

<b>REPORT TO:</b> COUNCIL	
<b>DATE:</b> 14 JULY 2009	
<b>SUBJECT:</b> "UNTREATED WATER SUPPLIED TO DOMESTIC AND OTHER PREMISES"	<b>FILE REF:</b> I01.01
<b>AUTHOR:</b> V MINTER, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER	<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>
<b>RELATED COMMUNITY OUTCOME:</b> Safe and Secure Communities	<b>RELATED COUNCIL ACTIVITY:</b> Planning & Regulatory

**CURRENT SITUATION:**

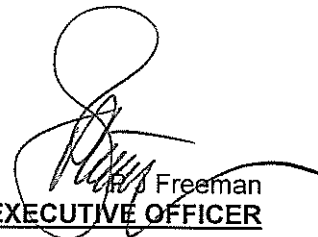
The attached report is self-explanatory. The recommendation is made with particular reference to the current body of knowledge on safe drinking water and Council's legal and moral obligations to enhance the health of its residents. The cost of installing domestic water treatment facilities is just a small fraction of the total cost of building or renovating/additions to a home but have a large impact on the well being of persons using these premises.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** That:

1. The report be received.
2. Council endorses the continued application of its Policy on Drinking Water outside treated drinking water supply areas as adopted in October 2006.



V Minter  
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER**



P J Freeman  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

## REPORT ON UNTREATED WATER SUPPLIED TO DOMESTIC AND OTHER PREMISES

### Context of Existing Council Policy

On 14 June 2005 the Council adopted a policy on "The Provision of Safe drinking water in Rural Areas".

This policy introduced a requirement for the first time that residences, public buildings and premises in which food is prepared commercially, which are built or substantially altered outside areas supplied by a properly treated "Community Drinking Water Supply" must be provided with water that is safe to drink. The means by which persons applying for building consents for buildings in these categories intend to ensure their water supplies are safe must be included in their building consent. Raw water which is derived from sources other than "secure bores" is subject to environmental contamination including faecal contamination.

In October 2006 (4 October 2006) the Council adopted an extension to the existing policy to require the aforementioned categories of buildings to treat their water so as to enable them to meet the minimum bacteriological/protozoal standard for drinking water in New Zealand as published in the "New Zealand Drinking Water Standards 2005 (August 2005)".

All applicants outside treated drinking water supply areas are advised by way of information attached to their building consent documents of these requirements for their buildings.

### Justification For Continued Application On Policy

- The availability of safe drinking water for all New Zealanders irrespective of where they live is a fundamental requirement for public health. ("Dr Karen Poutasi, Director General of Health, new Zealand Drinking Water Standards 2005").
- The New Zealand Building Code under clause G12 – "Water Supplies" has recognized the above and incorporated the following statements:
  - G12.3.1 "Water intended for human consumption, food preparation, utensil washing or oral hygiene must be potable".
  - G12.3.2 "A potable water supply system shall be:
    - (a) Protected from contamination.
- The New Zealand Drinking Water Standards 2005 revised in October 2008 define "Potable Water" as "Drinking water that does not contain or exhibit any determinand to any extent that exceeds the maximum acceptable values specified in the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand (NZDWS)".

In the case of bacterial determinands, E coli is used to indicate the presence of other harmful bacteria and the standard for this determinand is 0/100ml sample (Section 2.2, Table 2.1).

In the case of pathogenic protozoa (eg giardia/cryptosporidium) the standard set under the same section of the NZDWS is again 0/100ml sample of water.

To meet the standard for potable water therefore there may be no pathogenic bacteria or protozoa present.

Whilst the NZDWS were prepared primarily to address community drinking water supplies. ("A reticulated publically or privately owned drinking water supply connecting at least two (2) buildings on separate titles and serving at least 1500 person – days a year eg 25 people at least 60 days per year") (NZDWS p 143) an amendment to the Health Act 1956 now links the Health Act requirements of the NZDWS and the Building Act 2004 and its Code by defining "potable" and "wholesome" as follows:

- Health Act 1956 (Section 39(1)) states in part "It shall not be lawful for any person to erect or rebuild any building intended for use as a dwelling house or for any person to sell or let or sublet or permit to be occupied as a dwelling house any building or part of a building unless in every such case sufficient provision is made in accordance with the Building Code and Building Act 2004 for the following matters:
  - (a) an adequate and convenient supply of wholesome water available for inmates of the dwelling".
- Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Act 2007 defines "wholesome" as:
  - (a) "being potable"
  - (b) "not containing or exhibiting any determinand in an amount that exceeds the volume stated in the guideline values for aesthetic determinands in the Drinking Water Standard as being the maximum extent to which drinking water may contain or exhibit the determinand without being likely to have an adverse aesthetic effect on the drinking water"

The word "Potable" as found in Building Code (G.12) the word "wholesome" as found in the Health Act 1956 (Section 39) are now both defined under the Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Act 2007). In both cases the definition links back to the Drinking Water Standards of New Zealand 2005 (Revised 2008) as providing the means by which drinking water must be assessed. The "Maximum Acceptable Values" (MAV's) for chemical, physical, bacteriological and protozoal determinands are provided as well as the means by which these standards may be effectively achieved and demonstrated.

Whilst the MAV's apply to all drinking water the means of demonstrating compliance (testing, sampling, recording etc) are mandatory only for "Community Drinking Water Supplies. (As confirmed by Paul Prendergast (Ministry of Health member of Expert Committee on Drinking Water Quality set up to advise the Ministry of Health) on 28 May 2009.

The Wairoa District Council has a duty under the Health Act 1956, Section 23 – "improve, promote and protect public health within its district. This requirement is reflected in the Council's LTCCP.

In relation to the availability of safe drinking water for all residents of the district the key legislation mentioned in this report now meshes with the most recent knowledge available in New Zealand and Overseas (including WHO standards and guidelines) on safe drinking water and published in the NZ Drinking Water Standards.