



Stock exclusion – a focus for the cooler months

With winter just around the corner, now is a good time to be making sure the fences and barriers along your farm's waterways are up to scratch.

If stock get into waterways over the cooler months, it not only raises the risk of animal disease or parasites but can also cause damage to the banks and beds of streams and rivers. Stock can also discharge dung and urine directly to water which could result in compliance action from the council (see inside pages). In most cases this is avoidable if the necessary steps are taken to ensure stock do not get into waterways.

Cattle, deer and pigs are particularly attracted to water and can have a serious impact on water quality. Sheep are much less of a problem, unless they are present in very high densities, for example when they are break-fed on a forage crop with no action to prevent access to waterways.

What's inside this issue

- › Stock exclusion compliance results are reported every six months by Environment Canterbury.
- › On the inside pages are the results for July to December 2018.
- › On the back page you will find some useful tips
- › The encouraging news is that there were only 42 call-outs during the period, down from 56 in the first six months of 2018.

Stock exclusion from waterways

JULY - DECEMBER 2018

Our rules

- > A consent is needed for intensively farmed stock to access the bed of a lake or river. This includes cattle or deer on irrigated land or contained for winter break-feeding, dairy cows or farmed pigs.
- > Cattle, deer or pigs are prohibited access to sensitive river sites such as a salmon spawning site or in a drinking water protection zone.
- > Some non-intensive stock (e.g. sheep) may access rivers and lakes provided they do not damage the bed or banks, or affect water quality.
- > Stock exclusion also forms part of Farm Environment Plans and related measures are checked during FEP Audits to ascertain whether stock exclusion GMPs are met.

Our targets

- > For intensive stock: we respond to 80% of incidents within two days.
- > For non-intensive stock: we respond to 80% of incidents within five days.

How we respond to incidents

- > Intensive stock are removed as soon as practicable. We then work with the landowner on preventative measures such as fencing waterways.
- > For non-intensive stock we ensure no damage has occurred, and then educate land-owners.

 We investigate each incident to determine whether enforcement action is needed, in addition to advice and education.

 Formal written warnings notify of an offence and require action to be taken.

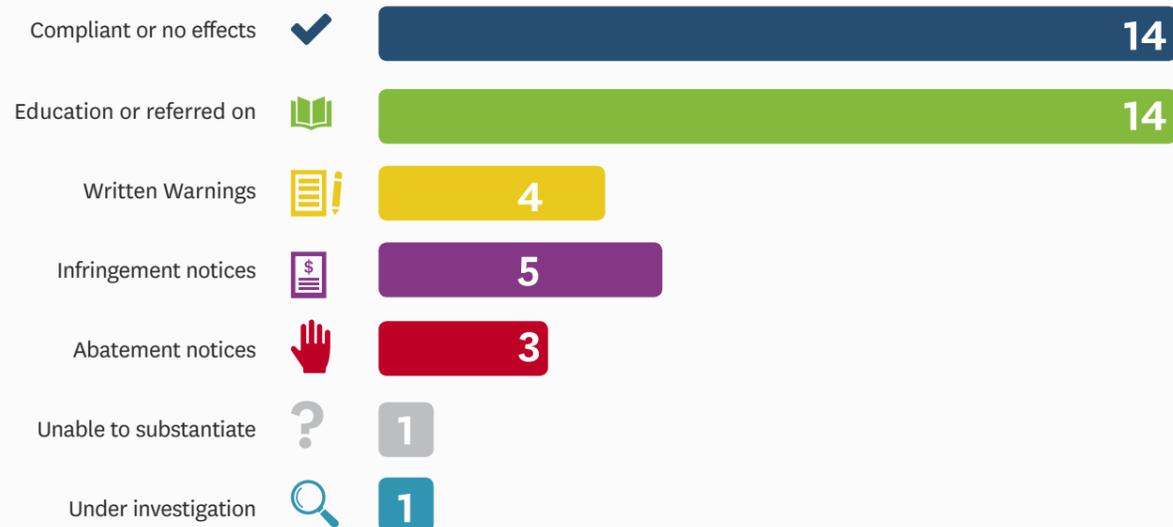
 Infringement notices, which include a fine, are issued for more significant breaches.

