

# NPCA Newsletter



National Possum  
Control Agencies

We provide a forum for agencies and stakeholders involved in possum and vertebrate pest control to cooperatively address industry issues, share information, develop best practice and promote training / professional development. Any individual or organisation engaged in the vertebrate pest control industry is eligible for membership.

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The NPCA is run by a management committee of six people and a National Co-ordinator.

### Management committee:

Mike Hawes (Chairperson) –  
*Department of Conservation*

Penny Fairbrother – *Animal Health Board*

Bill Martin – *Local Government New Zealand*

Bronwyn Shute – *Contractor*

Martin Brenstrum – *Contractor*

John Sanson – *MAF*

### National Co-ordinator:

Maurice Kennedy

## REGISTER NOW - OUR 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CONFERENCE

26-27 November 2008

**Brentwood Hotel,  
Kilbirnie, Wellington**

This year's focus is on new research and technology for pest control – with a special emphasis on field applications that make a difference for contractors and practitioners.

Take this opportunity to meet, share experiences, exchange information and network with people involved in all aspects of the vertebrate pest control industry.

Join us for presentations from:

- *scientists* on new research that makes a difference to vertebrate control;
- *practitioners* on new technologies and best practice for effective pest control;
- *manufacturers* on the latest pest control tools.

Register online and check for conference programme updates at: [www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz)

## AGM—YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE A SAY

**TIME:** 2pm, Tuesday  
25 November

**VENUE:** Board Room  
Animal Health Board  
Level 9,  
Guardian Trust House,  
15 Williston Street,  
Wellington

Two management committee members are elected annually at the AGM – please come and cast your vote!

Any individual or organisation engaged in the vertebrate pest control industry is eligible for membership, with the following benefits:

- have a say in NPCA activities;
- contribute to the industry's development;
- keep up to date through our publication and information services;
- access training programmes.

To become a member visit our website: [www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz)

National Possum Control Agencies, PO Box 11461, Wellington 6142.

Tel (04) 499 7559, Fax (04) 473 1603, Email: [npca@xtra.co.nz](mailto:npca@xtra.co.nz), Website: [www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz)

## REGISTER NOW - OUR 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CONFERENCE

As the following outline shows, the conference programme is shaping up well.

### WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER

#### SYMPOSIUM ONE: LATEST 1080 RESEARCH

**Chair: Penny Fairbrother**, NPCA committee member, Research Co-ordinator Animal Health Board

New findings including the breakdown of 1080 in common NZ soil types, inducing possum shyness in dogs, kea in regard to 1080 operations, and plant uptake of 1080.

#### SYMPOSIUM TWO: MORE THAN JUST POSSUMS

**Chair: Mike Hawes**, NPCA Chairperson, Technical Support Advisor (animal threats), Department of Conservation

New tools and best practice for monitoring and control of a range of vertebrate pests including stoats, feral cats, wallabies, pigs and ferrets.

#### SYMPOSIUM THREE: NEW WAYS OF USING OLD TOOLS

**Chair: Penny Fairbrother**, NPCA committee member, Research Co-ordinator Animal Health Board

Reducing weka deaths; targeting habitats requiring control, cost-effective multi-species control and multi-species baits for smart pest control.

#### SYMPOSIUM FOUR: TAKING IT TO THE MARKET

**Chair: Charlie Eason**, Lincoln University / Connovation Ltd.

Registration of new toxins; field trials of deer repellent bait; thinking beyond 1080.

#### POSTER SESSION

A chance to interact directly with researchers before drinks and nibbles - informal presentations about topics depicted in poster displays will focus on new toxins and baits for multi-species control.

### THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER

#### SESSION ONE: 20-MINUTE PAPERS

Includes an update on changes in Animal Health Board vector management and the National Performance Measurement System review; working with ERMA; review of kill traps; possum control on pasture/forest margins; use of chew cards in possum control; and ethical issues.

