

Wairoa In Focus

Your Community, Your Future



Rates rebate reminder – are you eligible?

The chance to get some money back from your rates bill is still open to those who qualify for a rates rebate. Assistance of up to \$530 may be available if your income is around \$21,180 or less per annum (before tax). In some cases the income threshold is higher, so Council is encouraging those who may be eligible to take up the opportunity. The first step to determine if a rebate is coming your way is to ensure that your name is on the rates bill for the home where you live, you were living there on July 1 this year and that the address is your usual residence. The main use of the address may not be for business, farming or commercial income.

If the property is in the name of a family trust or estate, you need to have evidence that you have a legal ownership interest in the property and an obligation to pay the rates.

If all these details are in place, the best course of action is to ring the Council to make an appointment to go through the application form and calculate eligibility. If you are not able to come to Council due to a disability, a staff member can make a house visit.

The ten minute process will reveal immediately if a rebate is due, provided the correct documentation is supplied, including proof of all your yearly taxable income for the year ending March 31, 2008, Hawke's Bay Regional Council rates information and copies of birth certificates of any dependants living with you.

Rebates will be issued until June 30, 2009.

Anyone wishing to make an appointment can contact Council on 838 7309. Appointment times are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9am to 12pm.



Many ratepayers in the district may receive a rebate.

Joining the water team

Next time you turn on a tap, spare a thought for the busy team working to ensure clean, safe water is available around the clock for those on town supply. Wairoa District Council is charged with providing this vital service to the people by maintaining and operating a vast network of pipes that snake their way from underground reservoirs at Frasertown towards the urban centre of Wairoa.

Operators are rostered to be on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and must be ready to cope with anything that may affect the town's water supply. The latest person to join the crew at the water treatment plant is operator Pete Newland.

Pete is no stranger to many, having lived in the district all his life and worked in a variety of roles. These include working as a banker, a meat inspector and for the past nine years as a motorcycle mechanic.

"Elements of all these jobs are coming together to help me in my new role at the treatment plant," he said.

Pete is stepping into the role of Morgan Goldsmith, who in turn is replacing Malcolm McGregor as plant manager.

Whenua rahui relief for Maori freehold owners

Around six percent of land in New Zealand is in Maori freehold title, and a large proportion of that is registered in the Wairoa District.

In most cases, the land has been passed down through the generations and is owned by groups of people, rather than one person.

Council has a whenua rahui system in place where land owners may apply for rates relief. Strict criteria apply, including that the land must not be in use for any purpose.

Maori liaison officer Joy Scott is regularly out in the district meeting with Maori freehold title holders to discuss how whenua rahui can help them.

Joy also holds monthly public clinics at both Opoutama and Tuai, where she is happy to talk about any topic to do with council.

She encourages people to come and see her if they wish to know more about how the system works and whether they are eligible to apply.

Phone Joy at council on 838 7309 or call in to see her at the Queen Street offices to ask questions or to find out when the next clinic is.



New water treatment plant operator Pete Newland.

Call to keep our district clean for all to enjoy

The Wairoa District offers some of the most stunning scenery in the country and we all need to work to keep it that way.

Rubbish is a continuing problem in certain areas of the district and council's environmental health officer Vic Minter is encouraging people to "think before they throw".

"We've got a beautiful environment here in Wairoa, but it's being constantly compromised," Vic said.

The view site on Pilot Hill is one example of how a public area has become an unpleasant spot due to the careless disposal of all kinds of waste – from household rubbish to animal skins.

"Please make use of the Wairoa landfill and recycling service – leave the environment for all to enjoy."

Fines of up to \$5,000 for individuals and up to \$20,000 for commercial dumping can be enforced on those found responsible for ruining the landscape with litter.



**REDUCE, REUSE,
RECYCLE**

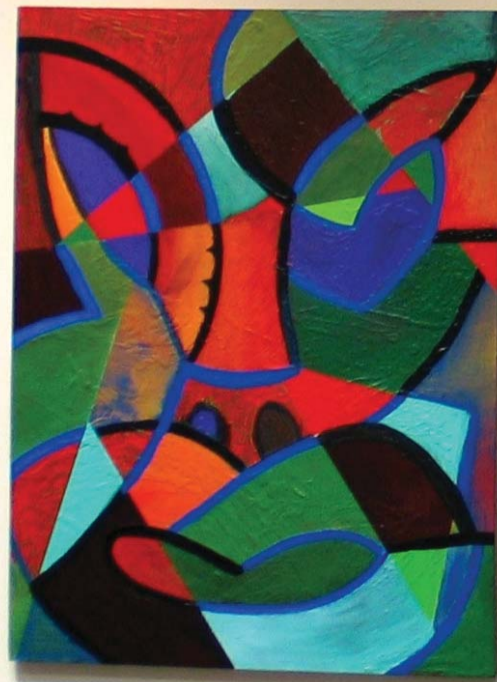
For the diary:

Councillors get together once a month for an official meeting to make decisions on a range of issues, from budgeting and finance to policy and by-laws. They meet again in the same month on a more informal basis for a workshop to discuss and debate different issues arising from the full council meetings.

The public are welcome to attend these regular meetings, which are advertised on the website and in the Wairoa Star. Here are the dates for the rest of the year:

Council meetings : October 14, November 11, December 9

Workshop meetings: October 28, November 25, (no December meeting due to public holidays)



Invitation to view contemporary art at Council

Council chambers have become a temporary art gallery displaying the work of talented young artist Chance Rohe.

Council is proud to host Chance's work as part of the 'Arts in Business' concept coordinated by Creative Tairawhiti.

The public are welcome to view the exhibition on weekdays between 12noon and 2pm, except for Tuesday, September 23 when chambers are in use.

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