



New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health (NZIEH)

Report to the International Federation of Environmental Health 2017

The New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health (NZIEH) has been very busy over the last year working on behalf of its members on a number of key issues.

1. The Food Act 2014.

The implementation of this important key piece of legislation is causing significant issues for our members and I was asked by our members to write to the Minister of Food Safety to voice our concerns. The key issues of concern were; a significant increase in compliance cost, uncertainty on the correct interpretation of the act, uncertainty of accreditation and warranting requirements, poor interagency cooperation and a lack of communication between the ministry and territorial authorities (councils).

Following discussions with the Minister of Food Safety and the Ministry of Primary Industries (who are responsible for ensuring the Food Act is implemented) the institute has set up a working group to improve communication and to develop better collaboration between the ministry and the various territorial authorities.

2. Communication

Communication with and between our members continues to be problematic with poor website traffic volumes. The new website which was designed last year is now the key means of communication for our members, the public and other interested parties. A 'members only' area has been created which includes a forum on various topics. The website is not functioning as we hoped it would and we are currently reviewing our options on what we need to do.

3. Other legislation

The enactment of a number of key pieces of legislation during 2016 (Food Act 2014, Food Regulations 2015, Health & Safety at Work Act 2015 and Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016) continues to be a challenge for Territorial Authorities. Significant changes have been required to implement the new legislation - particularly in relation to the new Food Act.

4. New Zealand Standard for the decontamination of methamphetamine contaminated properties.

The manufacture and use of illicit drugs in the community is increasing at an alarming rate in New Zealand. This is resulting in an increased number of contaminated properties being notified to Territorial Authorities. These notifications are increasingly being made by tenants, landlords and potential buyers rather than from the usual sources such as the Police and Public Health Units. A New Zealand Standard was released NZS 8510:2017 at the end of June. The Standard will help to ensure a consistent approach is used nationally by Territorial Authorities, Testing and Remediation Companies. NZIEH had two members involved in the writing of the standard. The key changes to the previous guidelines are a relaxation of the decontamination level requirements - Now 1.5ug/100cm² for living areas and 3.8ug/100cm² for non-living areas and that decontamination requirements relate to any methamphetamine affected property and not only Clan labs.

5. The World Congress in Environmental Health (Auckland March 2018)

The NZIEH is working very hard to ensure the success of the upcoming congress. We have employed the services of The Conference Company to help us with the organisation of this most important event. I would like to urge all IFEH members to make the effort to attend the congress as it will be a great opportunity to see how Environmental Health functions in the South Pacific as well as a great opportunity to network with members from other countries. The conference theme is 'A



new zealand Institute of Environmental Health Inc

South Pacific Perspective'. Having the opportunity to discuss and share our knowledge and experiences on the many topics that we, as Environmental and Public Health Professionals, deal with on a day to day basis is a fantastic opportunity. In NZ we have many unique Environmental Health issues which we would like to share with our global colleagues. Although the programme is yet to be finalised I am sure it will be packed with interesting topics and provide a chance for all of us to learn something new.

New Zealand is an ethnically diverse Pacific country with a multitude of different cultures from around the world calling it home. Our legal system is based on the British model and our laws are very similar to that found in other Commonwealth countries such as those found in the United Kingdom and Australia. Having a population of about 5 million people spread across a country the size of Great Britain or Japan makes for some interesting administration challenges. The influx of people from other cultures has meant significant and rapid societal changes particularly in Auckland where the majority of new immigrants settle. The Environmental health profession has had to adapt to working in this culturally diverse, dynamic and challenging environment. The conference is an opportunity to explore the impact of change in the South Pacific and to learn more from each other..

The conference will be held at Sky City In the centre of the city. There is a range of accommodation available within easy and safe walking distance - from budget friendly backpackers to 5 star hotels. Auckland has been voted the 3rd most liveable city in the world, it offers the ultimate combination of a modern city with natural beauty. Everything is within close proximity - hotels, restaurants, attractions and entertainment districts, and there are endless adventures right on the doorstep, from island retreats and wine tours to dolphin spotting and sailing.

Darryl Thompson - August 2017

President New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health