

Foreword



This Lahti Region Environmental Review for 2015 is the last joint environmental review of the three municipalities. At the beginning of 2016, Lahti and Nastola were merged into one, and Hollola and Hämeenkoski were also amalgamated. The preparations for the mergers marked the entire year 2015. Changes were also made in the environmental organization, and Lahti Region Environmental Services was dissolved as a unit.

Apart from the traditional environmental indicators, this environmental review also lists future goals and challenges. The positive things that we should mention include the continuing high level of waste recovery, improvements in energy efficiency and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. In addition, we can be proud of the fact that Lahti was internationally recognized for environmental excellence in 2015. On the negative side, a new record was set in 2015 in the number of days with poor air quality. Furthermore, for the first time since 1979, the number of listed buildings did not increase. We hope that these are passing phenomena rather than symptoms of deplorable new trends.

We, the mayors, encourage the new municipalities, their departments and employees as well as the businesses and citizens in this region to share the responsibility for our environment and to make environmentally sound decisions. Air, climate, groundwater, lakes, forests and animals do not respect municipal borders. Hazardous chemicals are transported on the roads and tracks across our municipalities. We all share this planet, but as it is difficult to achieve a planet-wide impact, we should focus on that which is possible: on the safety and quality of our local environment and on the protection of our climate using the means available to us. In environmental matters, cooperation has been and will always be vitally important.

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