 Abatement notices are typically issued when the offender doesn't co-operate or if we have reason to believe that the offence could happen again.

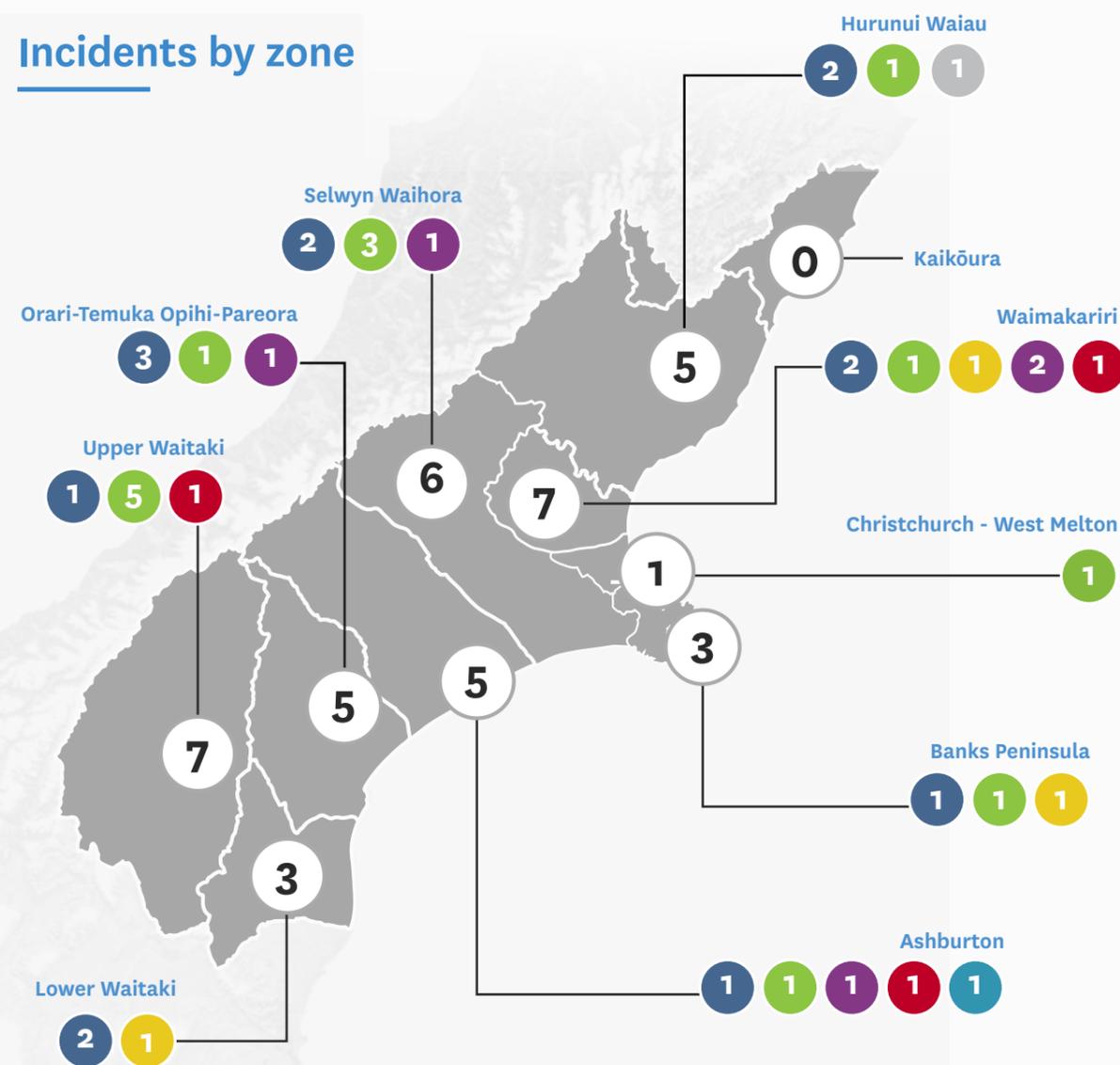
 Prosecution is reserved for offences so serious that they warrant proceedings through the courts.