#### SESSION TWO: TRADE PRESENTATIONS

Presentations from manufacturers and distributors on control tools, products and accessories for pest control and population monitoring.

We are continually updating the programme as details are confirmed. Keep checking for updates at [www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz) – and don't forget to register! Registration forms can be downloaded from our website and either posted or emailed.

## NEW WATER SAMPLING & TESTING GUIDELINE FOR 1080 MONITORING

Those responsible for monitoring aerial 1080 baiting operations should be aware of a new guideline for sampling and testing water associated with such operations.

The July 2008 guideline is available online at: [http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/services/laboratories/toxlab/protocol\\_water.asp](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/services/laboratories/toxlab/protocol_water.asp)

It was updated for the first time in ten years following a project initiated by NPCA in 2007 to review research into the potential risks of contamination of water supplies by 1080. The review of water monitoring and research into 1080-treated catchments since 1990 revealed no evidence of drinking water having been con-

taminated and indicated that contamination is highly improbable if current safety procedures are followed.

The research findings also indicated that any residual 1080 is most likely to be detected in water samples taken within 8 hours after a 1080 aerial drop. The guideline has been amended to reflect these findings. While sampling intervals and frequency for each 1080 operation should always be confirmed by a hydrologist, sampling over extended periods may no longer be required.

Water samples taken for monitoring 1080 are tested at the Landcare Research Toxicology Laboratory. The results are usually available within 5-10 days but a

24-hour service is available for critical samples on request.

The results are also recorded in a database of over 2,000 water samples tested for 1080 contamination since 1990. Laboratory Manager, Lynn Booth, says the database is an invaluable centralised and co-ordinated source of information.

"For the database to be really useful we need to get good information about each 1080 operation with the water samples. It's really important that the Sample Form available in the new guideline is fully completed and submitted with every batch of water samples."

For more information contact: Lynn Booth, Tel (03) 321 9617 or [Boothl@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:Boothl@landcareresearch.co.nz).

## Toxicology Laboratory Services



As well as the 1080 water analyses described on page 2, the Landcare Research Toxicology Laboratory provides a range of services that may be of interest to those involved in the pest control industry, including:

- quality assurance testing for **baits** being used in pest control operations;
- analysis of environmental samples such as water, soil, meat, eggs, milk and weathered baits for **pesticide residues**;
- testing of urine and blood plasma for possible **worker exposure to 1080**;
- analysis of **animal tissues** for pesticide residues in cases of suspected poisoning, including invertebrate tissues, vertebrate tissues, serum, plasma, and urine.

For more information on these services, including online protocols for sampling and testing, see:

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/services/laboratories/toxlab/services.asp#protocols>

Or contact:  
Lynn Booth, Laboratory Manager  
(03) 321 9617.

## VECTORLINK / PDA TRAINING

Since March this year, NPCA has co-ordinated the delivery of ten VectorLink PDA (Personal Digital Assistants) training days.

The courses were a great success, with such high demand in the South Island that additional days were organised to cope with the extra participants.

All aspects of VectorLink and PDA training were covered to prepare participants for work in the field, enabling field operatives with little to no prior experience to come to grips with the new technology.

Course evaluations received from participants indicated that the training days had been highly productive and educational for all involved. Of particular note were the comments praising the high level of practical and theoretical facilitator knowledge and the high tutor-to-participant ratio.

Mike Morrison (DoC) and Rob Hill (AHB) provided specialist tutor and technical input to support the course directors, who were Diederik Meenken, Brent Rohloff, Rod Smillie and Ron Walker.

## PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK FOR PEST MANAGEMENT

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand is leading a project to develop a Performance Measurement Framework for pest management.

The project objective is to develop a framework which all pest management agencies can use to measure, understand and report performance. The framework will need to integrate with agency reporting systems, and support regional and national level reporting.

