



As a customer on the Lower Waitaki water supply, you will soon be supplied with significantly better quality water which meets the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards.

This newsletter outlines what the upgrade means for you, and over the page, provides some background and time frames for the upgrade.

What the water supply upgrade means for you

Benefits

The upgrade to the Lower Waitaki supply will mean:

- All households/properties will be supplied with high quality water which meets the NZ Drinking Water Standards.
- Water sourced for the supply from a new aquifer is good quality and easy to treat. Before it gets to your property it will have received Ultra Violet (UV) disinfection and chlorination (rather than just chlorination, as it does currently).
- There will be much less chance of the supply being turned off due to contamination.
- There will be no need to clean filters as often.



Rates impact

Council chose the most cost-effective option for upgrading the Lower Waitaki supply. This will result in a lower impact on rates over the longer term than would have been the case with other possible options (such as treating water from the Lower Waitaki Irrigation Company water race or a pipeline from Oamaru).



Rates increases to help pay for the upgrades began this year, and were included in the first invoice that went out in late July.

Level of service

The upgrade focuses on improving the quality of the water. The supply will continue to be restricted to 1800 litres per day per unit (rather than being 'on-demand').

However, as noted above, the chances of the supply being turned off due to contamination will be much lower. This is because the water will come from an underground aquifer rather than an exposed water race (as it does at present).



Maintaining water quality

Council will flush out supply pipes and clean out reservoirs shortly before the upgraded water is supplied to properties.

You can also ensure the water supplied to your property remains top-notch by cleaning water storage tanks. This is something which should be done every year, if possible.

You can contact your tank manufacturer or go online for more information. Gisborne District Council have some useful tips for tank cleaning - www.gdc.govt.nz/cleaning-a-water-tank



Please see over the page for time frames on when the upgrade will come into effect

Background

Why upgrade supplies?

To improve the quality of drinking water supplied throughout New Zealand, the Government introduced the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand in 2005 (Revised 2008).

This means the Council must upgrade 21 of the District's 23 water supplies to the specified standards within the next six years. If it doesn't, it will be breaking the law.

Council started planning for the upgrades a few years ago and included information in the Council's newsletter - the Waitaki Link.

Proposed time frames and budgets were outlined in the Draft Waitaki Community Plan 2009-19 and through the media. The Plan went out for public consultation throughout Waitaki, before being adopted by the Council in June 2009.

After the Plan was adopted, the Government allowed communities another three years to meet the Drinking Water Standards and a revised timetable was adopted by the Council in October 2009.

The Lower Waitaki supply was identified as a high priority for upgrades, and detailed planning work started as soon as the Plan was adopted.

Deciding how to upgrade

Under the Plan, the Council has three main options for upgrading water supplies to meet the standards:

- To build better treatment plants to treat water that is currently used;
- To find new, more easily treated water and treat this;
- To supply water from a semi-centralised treatment plant to neighbouring supplies.

The method of upgrade is selected by considering how much it will cost to build and run, and whether the Council is confident it will consistently produce the very high quality water required to meet the Standards.

The existing intake for the Lower Waitaki supply draws water from Lower Waitaki Irrigation Company water race. Although it is a reasonably consistent supply, it is prone to very poor quality. This water would be difficult and expensive to reliably and consistently treat to the required standard.

Water will instead be taken from the Lower Waitaki Plain Aquifer and treated at a new water treatment plant. This groundwater is reliable in terms of quantity, and tests have shown it to be clean, clear and easy to treat. Two bores have been drilled with pumps fitted in each of these. The pumps will draw the water from 27 metres below the ground, significantly reducing the risk of contamination from the surface.

Time frames



SEPTEMBER 2011 - customers on the Lower Waitaki supply will be supplied with chlorinated groundwater from the new aquifer via a pipeline that runs from the bores to the current intake and pump house. As soon as this happens, customers should notice a significant improvement in water quality.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2011 - while water is being supplied to customers directly from the bores, it will allow Council to renovate and convert the existing pump house into a water treatment plant. When completed, the plant will treat the bore water to the required Drinking Water Standards.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011 - treated water from the plant will be supplied to customers. There is unlikely to be any noticeable difference when this happens, however, the water will meet the Drinking Water Standards.



Want to know more?

If you need more information about your drinking water supply or wastewater services, please contact the Council's Customer Services team on 03 433 0300.

Or you can go to the Council's website -

www.waitaki.govt.nz

and click on the [Waitaki Water](#) link.

