sediments sampled?)
14. Management is - divert dry weather flow into wastewater network; monthly monitoring of weir overflows and stormwater outlets; remove encrustation on stormwater pipes annually through flushing
15. Houghton Bay catchment of 63ha generates 1.5m<sup>3</sup>/s during 6 month ARI, diversion captures up to 6l/s base flow and up to 33l/s during rain events. Note the different units of measure (1m<sup>3</sup>/s =

1000l/s) so 1.5m<sup>3</sup>/s is 1500l/s and therefore well above the diversion rate.

16. Have any adjustment for increasing rainfall with climate change been made?

17. Was going to look at options to monitor diversion in real time - has happened? Discussion of telemetry system in the dry weather leachate diversion manhole to give early warning of blockages - did this go ahead? What info has it captured? Have incidents been responded to? Does the fortnightly diversion inspection still occur?

18. Have sumps been baffled to capture sediment, litter and debris? Evidence of significant debris after recent rainfall. Was a sump inspection contract let and what reporting resulted?

19. Flushing treatment - how does it capture the material flushed out? Still done every six months?

20. Option rejected of collecting landfill gases - been reconsidered?

21. Option of mycoremediation was early in NZ at the time but has it been more widely used now? Where is the leachate pond mentioned? Commentary that "should be suitable after a period of time" - what timeframe?

22. Note sometimes there has been accumulation of leachate in depressions in the terraced playing fields.

23. Odour control trial in 2014 was successful and proposed design of odour control chambers to be completed by December 2015 - did this get implemented? Is it still in place? What monitoring has been undertaken? Was this for the hydrocarbon odour or another more biological one? Is the same neutralising agent being used?

24. Our location at Hungerford Road is at the bottom (gravity) of the old landfill structure so an accumulation of all the gases pushed down during rainfall events comes out at the stormwater drain outside our house? It is a very regular strong odour of hydrocarbon so raises concern. It's also present at the Houghton Bay outfall.

On 31/08/2022, at 7:17 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com> wrote:

Kia ora ano [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

I've clarified a few more questions as below if that helps with the response.

I'd be happy to make a time to sit down in person to discuss if easier too!

1. What is the leachate made up of? How often is it sampled? Is it changing? How does someone know that the observed discharge is the leachate and not some other contaminant? How is the flushing of the pipe managed? Are there risks to people and animals (including my small dog!) from interacting with the discharge? I've seen summaries of the receiving environment but also interested in how often it is re-tested.

2. What is the hydrocarbon odour? How often is that sampled or tracked? Is it related to the leachate?

3. Are the management interventions I've read about in place? How often are they monitored? Are they working as designed? In particular I'd like to know how often the leachate is not being diverted to the waste water system and whether that correlates with the odour. I've also read about some odour management and it is unclear whether that is working given the regular strong odours I'm experiencing.

4. I'd also like to understand whether the closed landfill status is relevant for how this is managed - obviously the landfill is a historical buried source of pollution as a site itself, but once the leachate leaves the site it becomes a current active pollution event, particularly as it discharges into a marine reserve. Or is there a technical definition that encompasses that?

5. How can I get involved with the consent renewal process? I am connected to the Houghton Bay Progressive Association who have been concerned about this in the past.

Fyi, I've lined up a meeting with a GW councillor and a WCC councillor next Thursday 3pm to talk this over so if you are able to help with any info before then, that would be great.

Best wishes, [REDACTED]

On 30/08/2022, at 9:30 AM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz> wrote:

Good morning [REDACTED],

Wellington Water operates and maintains the arrangements here that see base stormwater flows diverted to the wastewater network, maintain the grit-trap to the jumping weir and then the alarms that tell us when the jumping weir is operating due to more significant rain events.

Wellington Water also conducts the periodic 'flushing' of the system etc. I have included the link to Wellington Water's landing page on the subject as these questions are often of interest. [Houghton Bay leachate - Wellington Water](#)

If I may, I will need to ask either or both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to respond to your query.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 30 August 2022 9:23 am

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@wcc.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Fwd: Houghton Bay Discharge

Kia ora [REDACTED]

Hoping you can help me fill a gap with monitoring reports for the Houghton Bay outfall?

I'm looking for evidence that the management interventions I've read about are in place and operating as designed.

I regularly have a strong hydrocarbon smell from the stormwater drain outside my house at 65 Hungerford Rd. For the past week I've been taking photos of discharge to the bay too, this morning's pic attached.

