

Wairoa In Focus

Your Community, Your Future



Bokashi bumper crops

Broccoli the size of dinner plates, early potatoes and unprecedented numbers of dahlia flowers are just some of the benefits reported by households taking part in the Wairoa District Council trial of Bokashi compost bins. As part of Council's commitment to zero waste, the aim of the trial was to establish whether the Bokashi system could work here as a method of reducing the amount of food waste going into the landfill.

Reaction to the trial has been positive, with participants reporting vast improvements in their gardens as well as savings in the household budget thanks to homegrown vegetables and reduced landfill costs.

At the beginning of the trial, food waste from the 20 households involved weighed in at a total of 123kg. The final weigh-in after six months saw a dramatic reduction down to 0kg of food waste.

Single parent families, large families,

the elderly and the young were all represented in the trial, which ran from June until November last year. The fact that all households taking part in the trial stuck with it throughout is testament to how easily the Bokashi system can be incorporated into daily life.

Everything except for liquids can be thrown into the Bokashi bin, which uses a unique method of fermenting, rather than putrefying. This cuts out unpleasant smells completely and results in super rich liquid compost after only two weeks of processing. Several other councils around the country, including the Gisborne District Council, have jumped on board the Bokashi bandwagon by subsidising the set-up costs to residents.

In the coming months Council will be looking at the feasibility of introducing a subsidy to encourage the use of bokashi by more Wairoa households.



Mayor Les Probert led over 240 bikers along 10km of the Wairoa riverside in the hope of claiming victory.

Mayoral Challenge attracts a great crowd

Thank you to all those who took part in the annual Mayoral Challenge bike ride on Saturday.

Around 240 bikers took part in the ride, which saw even tiny tots joining in to have more riders than any other New Zealand town.

This event would not have been possible without the support of all the volunteers, coordinators and, of course, the participants. Numbers will be sent to the national collection point for collation, and results are expected to hit the news next month.

Upsurge in recycling benefits community

More and more recycling bins are dotting the roadside in town on Wednesdays as residents take up the Wairoa District Council's 'zero waste' challenge.

Rural dwellers are also picking up their recycling habits by taking advantage of the drop-off days at set points throughout the district.

More work is required to spread the message and get the rest of Wairoa's households into the habit of recycling, but progress is beginning to show.

Engineering manager Neil Cook said the upsurge was a positive sign that awareness of the benefits of recycling was increasing.

"People are not only doing a good turn for the environment – they're also saving themselves money by taking advantage of the free service rather than putting it all into rubbish bags," he said.

Cans, glass, paper, cardboard and plastics are all recyclable, cutting down on the amount of waste that has to go into the landfill.

Any non-recyclables, such as nappies and food scraps, should not be included in recycling.

Also, broken glass should be disposed of separately to avoid anyone getting hurt. This was a particular problem in rural areas. Wairoa recently upgraded its recycling centre to accept grades one to seven plastics, which means even more products can be processed. Many other councils throughout the country are yet to do this, making Wairoa a leading example in recycling.

Rural recycling is on the first and third Sunday of each month at the following locations and times:

Kotemaori (Kotemaori School) 10am to 11.30am
Raupunga (beside public toilets) 12noon to 2pm
Mohaka (old pub site) 2.30pm to 4.30pm
Tuai (behind hall) 9am to 12noon
Ruakituri (opposite school, first Sunday only) 9am to 11am
Te Reinga (opposite school, first Sunday only) 11.30am to 12.30pm
Nuhaka (QRS metal yard) 9am to 11am
Mahia (376 Kaiwaitau Road) 11.30am to 2pm

Limited days left for district voting

Time is ticking away to get voting papers in to decide who will become the newest councillor for the Wairoa District.

Forms were sent out to those on the electoral roll earlier this month and at the last count around 1900 votes had been placed. Candidates include Stuart Birrell, Garry Cooper, Dave Evans, Oha Manuel, Gordon McIntyre and Alice Wairau.

Electoral Officer Russell Snow said the next few days are the last chance for people to have a say in who will represent them.

"This is an important opportunity to vote for the person who you think will best serve the community, alongside those already in office," he said.

Votes must be in by Saturday, 12 noon.

Anyone did not receive papers but is eligible to vote can call in to the Council offices on Queen Street to fill in papers and post them in the official election box.

Preliminary results will be in on Saturday afternoon, with final results expected to be confirmed on Wednesday.

Civil Defence team carrying out vital survey

Civil Defence representatives from the Wairoa District Council will be knocking on doors in the Mahia area today and tomorrow to carry out a survey on how residents were affected by the recent fire there.

Questions will centre on how people found the evacuation process and whether insurance needs are being met, as well as seeking general opinions on the experience.

Although the survey is completely optional, the results will be vital in establishing the needs of those affected and assisting the community to develop a plan for future emergencies.

Help and patience in collecting this information will be greatly appreciated.

Reps plan to visit the homes of those evacuated and others in the general area of the fire, but anyone who feels they have been missed out is welcome to call in to the former Opoutama School to pick up a copy of the survey.

For the diary:

Council meetings (second Tuesday of every month):

March 10
April 14
May 12
June 9
July 14
August 11
September 8
October 13
November 10
December 8

Forum dates (fourth Tuesday of every month):

March 24
April 28
May 26
June 30
July 28
August 25
September 22
October 13
November 24

Full Council meetings and Forums are held in the Council Chambers in the Queen Street offices and are open to the public, unless otherwise specified. Meetings and Forums start at 10am.



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



Work continues along Black's Beach road

Heavy machinery is dotting the coastline along Black's Beach as work progresses to create a safe roadway along the seafront.

The work is being carried out as a result of damage caused by heavy rain last year, which led to a lengthy process of investigation, survey and design to come up with the best solution.

Retreating into the hillside was deemed to be the most viable option to keep traffic flowing. Council is investigating long-term options for coastal roads as the sea continues to reclaim the land.

Delays are being experienced by motorists as tonnes of earth are moved to construct the improved road and Council wishes to express thanks for the patience of those travelling the route.

Work is expected to be completed at the end of April, dependant on good weather conditions.

For more information phone 838 7309 or visit www.wairoadc.govt.nz