

# KEY MESSAGES ON AIR QUALITY

## MESSAGES DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO THE AUCKLAND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE'S POSITION STATEMENT ON AIR QUALITY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES

### What has happened?

- In April 2009 the Auckland Regional Public Health Service released a position statement on air pollution and early childhood education services. The position statement can be found at [www.arphs.govt.nz](http://www.arphs.govt.nz).
- The Auckland Regional Public Health Service position statement outlines **INTERIM** assessment criteria for **NEW** early childhood education services in the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's catchment of Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata District Health Boards **ONLY**.
- The Auckland Regional Public Health Service position statement, which only applies to the Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata District Health Boards, has a review date of August 2009.

### What are the Ministry's key messages in response to the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's position statement?

- The Ministry of Education is responsible for licensing early childhood education services and, first and foremost, the Ministry considers the health, safety and wellbeing of children in early childhood education services as paramount.
- To licence a new service the *Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008* requires that every application for a licence be accompanied by a report from the Director-General of Health, or a person nominated by the Director-General of Health, assessing:
  - that the relevant aspects of the premises and facilities standards and the health and safety practices standards are likely to be complied with

#### AND

- that the premises and facilities to be used by the service are suitable for use as a service.
- A health report contains a mix of evidentiary findings and recommendations; the Ministry makes licensing decisions based on evidence on a case-by-case basis.
- In Auckland the Director-General for Health has delegated the responsibility to carry out health and safety assessments to the Auckland Regional Public Health Service.
- The Ministry is working with the Auckland Regional Public Health Service, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for the Environment to determine an appropriate national response to concerns about air pollution and early childhood education services.
- In the interim the Ministry continues to consider health reports on a case-by-case basis when licensing new services.

## QUESTIONS

**I have already started to build my new early childhood education service in Auckland; will the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's position statement stop me from being licensed?**

No, not meeting the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's interim assessment criteria does not necessarily mean that the Ministry of Education will not licence a service.

However, any decision to either stop, or to continue, building is the decision of the service alone.

**Do the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's interim assessment criteria apply elsewhere in New Zealand?**

No, the Auckland Regional Public Health Service's interim assessment criteria do not apply elsewhere in New Zealand

The Ministry of Education is working with the Auckland Regional Public Health Service, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for the Environment to determine an appropriate national response to concerns about air pollution and early childhood education services.

In the interim the Ministry of Education continues to consider health reports on a case-by-case basis when licensing new services.