



Are your pond levels low?

Ponds should be at or near empty prior to 1 May each year. This allows for adequate storage of wastewater during the wet months and reduces the risk of non-compliance with regional rules.

Council will carry out additional visits to approximately 100 farms in April which routinely apply effluent to land. We will assess the levels of storage ponds and the effectiveness of stormwater diversion systems. Having an easy to use stormwater diversion system that is routinely used, reduces the volume of wastewater generated and the time and cost of running a land application system. There will be no charge for the visit and you will be notified by email if your farm has been selected. A note will be left at the time of the visit.

Please confirm your email to
rachaela@nrc.govt.nz

2018 Compliance Rates

SIGNIFICANT NON COMPLIANCE
16.6% No of Farms » 142

NON COMPLIANCE
22% No of Farms » 188

FULL COMPLIANCE
61.4% No of Farms » 525



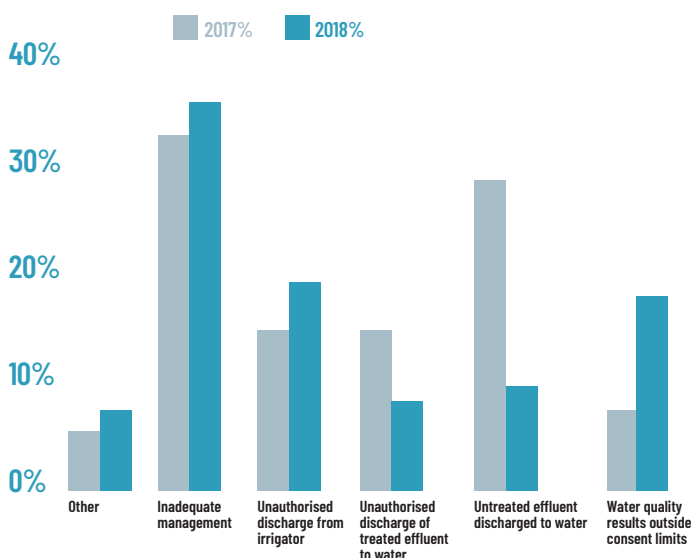
All active dairy farms in Northland were monitored between mid-July and late-November 2018.

It was encouraging to see a decrease in the rate of Significant Non-Compliance to 16.6% (the last two years at 21% and 18% respectively). The issues found however, are again largely reflective of inadequate

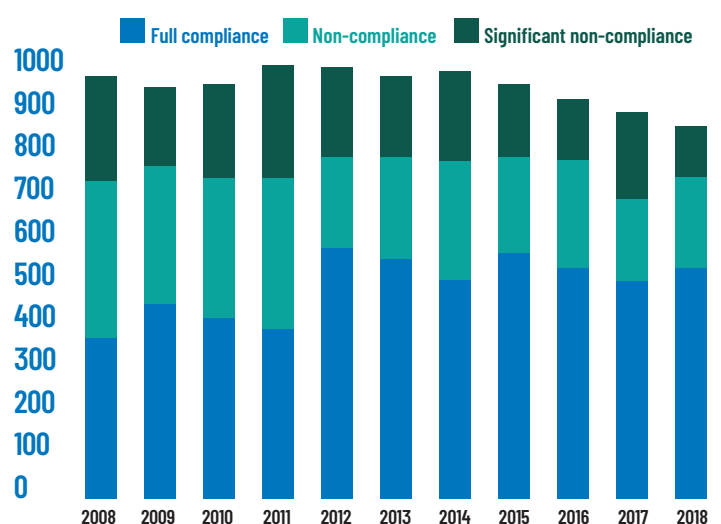
management. The reasons for significant non-compliance is seen in the graph below. In comparison to the issues found in 2017, there was a big decrease in the number of untreated wastewater discharges, however

there was a rise in water quality issues and unauthorised discharges from irrigators. A number of significant non-compliances could have been avoided with routine checks of the system.

Reasons for SNC: 2017 and 2018 Comparison



Farm dairy effluent compliance (all farms) 2008 - 2018



Routine checks of your farm system



A large proportion of significant non-compliance could be avoided with routine checks of the wastewater system.

Pipework was one issue that stood out this season, with a large number of pond overflows found due to lack of maintenance and routine checks.

