



# OHAI UPDATE

August 2005



The bund at Ohai.

## Noise Concerns at Ohai

The move from underground to opencast mining by Solid Energy in 2003 has created associated environmental impacts previously not experienced by the Ohai community. The main impact has been the increase in noise levels especially as mining moved closer to the township.

Solid Energy engaged an acoustical engineer to advise on mitigation measures that would reduce the impact on the community. As a result of the engineer's recommendations, Solid Energy is currently constructing a bund that will serve as a barrier to screen our operation from the town and reduce noise impacts. It has

not been created to stockpile overburden as reported in the Southland Times recently. The construction of the bund began early this year. The bund will be completed in November this year, fully grassed and put back into pasture.

Some residents have expressed concerns to us about night time noise from our site, particularly in relation to the construction of the bund. Our investigations to date indicate that cold frosty weather leads to the creation of a thermal inversion layer over the area, deflecting some of this noise back down into the township.

As soon as we became aware of the issue,

we put in place a number of measures to minimise noise levels when this type of weather occurs, particularly at night. Noise levels from our site are restricted under our resource consent.

We have discussed this issue with the Southland District Council and are committed to ensuring that we remain within our consents and that we are a good neighbour. If you have any concerns about noise on our site please call me on 03 225 4300.

Robert Watson

## Community Sponsorship



Ohai Area Manager Robert Watson delivers environmentally friendly bags and fluoro safety vests to pupils at Takitimu Primary School.

More on community sponsorship over page.

## Ohai Consultative Group



A meeting of the Ohai Consultative Group, held at the Ohai Fire Station.

The Ohai Consultative Group was established by Solid Energy at the end of last year to keep residents and interest groups informed about Ohai operational activities, while also giving them the chance to raise and discuss any concerns and issues they may have.

Since December last year three meetings have been held, and the main topics have been our blasting practices and subsequent noise and dust issues.

The meetings have been a great opportunity to listen and discuss concerns face to face and have created a successful vehicle for issues to be addressed.

If you would like to be involved in the consultation group please contact Robert Watson, Ohai Area Manager (details are at the end of this newsletter).

## Staff Profile: Barry Sayers – Laboratory and Environmental Co-ordinator



Barry Sayers, monitoring Morley Stream, Ohai.

Barry Sayer, Solid Energy's Environmental Co-ordinator at Ohai, has seen a lot of changes at the Ohai Coalfields during his 39-year mining career.

Barry began working for State Coal Mines at the Wairaki No. 3 workshop in October 1966, then worked as a blacksmith striker making rail crossings for the two Wairaki Underground Mines. Barry helped create the main drive at Wairaki No.5 Mine, before

moving roles to work as an apprentice Mine Electrician at Morley Mine in 1968.

It was at Beaumont Mine in 1979 that Barry noticed the biggest jump in the mining industry, when mechanised mining was introduced through machines such as the Alpine F6A roadheader, the Dosco roadheader and joy shuttlecars. These machines were a major step ahead from the banjo shovel and the mine tubs running on rails and operated by a winch, which had previously been in use!

Today, as Laboratory and Environmental Co-ordinator, Barry's role deals with a lot of the environmental issues at Ohai, such as monitoring dust and noise levels, managing the waste water treatment plant and recording and investigating all public complaints.

If you have any issues about Ohai Operations you would like to discuss with Barry, contact him on 0800 685 425.

## Mock Accident Tests Health and Safety Procedures



The "mock" accident scene, on site at Ohai.

Health and Safety has long been a top priority for all of Solid Energy's operational sites.

Recently, the Ohai team took part in a "Mock Accident" scenario to test the competency of their health and safety procedures.

The team, consisting of Solid Energy and Ohai Mining Ltd staff, and members of the Ohai Fire Brigade and Mines Rescue, were presented

with a collision between a light van and a truck where one occupant was trapped with a serious head injury.

Ohai Area Manager Robert Watson says he was very happy with the way the exercise was conducted, particularly as the team had to deal with heavy rain in harsh night-time conditions.

### Community Sponsorship continued...

This year, Solid Energy's Ohai operation has widened the scope of its community sponsorship and has supported a range of new local clubs, groups and schools while also continuing with previous initiatives including:

- Ohai Playcentre
- Ohai Women's Bowling Club
- Nightcaps Ladies' Bowling Club
- Western Southland Showjumping
- Ohai Golf Club
- St Thomas' School PTA
- Awarua Boating Club
- Ohai and Nightcaps Bowling Club
- Otago and Southland Axemen
- Drummond Kindergarten
- Takitimu Primary School
- St Patricks Primary School

The sponsorship of environmentally friendly bags and fluoro safety vests for pupils at Takitimu and St Patricks Schools (pictured on the front page) earlier this year has been a very successful project for Solid Energy.

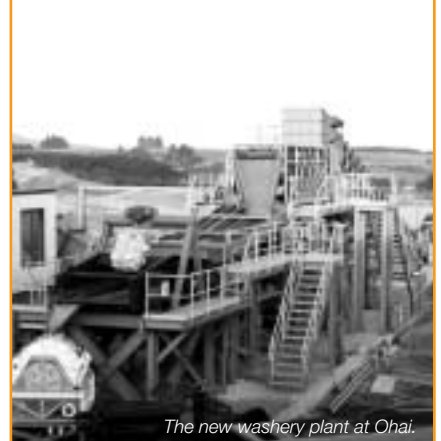
## Congratulations

Congratulations to Chris Proctor (Ohai Plant Operator) and Brett McGregor (Ohai Coal Quality Geologist) for winning a Solid Energy Ohai Health and Safety and Environmental award. The awards are a new initiative to Ohai, where employees are recognised for exceptional performance in the area of health and safety or environmental performance, on a three-monthly basis.

**Chris** was recognised for his proactive approach in insuring visitors were complying with site health & safety rules. In one instance he insisted that a visitor get back into his vehicle as he was not wearing appropriate personal protection equipment.

**Brett** was recognised for ensuring that site traffic management rules were adhered to. Brett has been very assertive in reminding contractors and staff that standards are not to be compromised.

## New Washery Plant Set to Improve Coal Quality



The new washery plant at Ohai.

Ohai Operation's new washery plant will improve the quality of coal leaving Ohai Mine.

Once it is fully operational, the new plant should reduce the "contamination" of bagged and household coal by dross and give staff the ability to screen wet coal from the mine.

The new washery uses a rising current of water to lift coal through a vertical pipe and onto a screening system, while heavier contaminated stone sinks through a rising water column.

The screening system splits the coal into nut, peas, chip and fines sizes. It then passes through a rising column classifier which cleans the coal, then passes it onto a dewatering screen.

The nuts and peas travel by conveyor into the existing screen plant for final screening, where they are loaded out to the bagging plant.

The chip coal passes through a centrifuge, which spins the water out before stockpiling it for blending.

The plant has been built using local contractors from Nightcaps, Wreys Bush, Otautau, Winton and Invercargill.

## Contact

If you would like any further information on any aspects of Solid Energy's Ohai Operations please contact Robert Watson, Ohai Area Manager, tel: 03 225 4300 or after hours, 0800 685 425.

All correspondence will be recorded in a register and investigated immediately, if required.

