

# Wairoa In Focus

Your Community, Your Future



## Hot work keeping roads in shape

Summer has settled in over the district, bringing with it a multitude of annual roadworks projects for the Council engineering team.

Around 20kms of reseal work is happening in different areas, including stretches of road at Mahia, Putere and Willowflat Road.

Reconstructions are also taking place, with a major job happening in Wairoa on Rutherford Street, and another on the Nuhaka/Opoutama Road near the Waikokopu turn-off. Road users will also be pleased to know that a temporary repair will be carried out on the dropout at Black's Beach to get it back to two lanes before Christmas, with full reinstatement of the road happening in the New Year. The reseals are expected to be completed in time for

Christmas, but the major reconstructions will carry through over the festive season.

Engineering manager Neil Cook said all these major roadworks projects have to be done during summertime as there was less risk of being rained out.

"While this can be inconvenient for holidaymakers, it's important for us to do it while the weather is good," he said.

To help keep the roads safe, drivers are advised to adhere to the 30km speed restriction through roadworks to prevent damage to vehicles, as well as to protect the safety of those working on the road.

Council is not responsible for roadworks on State Highways.



This drop-out at Black's Beach serves as an example of a major roading project requiring months of 'behind-the-scenes' work.

## Major projects require long journey to meet high standards

The summer projects are a part of Council's responsibility to continuously maintain and repair over 860 km of roads throughout the district, not including the State Highways, which are taken care of by the NZ Transport Agency.

As well as scheduled maintenance, such as the resealing and reconstructions, Council must also allow for unexpected damage caused by incidents such as floods or slips. Road damage is assessed on a case by case basis to establish the extent of what needs

to be done to bring it back up to standard. The first priority is safety. Slips are cleared to restore access, sometimes to single lane only, and barriers are put up around drop-outs to clearly identify danger zones.

The next stage is to assess the extent of the repairs required, ranging from minor work with no need for specialist input, to major projects requiring structural and geotechnical expertise.

If the latter is the case, the process can go on for months as surveys, design and

consent paperwork are developed and submitted, followed by a tender process and eventual mobilisation of the chosen contractor.

An example of this process in action is the road at Black's Beach, which is requiring major design work to bring it back to full service owing to the complex nature of the site.

Mr Cook said it was important to take the time now to do the job correctly so that problems could be avoided in the future.

Another reason why the process has to be followed diligently was due to funding.

The government funds anywhere from 66 percent to 95 percent of emergency repair work, provided certain procedures are followed.

"We have to follow the rules, or that funding is at risk," he said.

Any work that falls out of the government criteria is funded by ratepayers, so it is extremely important to adhere to guidelines.

## Rural fire restrictions kick in for district



Emergency Management Officer Tim Allan is ready for action.

Hot summer days have brought with them the introduction of a restricted fire season for the Wairoa Rural Fire District.

Permits are now required by anyone wishing to light an open air fire, be it to incinerate rubbish, have a hangi or barbeque, or to burn off vegetation.

There is no cost attached to getting a permit, with one day of notice required for an incinerator, hangi or rubbish fire and three days of notice for a burn-off. Larger fires also require a burn plan to detail the exact location of the fire and how it will be managed should it get out of control.

Emergency Management Officer Tim Allan said a plan was necessary to make action easier for emergency services should the need arise.

"We have volunteers ready to go at all times, but it is vital that we know of potential risks beforehand," he said.

Anyone planning on putting a hangi down for Christmas or New Year is advised to start thinking about organising a permit now.

Mr Allan said he was happy to call in to see people to work out a safe location for any fire, at no cost.

Permits can be obtained from the Council offices on Queen Street within working hours, from Monday to Friday.

The fire restriction applies to all rural areas within the district and is put in place when soil and vegetation reach a certain level of dryness. Monitoring is carried out remotely and is rated using the national Fire Weather Indices ranging from low fire danger to extreme fire danger.

This restriction does not apply to the urban fire districts of Wairoa and Nuhaka.

## New opportunities for well-known staff

A familiar face moves on this month as Joy Scott leaves Council to take up an exciting new opportunity in Hastings.

Ms Scott has spent the past two years forging positive relationships within the community as Maori Liaison Officer, working between the Council and local iwi by opening up channels of communication.

"The basis of my responsibility was to provide the Maori perspective for Council, as well as the community at large," she said.

Most of her work has involved being out amongst the community, working with the various iwi that make up the district.

Highlights for Ms Scott include implementing an internal Te Reo Maori programme, as well as putting together the Draft Maori Policy, which was up for public consultation recently.

The qualified lawyer of Ngati Kahungunu descent says the job has provided her with many opportunities in regards to personal development and career, standing her in good stead to take on her new role as District Manager of the Maori Land Court, based in Hastings. Council also bid a recent farewell to Sally Simpson, who left her role as economic development officer to take up the title of general manager for the Wairoa Community Development Trust.

Sally will continue to work closely with Council in her new role and will remain based at the Wairoa Visitor Information Centre.



Joy leaves her role as Wairoa District Council's Maori Liaison Officer this month to take on a new challenge.

## Christmas lights spark up soon

Festive fervour is about to explode as the count down to Christmas heats up and the Wairoa District Council is leading the charge.

Seasonal street lighting will set the town centre aglow from the first week of December, providing the perfect backdrop for the annual Santa Parade, scheduled to take place on Friday, December 5.

### For the diary:

**Council meetings:**  
December 9.

**Councillor workshop meetings:** No December meeting due to public holidays.

Council meeting and workshop dates for 2009 will be confirmed at the December meeting.

## Superheros set to have fun at library

Wairoa District Council is encouraging keen young readers to head to the public library to sign up for the summer reading programme.

Registrations for 'Superheros Read!' start on Monday, December 1 from 4pm to 6pm and the programme itself runs from December 15 through to January 23.

Those taking part will enjoy entry to a great line-up of entertainers and activities, as well as rewards and a finale party – and it's all free.

Join the library to register and enjoy the fun.