



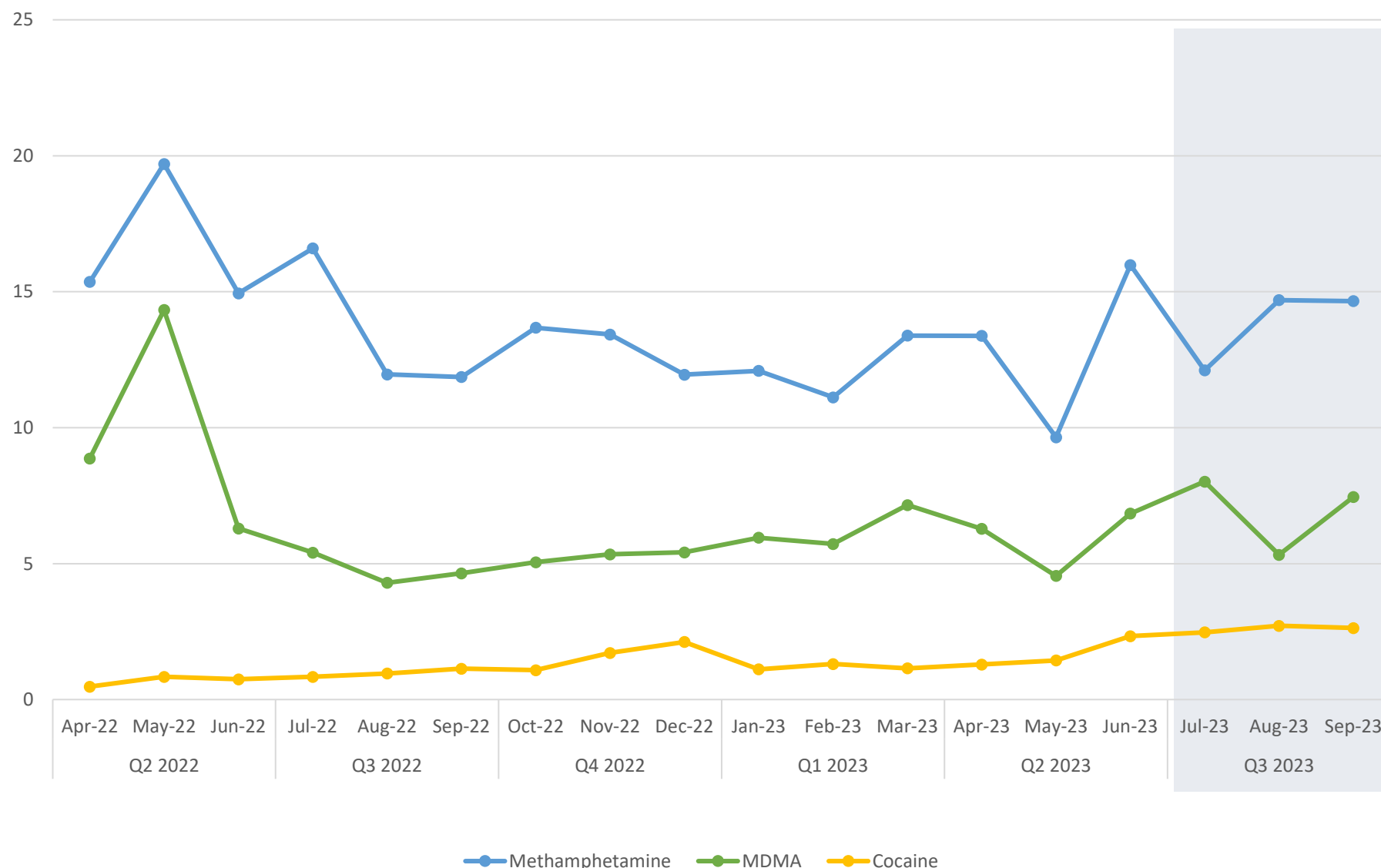
Wastewater Drug Testing in New Zealand: National Overview

