

Wastewater drug testing in New Zealand: Quarter Three 2020 Findings

National Overview

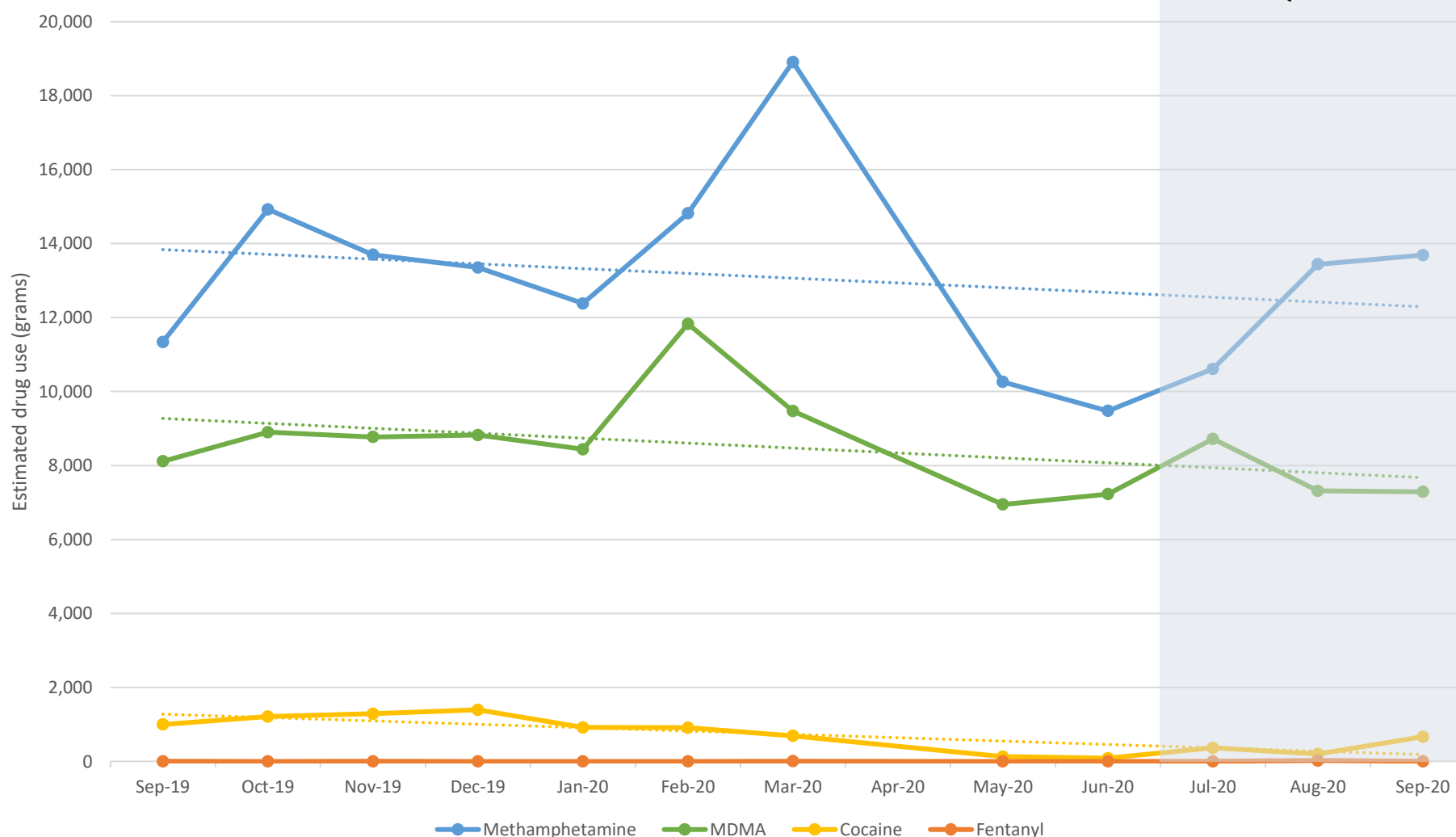
NOTES

- The wastewater testing regime has expanded to 45 testing locations across New Zealand, covering up to 75 percent of the total population. Wastewater testing occurs during one week per month, however the frequency of testing varies between sites.
- Q3 2020 covers the reporting period July to September 2020 (inclusive).
- All data is representative of the sites tested and care should be taken when extrapolating from testing site to District results.