The benefits of implementing a framework include:

- A common approach to performance measurement, with an agreed set of performance indicators and a single standard for data capture and reporting.
- Clearer linkages between regional and national outcomes
- Clearer understanding of performance leading to improved decision making by all agencies across the sector
- Information can be more easily shared between agencies and with stakeholders.

A review of the current state of performance measurement across the sector has recently been completed with input from key agencies, including Regional Councils, the Department of Conservation and the Animal Health Board. The 'current state' report has highlighted that a range of approaches to performance measurement exist across different agencies at present, and recommends the introduction of a common framework which will allow information to be presented in a simple graphical format.

Next steps for the project will include development of a conceptual framework, followed by a pilot trial using existing pest programmes before finalisation of the framework design.

Future stages for this project will include analysis of tools needed to support data collection, analysis and reporting (including GIS tools), and planning for the implementation of the framework.

## NPCA PROJECT UPDATE

NPCA's work is guided by an annual operational plan, which is closely linked to our strategic aims of quality assurance, public relations and communications, research and technology transfer and liaison with regulatory agencies.

### Projects completed and initiatives undertaken in the year ended June 2008 include:

- Updated possum monitoring protocols for both leg-hold and Waxtag® methods.
- Initiated a review of literature on water sampling for 1080 that in turn led to the updating of Landcare Research's best practice protocol
- Developed a best practice guideline for control and monitoring feral pigs.
- Began work on a best practice guideline for controlling feral and unwanted cats.
- Developed a logo and design style for NPCA publications and communications.
- Produced employer and field guidelines for monitoring occupational exposure to 1080.

### Projects to be undertaken in the 2008 – 09 year include:

- Production of brochures on commonly used toxins for vertebrate pest control.
- Update trapping best practice booklets to incorporate new trapping regulations.
- Review best practice guidelines for use of 1080 carrot bait in consultation with ERMA.
- Review best practice guidelines for controlling and monitoring pest rabbits.
- Develop a guideline on the use of possum control tools that can be used without a license.

## NPCA PUBLICATIONS – AVAILABLE ONLINE

Most NPCA publications can now be downloaded free from [www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz).

"One of our important and ongoing roles is to ensure there is up-to-date, reliable and practical information available for all those involved with vertebrate pest control," says NPCA National Co-ordinator, Maurice Kennedy.

"The online downloads have made that information more accessible and will, we hope, encourage more people to make use of it."

Maurice says that all NPCA's publications are regularly reviewed and updated as required.

"We need to keep up with new research, product and technical development as well as periodic changes in the regulatory environment. It's our objective to ensure that NPCA's protocols, guidelines and general information items reflect current knowledge and best practice."

### Rangitoto honey production

When updating *The Questions and Answers on 1080* booklet, successful pest control case studies in the first edition were followed up. Early successes were found to have led to more.

At Rangitoto Island, for instance, Mike Stuckey of Waitemata Honey, recalled the changes he noticed over several decades.

He recalls that honey harvests, although subject to weather varia-

tions, had been reasonably steady for many years until the early '70s. Production then dwindled due to possum damage until, by 1990, production was barely economic.

Possums and wallabies were eradicated in the early 1990s, starting with a 1080 drop in 1990. Mike says new shoots on the previously bare pohutukawa tree trunks began appearing within weeks of the drop.

"You could see huge amounts of growth, in the canopy and underneath as well, but it was mainly foliage with no immediate increase in flowering. They just put all their energy into recovery. Then, flowering gradually started to increase and improved pretty steadily."

An exceptional flowering season in the 2007-2008 summer saw a bumper honey harvest.

"I reckon it took about ten years for the trees to recover fully," says Mike. "The island is a totally different place now and it's not just the pohutukawas – the other trees like rewarewa are all flourishing too, and the bird life."

The Department of Conservation is now planning to eradicate the remaining seven species of mammalian pests on the island.

