

Price change reminder

Our prices changed on 1 July, so the new prices may be reflected on your bill (depending on your billing cycle).

The price of water and wastewater services has risen by 9.5 per cent. This means you will now pay 17.3 cents more for every 1,000 litres of water delivered and 30.2 cents more for every 1,000 litres of wastewater treated.

In addition, the cost for a paper bill has changed from \$1.20 to \$1.50 to cover the increase in postage charges. To avoid this cost, please sign up to e-billing.

For more information, visit our website.



Remember to flush your taps

It is best practice to flush a large glass of water from your drinking water tap each morning before using any water. This removes any metals that may have dissolved from plumbing fittings.

New Zealand's water can be slightly acidic and can dissolve metals. If water stays for several hours in your household pipes, it can dissolve heavy metals such as lead or copper. Small amounts of these metals may then enter your water supply.

This is a simple precaution for all households on both public and private water supply. The health risk is small, but a build-up of heavy metals in your body can cause health problems.

We continue to meet the requirements of the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2022 and deliver safe water. For more information, visit watercare.co.nz and search for 'drinking water quality'.



KEEP IN TOUCH

Tapped In is your newsletter. If you would like to talk to us about any stories from this edition or your ideas for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. To get in touch, please email our communications team at communications@water.co.nz. You can learn more about what we do at waterforlife.org.nz



Tap into our app

Download our free app to track your water use and manage your account on the go!

Scan one of the QR codes here or search for 'Watercare' on the App Store or Google Play to get started.

Renting the property? Please ask your landlord for permission to access the data on the app.



Struggling to pay an overdue bill? We can help

Our priority assistance programme offers support to people who are facing financial difficulty in a number of ways. For example, we can help set up budget-friendly payment instalments or offer referrals to other community organisations for financial assistance. Sometimes, people need a little more help and that's where the Water Utility Consumer Assistance Trust (WUCAT) comes in.

WUCAT, a Watercare-funded trust, supports customers suffering genuine hardship by approving payment arrangements to cover future Watercare bills and writing off part, or all, of the amount owed.

Heather Nicholson, WUCAT administrator, has been supporting the organisation since it was set up in 2011. She says people who approach her are facing all types of hardship from job loss, health issues, the increase in cost of living and debt from second tier lenders for car or mortgage repayments.

Heather, who is known as 'the water lady' in the community, strives to help people who are struggling to make ends meet. She works closely with organisations such as Habitat for Humanity, Salvation Army, Whānau Ora and the Fono to achieve the best outcome for the individual in need.

She says customers who aren't eligible for WUCAT assistance can choose to get help from Work and Income NZ or Citizens Advice Bureau who can help with budgeting advice.

If you need help with paying an overdue bill, visit our website or scan the QR code to download the application form for financial assistance. Once you've completed your details, you'll need a budget advisor to complete the rest of the form.

TAPPED IN

Bringing you news, updates and information from Watercare

Winter 2023

Record-breaking building programme underway

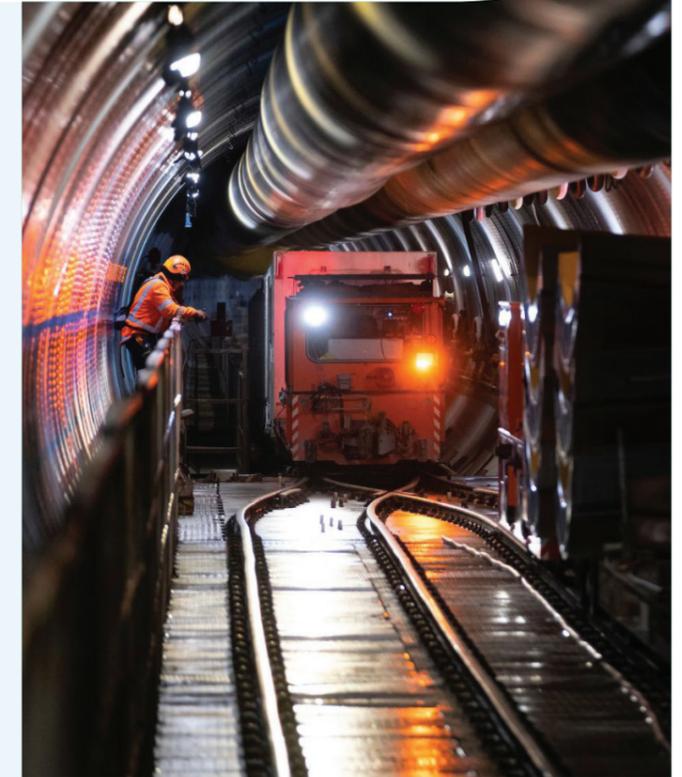
In this issue of *Tapped In*, we focus on our building programme. This financial year – which kicked off on 1 July – we will spend over \$1 billion on renewing and expanding our pipe networks, treatment plants and other assets. This work will help to protect the health of our communities as Auckland grows and our climate changes.