Fyi I shifted here 3 months ago and am a former regional councillor with a science degree who now works for MFE so can cope with technical info.

I'm connected to those in Houghton Bay looking at lifting the stream but I want to start with understanding what is actually happening right now.

With thanks, [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gw.govt.nz>

**Date:** Mon, 29 Aug 2022, 2:07 pm

Subject: Houghton Bay Discharge

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Hi [REDACTED]

I am responding to the emails you have sent the Environmental Pollution response team in regard to the Houghton Bay discharges from the old Houghton Bay Landfill.

As you are probably aware, the discharges from the closed landfill are a historical issue. The stormwater pipe which runs under and through the landfill collects leachate. To remediate this discharging to the coast, WWL has permanently diverted this to the wastewater network. However, when the system can't cope with the wastewater volumes (weather related), the flows overflow a weir within the pipe back into the stormwater network and discharge out at Houghton Bay. This is similar to a number of wastewater overflows within the Wellington region. Wellington Water monitor this specific overflow point and have monthly water quality monitoring in the bay.

To prevent dry weather discharges, WWL undertake regular inspections to clear the pipe to ensure there is no build up and prevent a block and an overflow to the stormwater network. They have also installed level flow sensors so they can manage the flow in the pipe and can see a build-up is occurring before it discharges. Because they have these sensors in place, [REDACTED] (WCC) has just informed me that the last recorded discharge of wastewater to the stormwater at Houghton Bay was for 15 minutes on 20 August 2022.

As for the odour, although this smells similar to leachate, it is not necessarily leachate. There is a known ongoing issue of crustacean growth and decomposition in the stormwater pipe. WWL remove this six monthly and flush the pipe. Although it may appear the odour and iron oxide staining a related, I have been advised they are not.

In terms of compliance from this discharge, as this is covered by the Global Stormwater consent which is a monitoring consent, the discharge as you have reported is not non-compliant. On this basis, GWRC have no intention to undertake any further investigation into this matter at present. The outcome of the new global stormwater consent which will replace the monitoring consent may direct action on this discharge. I understand this consent will be lodged by WWL to GWRC mid next year.

Wellington City Council are responsible for a number of closed landfills across the city, with several discharging into fresh and coastal water. Within this list of closed landfill sites, WCC have a number of health and environmental priorities for remediation. On the other hand, I understand they have a finite funding to remediate these issues. If you would like to see faster action in remediation of the Houghton Bay landfill discharge, I recommend you make contact with your local elected official.

On a separate note, if you wish to report a pollution event, please call it through to 0800 496 734 and the call centre will log your notification and allocate it to a member of staff. Direct emails to the [environmental.protection@gw.govt.nz](mailto:environmental.protection@gw.govt.nz) inbox is not allocated and will be missed.

Kind regards,



[REDACTED]  
Senior Resource Advisor, Environmental Regulation  
**Greater Wellington Te Pane Matua Taiao**  
**M 021 227 6647**  
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington 6011

*Please note I do not work on Friday.*

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>  
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gw.govt.nz>  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Date: Sun, 28 Aug 2022 05:39:15 +0000  
Subject: Fwd: Greater Wellington Regional Council Service Acknowledgement  
Part 4 of 4

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>  
**Subject:** Re: Greater Wellington Regional Council Service Acknowledgement  
**Date:** 28 August 2022 at 12:19:37 PM NZST  
**To:** Environmental Protection <[Environmental.Protection@gw.govt.nz](mailto:Environmental.Protection@gw.govt.nz)>

And again this morning - odour less today but some sort of discharge apparent.

On Thu, 25 Aug 2022, 1:05 pm [REDACTED], <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com> wrote:  
Ive just been down and the smell is quite strong today - a stranger walking past commented to me on it unprompted!

Here's another pic from 12.30pm today. There is only a little foam but there is evidence of iron-colour as you can see.

On Thu, 25 Aug 2022, 10:16 am, <[Environmental.Protection@gw.govt.nz](mailto:Environmental.Protection@gw.govt.nz)> wrote:  
Your transaction no. 22427 has been assigned to the duty officer - [REDACTED]. If you require any further information about this incident please contact Wellington Regional Council on 0800496734 and quote the transaction number.

Please do not reply to this message as the mailbox from which it originates is unmonitored.

<20220828\_102154.jpeg><20220828\_102143.jpeg><image001.png><20220828\_102154.jpeg><Mail Attachment.eml><20220830\_070337.jpg>