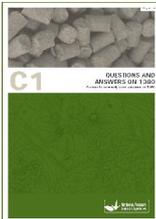
*If you know of anecdotal success stories like this, please let us know. Contact Maurice Kennedy:  
Tel: (04) 499 7559 or  
Email: [npca@xtra.co.nz](mailto:npca@xtra.co.nz)*



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The following publications have been either updated or released as new publications this year.

### Questions and Answers on 1080 (Code C1)



Answers commonly asked questions about possum control and the use of 1080. Written for the general public, it explains up-to-date research and assists people to assess the relative risks and benefits of the possum control programme.

20-page, A5-size booklet.

### Protect Your Animals from 1080 (Code C2)



Background information about accidental poisoning of non-target vertebrate species, including cats, pigs, sheep, rabbits, deer, horses, humans, birds and dogs. Includes information on species' susceptibility, symptoms, diagnosis, prevention and emergency treatment. For landowner and general public audience. Suitable for use as a handout and for letter box drops by agencies responsible for 1080 operations.

Brochure; available in 3 versions, each with contact information specific to AHB, DOC or Regional Councils. Order direct from NPCA.

Brochure; available in 3 versions, each with contact information specific to AHB, DOC or Regional Councils. Order direct from NPCA.

### 1080 and Dogs Don't Mix (Code C3)



A checklist for dog owners of precautions to minimise risks of 1080 poisoning. Includes a section on recognising signs of 1080 poisoning and an action plan for cases of accidental poisoning.

Brochure, available free online or order direct from NPCA.

### The Possum Busters are Coming (Code C4)



A brochure aimed at the parents and caregivers of preschool children for use by agencies and contractors as part of pre-operational public awareness initiatives.

Developed by NPCA in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Medical Officers of Health as part of the schools' package.

Brochure; available in 3 versions, each with contact information specific to AHB, DOC or Regional Councils. Order direct from NPCA.

### Water Sampling for Sodium fluoroacetate (1080) – How Much is Enough? (Code B5.1)



Report by Charlie Eason and Wayne Temple, commissioned by NPCA, which led to the updating of the *Water Sampling for 1080 Guideline* (refer page 2 of this newsletter).

This report is a thorough review of research findings relevant to water sampling for 1080 carried out by two respected scientists with extensive knowledge of toxicology.

Dr Charlie Eason is with CE Research Associates and was formerly with the Centre for Environmental Toxicology at Landcare Research.

Dr Wayne Temple is the Director of the National Poisons Centre at the University of Otago.

12-page, A4-size booklet.

### Protect Yourself on the Job; Prevent exposure to 1080 (Code B6.2)



A guideline for employees working with 1080.

Colour brochure available online or printed copies free from NPCA plus postage and packaging.

### How to give a Good Urine Sample; Monitoring for occupational exposure to 1080 (Code B6.3)



For employers and employees.

Brochure available online and printed copies free from NPCA plus postage and packaging.

### Possum and Ferret Traps: A report to inform and advise users of trapping products to ensure appropriate product selection and use.



Prepared for the Animal Health Board by Southern Pest Management, this provides a detailed assessment of the different types of leg-hold, kill and live-capture possum and ferret traps, according to specified performance and animal welfare criteria. Includes information about availability and prices valid as at July 2007.

96-page, A4-size booklet.

## NEW PUBLICATION FORMATS

A new distinctive NPCA publications style has been developed this year and applied to all current publications.

### The 'A series': Best Practice Guidelines for Controlling and Monitoring Vertebrate Pests

Includes:

- Protocols for possum population monitoring
- Best practice guidelines for monitoring and control of pest rabbits, rooks, hares, pigs, mustelids and wallabies



### The 'B series': Guidelines on regulatory pest control requirements

Includes:

- Legislation guide
- Safe handling of vertebrate toxic agents
- Signage and toxic agent tracking requirements for pest control operations.



### The 'C series': Public awareness materials

Includes:

- Information leaflets and booklets about 1080
- Information leaflets about safety precautions in regards to 1080; children, dogs and non-target animals.

