

Summary of Information - Greater Wellington Regional Council's Proposed Dangerous Dam Policy (including earthquake-prone and flood-prone dams)

The Building Act 2004 (the Act) requires Greater Wellington to review its policy on Dangerous Dams within five years of the policy being adopted. The policy only applies to medium or high potential impact dams that retain 3 or more metres depth, and hold 20000 or more cubic metres volume, of water or fluid.

Amendments to the Act in 2008 introduced two additional categories of dam; earthquake-prone and flood-prone. Section 161 of the Act now also requires Greater Wellington to develop a policy on these categories of dam in conjunction with the dangerous dam policy.

In identifying dams of concern, the policy proposes to investigate dams:

- that have not complied with the requirement to supply a complying annual compliance certificate; or
- where complaints have been received; or
- where information received under the Building (Dam Safety) Regulations 2008 highlight areas of concern; or
- where through other related work (such as undertaking compliance work), Greater Wellington becomes concerned about a dam.

Where a dam has been identified as potentially dangerous, earthquake-prone or flood-prone, further investigations will be undertaken by Greater Wellington in conjunction with the dam owner to establish whether the dam meets the dangerous, earthquake-prone or flood-prone criteria.

If a dam is deemed to be dangerous, earthquake-prone or flood-prone Greater Wellington (with the dam owner) will take action to reduce or remove the danger. The range of actions proposed varies depending on the risk and potential impact should the dam fail.

At each stage of the process, the proposed policy allows dam owners to dispute Greater Wellington's assessment of the dam and provide information to Greater Wellington that may influence the assessment.

The full proposal is included in Greater Wellington's Annual Plan 2011/2012 – Proposed.