

PROPOSED WATER SUPPLY BYLAW SUBMISSION

SUBMITTER: TAMAHERE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

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Presentation: YES we would like to present as a Committee

The Tamahere Community is a group set up by the Waikato District Council [WDC] to work alongside Councillor Wally Hayes. The Committee's aim is to act as a portal for Community views on Council planning and issues that impact on the Tamahere community.

In particular the Committee's focus is on the ongoing development, review and implementation of the revised Tamahere Community Plan, "The Lifestyle Community", 2004-2013, and to ensure development that takes place within our region also fits within the WDC LTCCP and Future Proof. The Committee submitted its strong support of Future Proof during the consultation phase.

SUBMISSION:

We support the under-lying philosophy of the water bylaw. That WDC need a by-law so they can recover financial losses due to water system damage, an avenue through which they can protect the asset and prevent "water rustling", and finally a by-law which will encourage water conservation.

However we believe the proposed Water Bylaw currently out for consultation, has some ambiguity particularly in paragraph 5.7.3, and thus will not ultimately promote the intended water conservation intended.

OPPOSE

The Tamahere Community Committee opposes the Proposed Water Supply Bylaw 2009 for the following reasons:

1. We submit that the Bylaw requires, in the section Continuity of Supply, three different scenarios to cope with the differing needs of urban, rural residential and rural users, and also ensures that it deals specifically with areas with a reticulated water supply and those without such a supply.

The following points relate to rural residential areas where Council Water Reticulation is available, and may not be entirely applicable to the urban centres in the district.:

2. Clause 5.7.3 is ambiguous and misleading. We have been advised from council that the intent of the wording is quite different from that which has been written. We accept the point as written NOT as intended, in that the customer has the option of either joining the Council Water Supply System or not doing so. Further, we submit that the Dual System Concept should be optional. By making all new dwellings have a dual system many users will use more Council reticulated water than they would if they were predominantly using rainwater.

3. We believe the capital and asset driven approach to water conservation is not an effective economic driver to conserve water. In fact it works in quite the opposite way, as if ratepayers have to make the capital investment to install a dual water supply as suggested then they will use that council supplied water. Whereas an economics driven approach to promote water conservation whereby variable charges that increase as more water is used would be much more effective.
4. The most conservative water system is a rainwater only system and there should be incentives for people to install these. Currently there are NONE.

FOR EXAMPLE RODNEY COUNCIL CURRENTLY HAS A REBATE SCHEME DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE URBAN DWELLERS TO INSTALL RAINWATER TANKS.

5. There are conflicts in 5.7.3 Paragraphs 2 and 3 in respect to dual systems and use of mains water for dry spells. This section is not clear and should be deleted from the Bylaw and re-submitted to the public for consultation.
6. We suggest that Council allow any dwellings with a certain level of rainwater storage on site, and where owners wish to have a single water system sourced predominantly from rainwater, be allowed to connect to the Council reticulated system to provide a back up water supply for the prolonged dry periods.
7. We would strongly support the option of a single reticulation water system supplied predominantly by rainwater but which would be supported by a back up connection from mains supply to provide relief in dry spells. Efficiency of use of the Council supplied water would then be encouraged by the stepped charging approach as earlier outlined.
8. Incentives should be offered to those ratepayers who do not hook up to the mains water supply in rural and rural residential areas. This should include the annual rate charge of \$267 being dropped for these users and the cost of this being transferred to the variable stepped charging system so it becomes user pay.
9. We strongly support the review into the installation of water metres in Ngaruawahia, Huntly and Raglan. These, along with those metres already installed, should have the economic driver of a stepped charging to conserve water.