Quarter Three: July – September 2023



- Wastewater testing occurs during one week each month, however the frequency of testing varies between sites. Nationwide testing started in November 2018, with current testing sites covering up to 75 percent of the total New Zealand population. While the nationwide programme tests for indicators of consumption of methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl, the three commodities routinely detected in sufficient quantities to accurately report on are methamphetamine, MDMA and cocaine.
- Q3 2023 covers the three month period between July and September 2023 (inclusive).
- All data is representative of the sites tested only. It is not possible to extrapolate this data to nearby communities that are not tested.
- Drug use is calculated from the concentration of each drug biomarker detected in the wastewater. This is reflective of the amount of pure drug being consumed and does not include fillers, binders or adulterants.
- The social harm cost estimates are derived from the New Zealand Illicit Drug Harm Index 2020 (DHI 2020). The DHI 2020 provides a conservative measure of the harms associated with the use of illicit drugs in New Zealand and considers both personal and community harms.

Estimated Drug Use Across All Sites (kilograms/week)



KEY FINDINGS Q3 2023

METHAMPHETAMINE

- Methamphetamine consumption across sample sites in Q3 2023 averaged an estimated 13.8 kilograms per week. This was above the average quantity consumed over the previous four quarters (8 percent or 1 kilogram above).
- Several districts recorded small increases in methamphetamine consumption, being above their respective average consumption rates over the previous four quarters.
- Methamphetamine use across samples sites in Q3 2023 equates to an estimated weekly social harm cost of \$15.3 million.

MDMA

- MDMA consumption across sample sites was variable in Q3 2023, averaging an estimated 6.9 kilograms per week. This was above the average quantity consumed over the previous four quarters (19 percent or 1.1 kilograms).
- Several districts recorded small increases in MDMA consumption. Southern District recorded the largest increase, more than doubling their average MDMA consumption rate over the previous four quarters.
- MDMA use across samples sites in Q3 2023 equates to an estimated weekly social harm cost of \$0.96 million.

COCAINE

- Cocaine consumption across sample sites increased in Q3 2023 to an average of 2.6 kilograms per week. This remained above the average quantity consumed per week over the previous four quarters (68 percent or 1.1 kilograms above).
- All districts recorded above average cocaine consumption when compared with their respective average consumption rates over the previous four quarters.
- Cocaine use across samples sites in Q3 2023 equates to an estimated weekly social harm cost of \$0.78 million.



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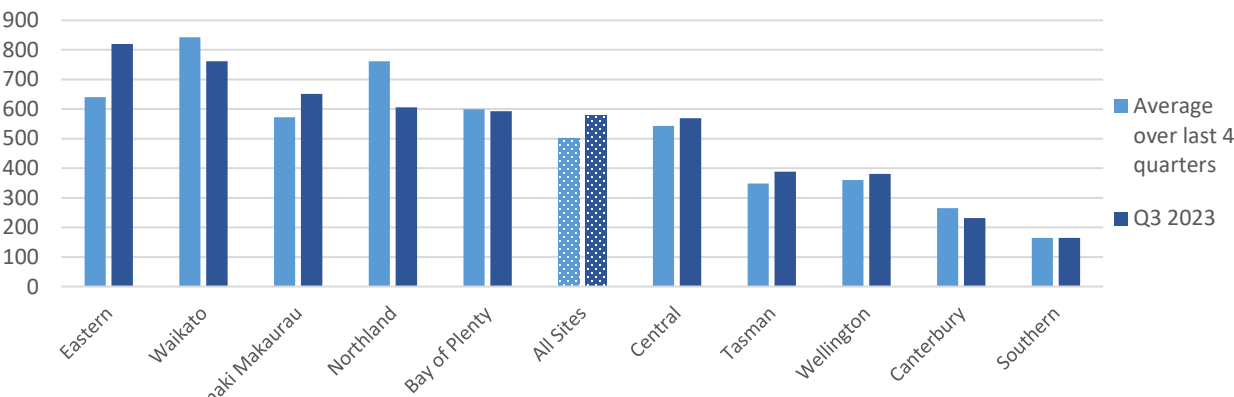
Quarter Three: July – September 2023