Right now, we have 160 projects underway in Auckland, and a further 190 in the pipeline. These works include the delivery of regional infrastructure, such as the third water storage reservoir at Redoubt Road in Manukau, and local infrastructure, such as the Waikōwhai water pump station and watermain.

Typically, our projects cater for population growth, improve the health of the environment, or make our infrastructure more resilient. Some work achieves more than one outcome. For example, the Central Interceptor wastewater tunnel will improve the health of the waterways and beaches in central Auckland by significantly reducing sewage overflows when it rains. It will also duplicate a critical piece of infrastructure – a section of the Western Interceptor that runs under the Manukau Harbour – meaning that we will be able to take it out of service for maintenance or if there is an issue.

We know we can't just build infrastructure and forget about it for 50 years – we must look after it. Soon, we will secure contractors to support us with the delivery of a \$3.5 billion programme over the next 10 years to upgrade and/or replace ageing pipes, pump stations, water storage reservoirs, and treatment plant equipment. Among other benefits, this programme will help to minimise water leaks and wastewater overflows in your area.

This year's devastating storms had a big impact on many of our customers and some of our infrastructure. Several people reported wastewater spilling out of the gully traps outside their houses. That happens when stormwater gets into the wastewater network.



Our Central Interceptor tunnel will reduce wastewater overflows into central Auckland waterways, creating a better environment for our customers to enjoy.

While gully traps are designed to overflow in these circumstances, it's still distressing for these homeowners. We always respond by cleaning and disinfecting the affected area as soon as the gully trap stops spilling. We are also working collaboratively with Auckland Council to identify where and how stormwater is entering our network.

We have a team dedicated to fixing the damage to our infrastructure caused by the floods and cyclone. Over the next two years, they will work to resolve more than 180 issues. Most of the work involves fixing wastewater pipes that broke due to landslides in northern and western parts of Auckland. We sincerely thank the affected communities for their patience at this very challenging time.

Keep reading this issue to find out more about our regional projects as well as work in your area. We have also included a reminder about the price rises, which took effect on 1 July.

Supersized regional projects

Central Interceptor wastewater tunnel

Deep below the surface, our tunnel boring machine Hiwa-i-Te-Rangi has quietly been chewing her way through Tāmaki Makaurau since she was launched from the Māngere Pump Station in 2021. She's recently passed the six-kilometre mark at Keith Hay Park on her 14.7-kilometre journey to build a mammoth wastewater tunnel that will significantly reduce wet-weather overflows in central Auckland and clean up our waterways.

The 4.5m-diameter tunnel will be able to hold 226 million litres of wastewater and stormwater, which means in heavy rain, there'll be fewer wet weather overflows, and we'll be able to control the flow to our Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Building a tunnel of this size takes time – it's expected to be completed in mid-2026.

We've also applied for consent to extend the tunnel from Grey Lynn through to Point Erin, so it can collect the combined stormwater and wastewater flows from the inner-city seaside suburbs.



Our \$3.5b programme to renew ageing infrastructure

We're about to kick off our biggest-ever investment in a programme to replace or upgrade ageing infrastructure.

Over the next few months, we'll be looking for contractors to partner with on a 10-year, \$3.5 billion programme of work to replace our ageing water and wastewater pipes, and upgrade or renew critical infrastructure at our pump stations and treatment plants.

About three quarters of the work involves replacing water and wastewater pipes – which ultimately means we'll have fewer leaks, water outages and wastewater overflows.

This represents a move away from the 'fix it when it breaks' approach to a more proactive solution. By investing more up front in targeted renewals we'll improve your water and wastewater service and in time, we'll reduce our operational costs with fewer reactive replacements needed.