What we found and how we responded to reduce environmental damage

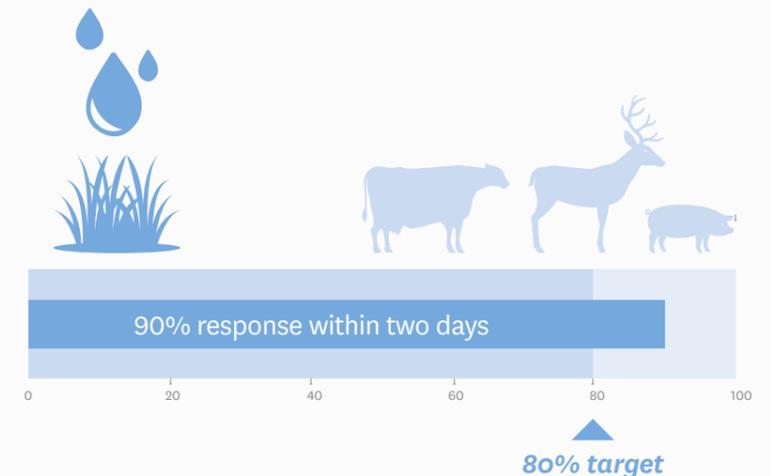
Total number of incidents **42**



Incidents by zone

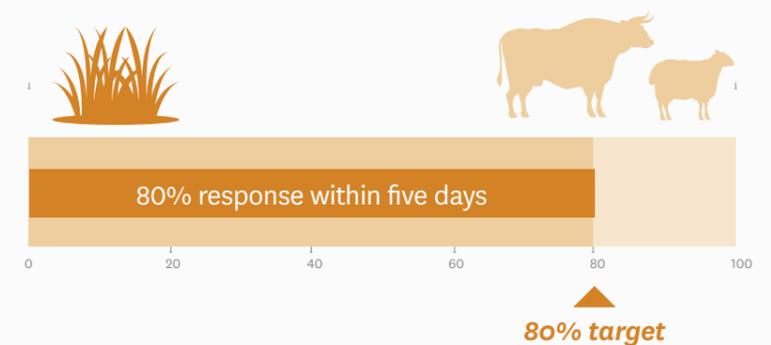


Our performance



Intensive

Stock on irrigated land: Cattle, dairy cattle, deer or farmed pigs.



Non-Intensive

Stock on non-irrigated land: Cattle or sheep.

Permitted activity

There were another seven reported incidents which, after an initial desktop review, were found to be permitted activities and did not require site visits. In such cases we educate the people involved to ensure they understand their responsibilities to protect the environment as a permitted activity.

Good Management Practices are good farming

All farming sector groups have agreed a code of Good Management Practices, including the following for stock exclusion:

To the extent that is compatible with land form, stock class and intensity, exclude stock from waterways.



Above: Fencing off waterways from stock helps protect water quality



Above: Pugging damage - not permitted

Tips and ideas on how to keep stock out of waterways



Plan and prioritise waterway areas (including wetlands) to fence, based on the vulnerability of the land, significance of the waterway and potential to impact on water quality off-farm.



Exclusion of extensively farmed stock from waterways in hill and high country areas may not be practical but rather a mix of mitigations and practices can be used to minimise sediment and faecal bacteria losses from farms.



Actively manage stock, stock density and stock classes adjacent to waterways to reduce risks to water where fencing is not practical.



Exclude stock from significant waterways, drains and significant wetlands.



Locate and manage crossing of waterways so it will not result in degradation of those waterways.



Provide alternative stock-water sources away from waterways where possible.



Provide shade and shelter away from waterways where appropriate.



Place salt blocks and supplementary feed away from riparian margins.



Leave an appropriate buffer depending on slope, to filter runoff, even if only temporarily during vulnerable periods.



During high risk periods for erosion e.g. winter grazing, fawn weaning, actively manage stock to prevent slumping, pugging or erosion.



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