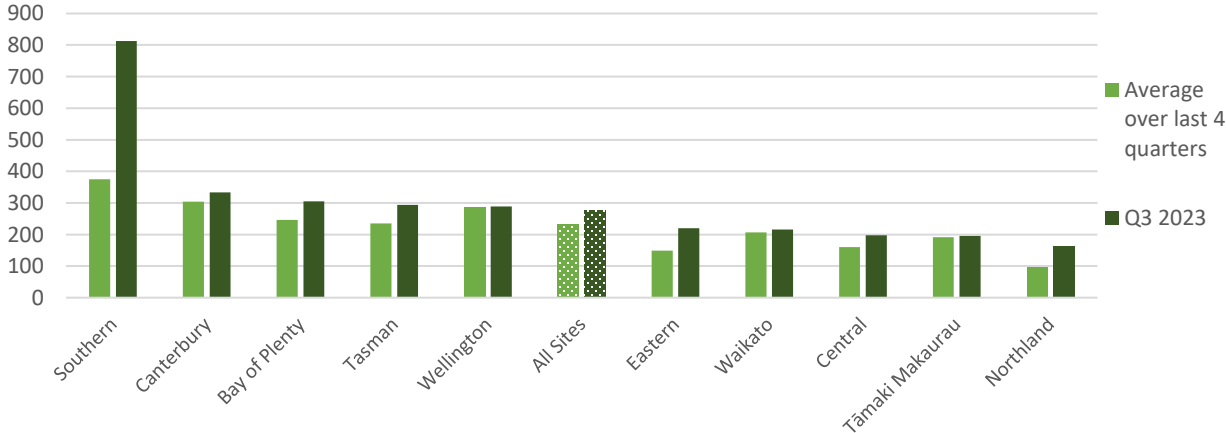
- Per capita drug consumption is shown as milligrams per day, per 1,000 people. As a number of locations are tested every second month, the presence or absence of data from some sites within a district will affect the total load and per capita consumption rates reported each quarter. **District** relates to the sites tested within each district and should not be extrapolated to represent the entire district. **All sites** relates to the per capita consumption for all sites tested across New Zealand. In previous reports *all sites* has been called *National*. This terminology change has been made to improve clarity around the data and what it means.
- The average weekly drug use pie charts show the average estimated drug use (in grams) for each commodity per district per testing week during Q3 2023. As this data is not adjusted for population, larger metropolitan areas record higher quantities of drug use per week due to the larger number of people in the catchment zone.
- The per capita drug consumption bar charts compares each district's average consumption rate over Q3 2023 with their respective average consumption rates over the previous four quarters.

PER CAPITA DRUG CONSUMPTION BY DISTRICT: Q3 2023

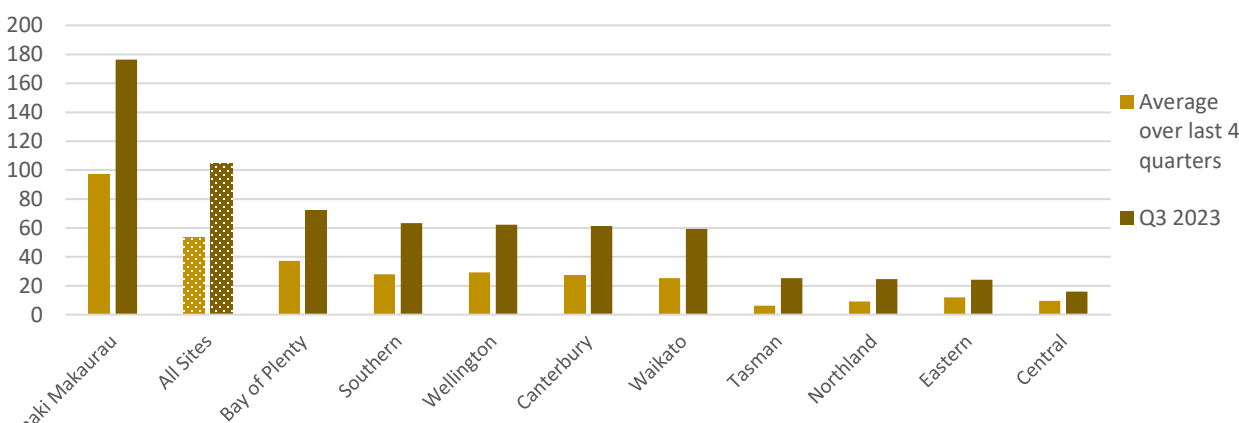
Methamphetamine Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



MDMA Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



Cocaine Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



AVERAGE WEEKLY DRUG USE BY DISTRICT SITES Q3 2023 (GRAMS)

