

Welcome to issue 27 of BusinessCare's E-newsletter! In this issue we update you on the Auckland BusinessCare Enviro-Mark programme and provides some advice on how cleaner production advisers can help businesses get a handle on managing their hazardous substances. For more information about BusinessCare visit: www.businesscare.org.nz

New programme to help businesses

— by Kevin Crutchley North Shore City Council

Businesses around Auckland are being offered a great opportunity to grow lean and green with the launch of a new programme. Called *Auckland BusinessCare Enviro-Mark*, the programme will focus on assisting businesses with good environmental practice and getting formal recognition through certification.

The *BusinessCare Enviro-Mark programme* concept was developed by North Shore City Council in 2002 and had seven businesses participating in the *North Shore City programme*:

- Allied Concrete Albany,
- de Bruin-Judge Furniture Ltd,
- Lowery Supa Cutters Ltd,
- Phonak New Zealand Ltd,
- Sony New Zealand Ltd,
- Troake Group
- Vertex Pacific Ltd.

In 2003 North Shore City Council expanded this programme concept with other councils in the Auckland region, the Ministry for the Environment and Landcare Research and it is now operating regionally in Auckland and is called the *Auckland BusinessCare Enviro-Mark programme*. Recruitment for this programme has been completed with 68 businesses joining the programme.



What is the programme about?

The regional programme has received financial support from a number of sponsors* and the member businesses and will run for two years for the businesses. In that time they will get:

- up to 28 hours of personal, expert advice about environmental management
- practical “how to” information
- recognised Enviro-Mark®NZ certification
- a contribution towards programme costs

The Auckland BusinessCare Enviro-Mark programme actually combines two elements, BusinessCare and Enviro-Mark®NZ.

BusinessCare is a programme which promotes environmentally and economically sustainable business and helps businesses reduce their adverse environmental effects by:

- using resources like water, energy and raw materials more efficiently
- producing and purchasing environmentally sound products and services
- avoiding or reducing all forms of waste.

Enviro-Mark®NZ is an environmental management certification system for businesses which has five levels of achievement, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond.

If you want to know more about the programme visit:

www.enviro-mark.co.nz/businesscare or call Kevin Crutchley at North Shore City Council on 486 8600 extension 8155.

***The Auckland BusinessCare Enviro-Mark Programme is funded by:**

North Shore City Council, Auckland City Council, Waitakere City Council, Manukau City Council, Papakura District Council, Auckland Regional Council, the Ministry for the Environment and Landcare Research.

Tips for practitioners

Helping businesses deal with hazardous substances

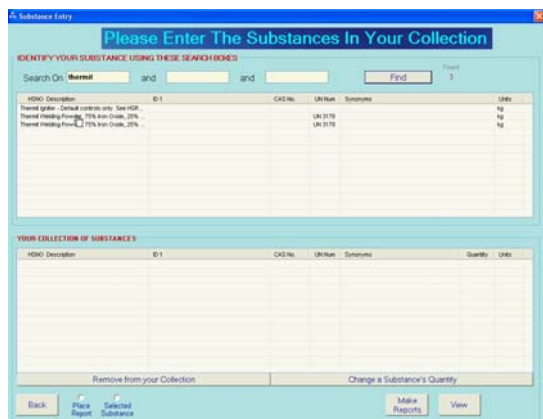
Improper handling and storage of hazardous substances can be disastrous for both people and the environment. In the 6 months to February 2005 there were 159 new chemical related workplace injuries costing almost \$1m, bringing the total number of chemical related claims for the period to 444 at a cost of \$8,222,666¹. Then there are the costs to the company, local government and the wider community, of chemicals released into the environment, which are extremely difficult to put a dollar figure on.

The Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO) is intended to: "protect the environment, and the health and safety of people and communities, by preventing or managing the adverse effects of hazardous substances"². HSNO replaces; the Explosives Act, 1957; the Dangerous Goods Act, 1974; the Toxic Substances Act, 1979; the Pesticides Act, 1979 (with minor exceptions); and parts of the Animal and Plants Acts (1967 and 1970) that covered the intentional introduction of new species into New Zealand³.

HSNO is relevant to cleaner production advisers, as compliance is the first step on the road to sustainability. If companies aren't interested in getting compliant, then there is little value in advocating the merits of waste minimisation and design for environment. The results are likely to be disappointing!

So how does a cleaner production adviser with no experience of HSNO or understanding of what the requirements are, advise business on how to manage their hazardous substances? One option is to refer them to OSH or the local council for a "voluntary" assessment! Another option is to point them in the direction of the latest compliance tool for Hazardous Substances – ChemSafe©.

ChemSafe© is a software tool that is simple to use. Users enter information on site, building and storage areas, and then search the comprehensive database to correctly identify substances from the ERMA Approved or Transferred substances list. The software produces full reports for each substance as well as detailing requirements where two or more substances are held in the same area.



Using the software tool to manage hazardous substances removes the need for companies to develop an in depth understanding of the HSNO legislation. At the same time the software makes it easier to comply with the legislation, reducing the likelihood of health, safety and environmental accidents and incidence related to improper storage and handling of hazardous substances.

ChemSafe© is available in five versions, catering for small and large businesses, consultants and councils, and is supported by an email and telephone helpdesk. For more information on ChemSafe© contact the New Zealand Chemical Industry Council helpdesk on (04) 499 4311 or email chemsafe@nzcic.org.nz

Screenshot from Chemsafe©

Your comments ...

If you have favourite tips of your own or projects you would like featured in this newsletter, send them to Carole Inglis at carole@wasteminz.org.nz and we will include them in the next newsletter.

¹ Accident Compensation Corporation – summary of claims between 1994 and 2005

² Ministry for the Environment – Hazardous Substance Strategy Volume Two, Section 1.1

³ Hazardous Substances and New Organisms website - <http://www.hsn.govt.nz/index.html>