KEY UPDATES

- From Q2 2020, quarterly reporting will occur in alignment with the calendar year; **Q1:** January – March, **Q2:** April – June, **Q3:** July – September, **Q4:** October – December.
- The realignment of reporting quarters has resulted in February and March being excluded from quarterly reporting in 2020. February and March will continue to be depicted in year-to-date national consumption trends, as shown in the graph below.
- In September 2020, Waipukurau was added as a testing site within Eastern District. The Kerikeri testing site is no longer participating in the wastewater testing programme.

WEEKLY NATIONAL DRUG USE



KEY FINDINGS: Q3 2020

METHAMPHETAMINE

- The average national total load steadily increased during Q3 to 12.6 kilograms. This is an increase of 27 percent from the average total weekly load in Q2 of 2020.
- Northland, Eastern and Bay of Plenty Districts had the highest methamphetamine consumption per capita.

MDMA

- On average, 7.8 kilograms of MDMA was consumed nationally per week during Q3. This is a slight increase in comparison with Q2 where the average weekly consumption was 7.1 kilograms.
- Southern, Wellington and Canterbury Districts continued to consume the most MDMA per capita throughout Q3.

COCAINE

- The average national weekly consumption of cocaine was 0.4 kilograms during Q3. This is a slight increase when compared with Q2 where 0.1 kilograms were consumed.
- Tāmaki Makaurau, Canterbury and Southern Districts consumed the most cocaine per capita during Q3.

The average consumption of all drugs tested for during Q3 2020 was higher in comparison with Q2. This is likely due to changes in supply and demand behaviour as New Zealand moved out of COVID-19 restrictions.

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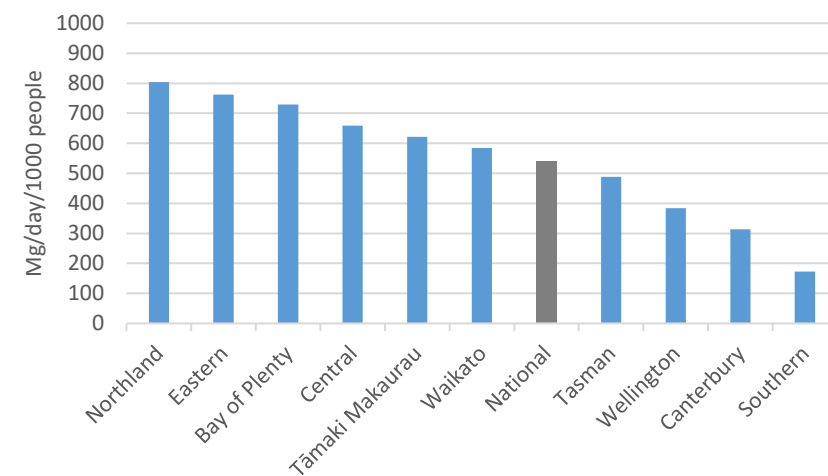
Police District Overview