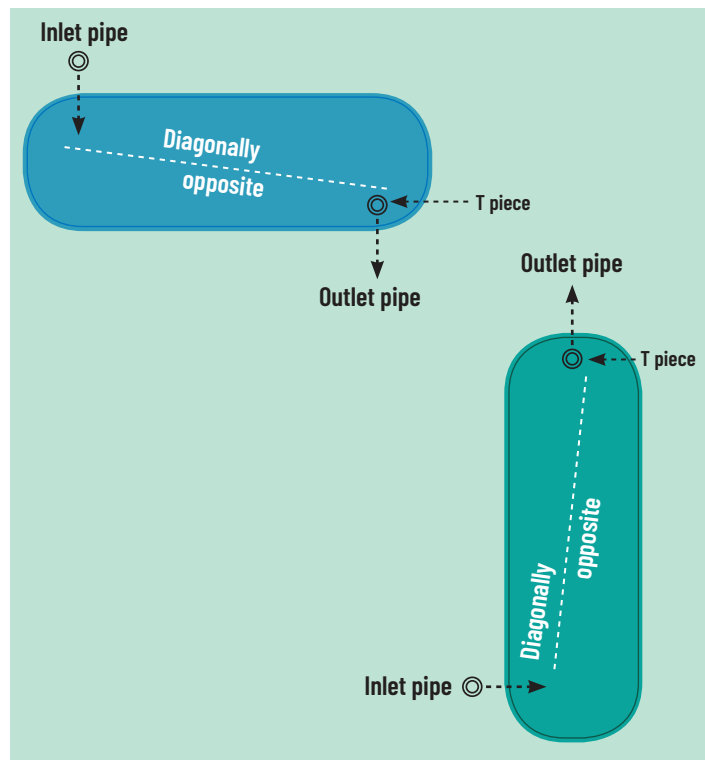
A pipe that has floated too high or has been damaged from machinery can be the difference between full compliance and significant non-compliance.

Dairy NZ has a 'self-assessment' tool available on its website. You can find it at www.dairynz.co.nz by searching 'DairyNZ Northland checklist'

Inlet and Outlet pipes in wastewater treatment ponds

With the increase in water quality issues this season, the importance of inlet and outlet pipe positioning should not be overlooked.

In each pond, pipework should be positioned diagonally opposite to avoid short-circuiting of wastewater and ensure adequate treatment.



Re-cap: How long does it take to empty your ponds?

It is important to have your pond(s) at or near empty by 1 May to ensure adequate storage/treatment of wastewater when conditions are unsuitable for land application over the winter months.

Do you know how long it takes to empty your pond(s)?

To estimate the time required use the template below. Remember this calculation does not include wastewater and rainfall entering the pond while it is being emptied.

Example

Pond working Volume (m ³)	Irrigator pumping rate	Irrigator pumping hours to empty pond
4000m ³ ÷	14m ³ /hour	= 285 hours

Your system

m ³ ÷	m ³ /hour	= hours
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Example

Irrigator pumping hours to empty pond	Irrigator hour pumping per day	Irrigator operating days
285 hours ÷	6 hour/day	= 48 days

Your system

hours ÷	hour/day	= days
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Biosecurity controls in place

Standard practice will continue for FDE Officers to 'arrive clean, leave clean'. A hygiene kit is carried in each vehicle to use when water is not available on farm.



Feeding out on races

A number of farms were found to be using feed bins or troughs on races this season. This generates additional wastewater that must be contained and/or reticulated to the treatment system. Consideration must also be given to the capacity of the system to receive additional volumes from these areas.



Rule changes are coming

Northland Regional Council is currently going through a plan change, meaning the current regional rules are still operative but the proposed rules also need to be considered. To keep up to date visit www.nrc.govt.nz and search Proposed Regional Plan.

Roof water diversion - reminder

Part of the proposed rule change is to require all roof water to be permanently diverted away from yards and wastewater systems.

A substantial number of dairy farms have permanent diversions in place, helping to reduce wastewater volumes overall. If you are yet to permanently divert roof water, warnings will be given and formal enforcement action may be taken if permanent diversions are not put in place.



Cow numbers

Any increase in cow numbers or change to the calving regime (including milking empties over winter) must be notified to council.



If no contact is made and the regime changes, it is likely the farm will be graded non-compliant. Milking through the winter months or increasing cow numbers generates additional wastewater volumes that need to be allowed for in your wastewater ponds.

Irrigators - *Out of sight out of mind?*

Whenever wastewater is applied to land it is important to carry out a visual check to make sure the irrigator is operating as it should be.

Too often farmers are caught out by not checking the irrigator (or pipework) and an issue is discovered after a problem has occurred. It is also important to keep an eye on soil moisture levels. Often some parts of the farm will be drier than others and can be used for longer periods.



Has your farm gone out of supply?



Several farms went out of supply last season without notifying council. Supply information is not shared by dairy companies; therefore, if your farm does cease supply, please notify a member of the FDE team.

If no notification is given your farm will be monitored as normal and you will be charged the cost of the inspection.

Unsure about something related to your farm dairy wastewater system?

Get in touch with our Farm Dairy Effluent team, we are here to help.



Rachael Anderson
Farm Monitoring
Manager



Nathan Walker
Farm Monitoring
Officer



Megan Evans
Farm Monitoring
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 www.nrc.govt.nz/farmmanagement