New \$60m water storage reservoir

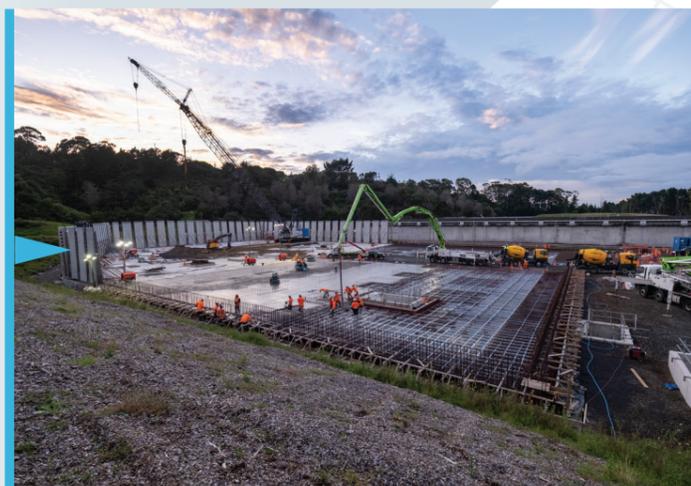
An additional 45-million-litre water storage reservoir in Manukau has reached a critical milestone, with work now underway to construct its concrete roof.

Our Redoubt Road reservoir complex can already store up to 120 million litres of water, and more than 80 per cent of Auckland's treated drinking water passes through it each day. It holds water treated at our Ardmore and Waikato water treatment plants, before it goes into the water network and ultimately out of your taps.

The addition of a third storage reservoir at Redoubt Road increases the resilience in our water network, and future proofs Auckland's water supply by catering for growth.

Our infrastructure team is always looking for opportunities to reduce carbon in construction. On this project, we're adding fly ash to the cement, which helps offset carbon emissions and makes it more durable.

The new reservoir is on track for completion mid next year.



Our third storage reservoir at Redoubt Rd, Manukau, will increase the resilience in our water network and future proof Auckland's water supply by catering for growth.

What's happening in central and west Auckland

Catering for growth

Waikōwhai water pump station and watermain

- \$54 million
- 5,750m long pipe
- Under construction
- Mount Roskill
- To be completed by: early 2025



What are we doing?

We are carrying out upgrades to the water network to cater for current and future development and population growth.

The upgraded network includes a new booster pump station and watermain which will cater for Kāinga Ora's future urban development in this area. This project will enable 4,000 additional houses, plus 170 infill dwellings within the Waikōwhai and Mount Roskill areas.

What have we done so far?

Construction of the booster pump station near Akarana Golf Course is underway. Once it is completed, treated water will be pushed to Mount Roskill faster than the existing water system, allowing for future growth.

Work on the watermain has also started along Richardson Road, between Penny Avenue and Playfair Road.

What's next?

The pump station is on track to be completed in March 2024, while the watermain is expected finished in early 2025.

Protecting the environment

Herne Bay wastewater pipe

- \$47 million
- 2.1m diameter pipe
- Planning
- Herne Bay
- To be completed by: 2026 – 2028



What are we doing?

We are proposing to build a new wastewater pipe to significantly reduce overflows and improve the quality of waterways and swimmable beaches in the area.

The proposed wastewater pipe will support the extension of the Central Interceptor wastewater tunnel. It will ensure combined overflows are captured and transported to Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant for safe treatment.

What have we done so far?

We are in the process of designing the programme, obtaining the required approvals, and conducting geotechnical investigations. These investigations are essential to add to our knowledge of soil, geology, and groundwater conditions for this project.

What's next?

We plan to lodge the resource consent application for Auckland Council assessment shortly. Construction is expected to start next year in parallel with the proposed Point Erin Central Interceptor extension project.

Building resilience

Huia 1 watermain

- \$139 million
- 17km long pipe
- Under construction
- Epsom, Mount Roskill, Titirangi
- To be completed by: Ongoing in stages



What are we doing?

We're replacing our large watermain along Titirangi Road to cater for the growing population.

The ageing watermain is being replaced so that we can continue to provide the essential water supply to Auckland. It currently transports water from the western dams which provides up to 20 per cent of Auckland's overall water needs.

What have we done so far?

Construction is well underway with 70 per cent of the project completed so far.

Earlier this year we wrapped up work on Atkinson Road two months early. Our contractors completed an 850m section from Atkinson Road to the Daffodil Street intersection in under five months.

Most recently, a 3.5km section from Highland Avenue to Portage Road was made live.

What's next?

We will continue to work along Daffodil Street, then move on to Konini Road intersection by August. The works on Donovan Street in Blockhouse Bay are planned to start in November.