NOTES

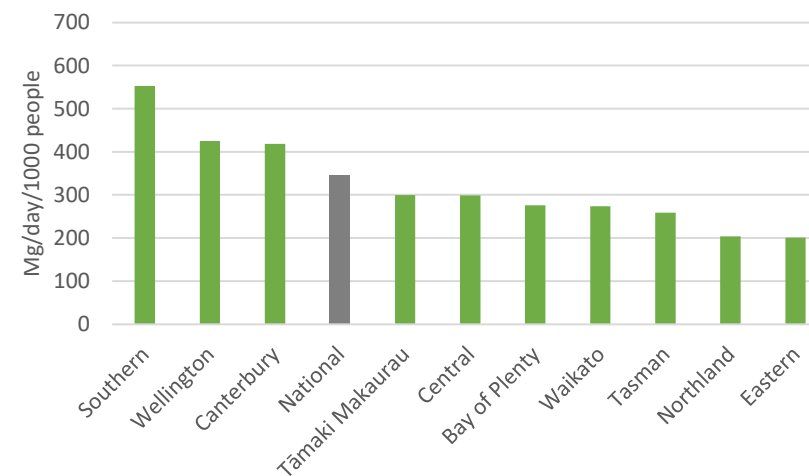
- Per capita graphs are not shown on a comparative scale, due to the variance in consumption levels across different drug types. Drug use is shown as milligrams consumed per day, per 1,000 people.
- Average weekly drug use graphs show the average consumption in grams for each commodity tested for, by district, throughout Q3 2020. The graphs for Tāmaki Makaurau, Wellington and Canterbury have been enlarged to reflect the higher levels of consumption in metropolitan areas.
- Tasman District had an unusual fentanyl increase during the week of testing in August 2020, which has significantly impacted the quarterly average. This was investigated and found to be a testing anomaly.

