

Coal Dust Resource Consent Renewal

We are in the process of renewing our Coal Dust Resource Consent, which enables us to store and handle coal for export.



Why?

Our prior consent was granted in 1997 and is due to expire in 2022.

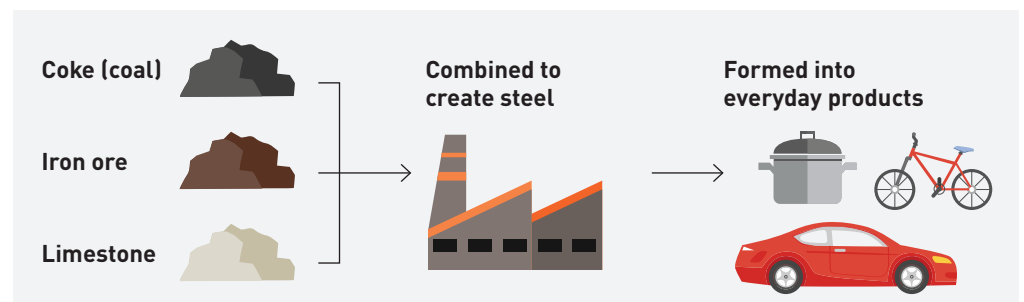
Since that time, new national standards for air quality have come into effect as part of the Resource Management Act (RMA). The new standards require detailed assessments to be undertaken as part of the resource consent application, and these will take place in the coming months. Our new consent application is due to be lodged mid-2021 and preparations for this are now underway.

What kind of coal do we export at Lyttelton Port?

Approximately 95% of the coal we store at LPC is a type of coal called “coking coal”. When most people think of coal, they think of thermal coal - coal which is burned for heat and widely associated with the effects of climate change. Coking coal, however, is actually one of the ingredients used to make steel.

The coal we store at LPC comes in by train from the West Coast and is shipped mostly to China, Japan, India and Australia. New Zealand coking coal is considered some of the best in the world due to its high carbon content. It enjoys strong export demand and makes a significant contribution to our regional economy.

Coke to steel production

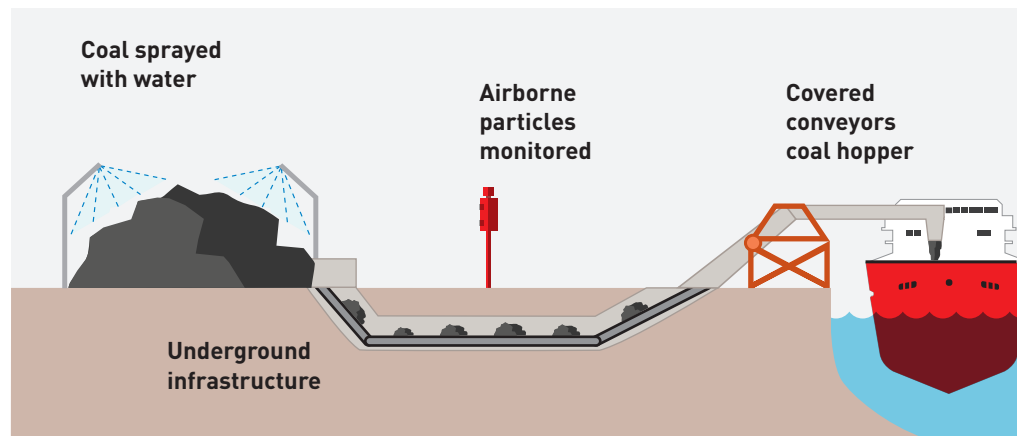


What impacts might coal storage and handling at LPC have for you?

An issue with coal storage and handling is the dust that can get blown off the yard on windy days. We minimise coal dust in a range of ways, for example spraying water on the yard using a water truck and sprinkler system when high risk weather is identified. This prevents dust from being blown around and becoming a nuisance or potential health hazard. All water is also collected and treated before it can be safely discharged.

To ensure that any dust that does travel away from the yard is kept well within safe levels we will be setting up monitoring stations in your area in November 2020, in addition to the existing 13 sites we already have around the Port. These will contain highly sensitive equipment that will continually monitor very fine airborne particles (e.g. PM10 and PM2.5). This way we can measure safe coal dust levels at all times and quickly address any issues should they occur.

How we minimise coal dust



What are our main focuses?

1. Nuisance Effects

This includes things like noticing coal dust on surfaces around your property, called “deposition”. While not necessarily harmful (and in fact, it’s often found to be smoke particulate rather than coal), we recognise that deposition is an undesirable effect that we need to monitor and minimise.

2. Human Health Effects

Our consent will require us to keep coal dust below levels that might impact human health in all residential and recreational areas. (A 2019 analysis by Source Testing NZ showed that even on-site in our coal yard, the level of coal dust exposure was unlikely to result in adverse health effects for the average worker.)

3. Other Effects

As part of the consent process we will be investigating effects in other areas as well, such as ecology, recreation and mahinga kai values.

Where are we up to in the process?

As a nearby resident you are part of our first step – public consultation.

We will also be holding community drop-in sessions (dates to be advised), consulting with a range of other stakeholders and interested parties, and performing modelling and monitoring before lodging our consent application mid-2021.

Your voice is important to us.

We welcome questions, comments and concerns from our neighbouring residents and the wider community.

We will be creating a page on the LPC website, sharing articles in the LPC Update and sending out regular emails over the next 12 months to the community. Please keep an eye on lpc.co.nz for the latest information.

Ask us a question:

We are compiling an FAQ page for our website and would love to hear your questions.

Share your experience:

We want to hear about your experience with coal dust this summer. If you have any concerns or would like to share your observations with us, please do.

Get in touch:

To ask a question, or register to receive regular information on this process, please contact:

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