PER CAPITA DRUG USE BY DISTRICT Q3 2020

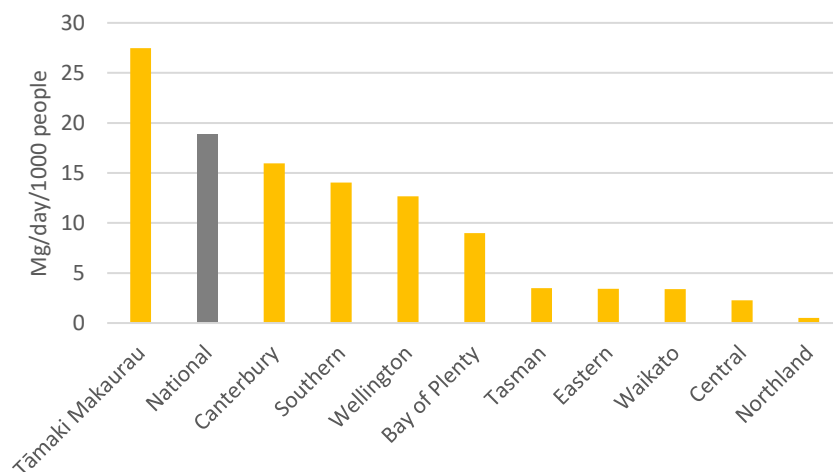
METHAMPHETAMINE: PREVALENCE PER CAPITA



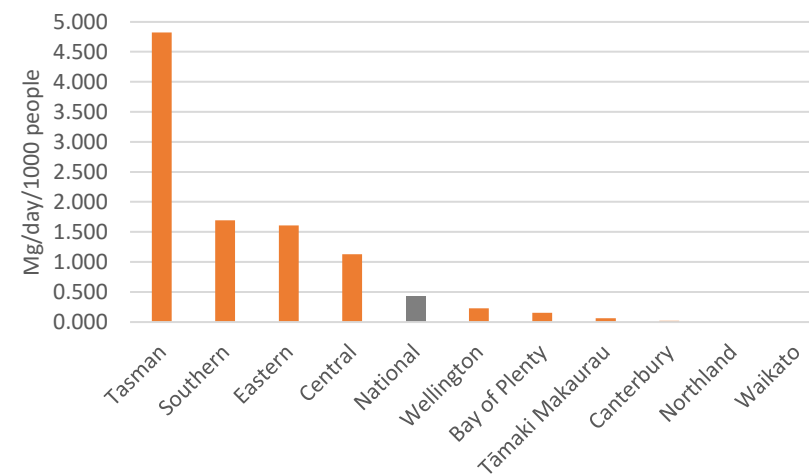
MDMA: PREVALENCE PER CAPITA



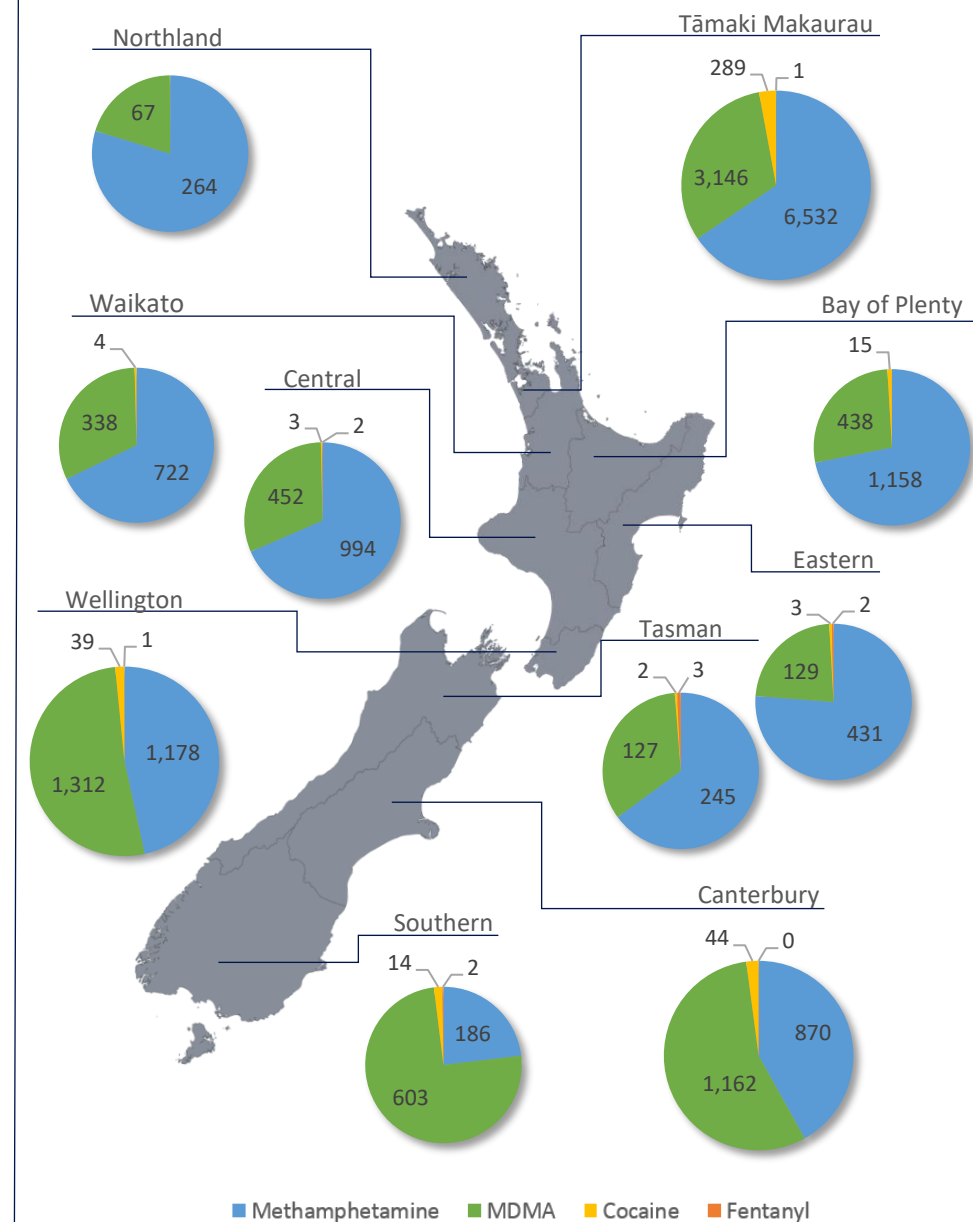
COCAINE: PREVALENCE PER CAPITA



FENTANYL: PREVALENCE PER CAPITA



AVERAGE WEEKLY DRUG USE BY DISTRICT Q3 2020 (GRAMS)



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Sample Site Overview



NOTES

- The below graphs illustrate the proportion of drug use detected at each testing site during Q3 2020, which aims to highlight the difference in patterns of drug use throughout New Zealand.
- Q3 2020 covers the reporting period July to September 2020 (inclusive).
- Kerikeri was not tested throughout Q3 2020, and is no longer a part of the wastewater testing programme.
- Waipukurau was added as a testing site in September 2020.

