

## 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](http://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](mailto:communications@water.co.nz). You can learn more about what we do at [waterforlife.org.nz](http://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

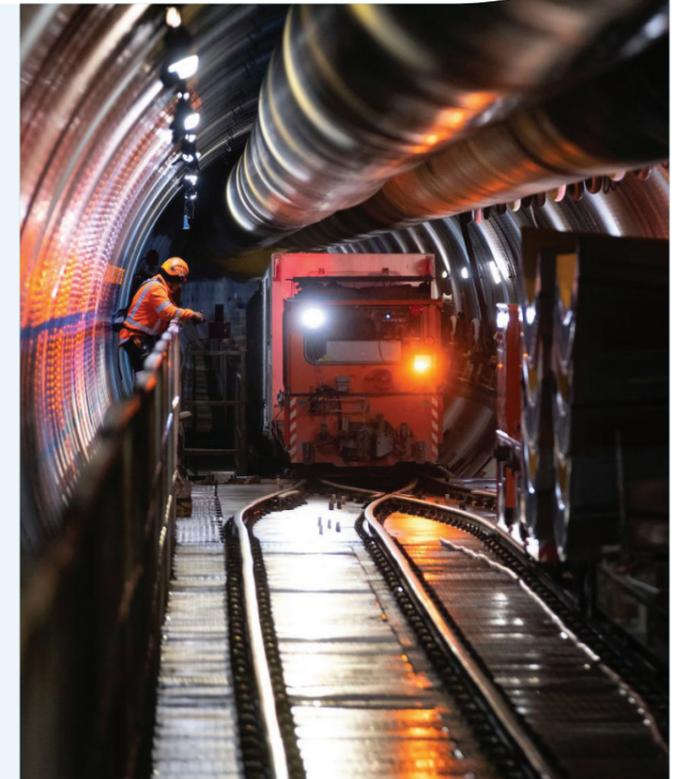
In this issue of *Tapped In*, we focus on our building programme. This financial year – which kicked off on 1 July – we will spend over \$1 billion on renewing and expanding our pipe networks, treatment plants and other assets. This work will help to protect the health of our communities as Auckland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

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.



Scan the QR code below or visit [watercare.co.nz/Central-Interceptor](http://watercare.co.nz/Central-Interceptor) to watch a short video of its greatest moments.



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 north Auckland

## Catering for growth

### East Coast Bays wastewater network upgrade

- \$21 million
- 1.75km long pipe
- Under construction
- Rosedale
- To be completed by: April 2024



#### What are we doing?

We're building a new wastewater pipe which will reduce wastewater overflows and cater for growth in Rosedale and its surrounding suburbs. The new pipe, along with the \$21.5 million Mairangi Bay Pump Station, will increase wastewater capacity and help reduce wet-weather overflows in the East Coast Bays area.

#### What have we done so far?

Work is being carried out from Windsor Park to the Rosedale Wastewater Treatment plant. To reduce impact on commuters, we adjusted the original pipeline route along Constellation Drive, choosing a quicker, cost-effective, and less disruptive path. We have installed three sections using trenchless technology.

#### What's next?

Construction is currently taking place in Rosedale and will connect to the Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant around April next year.

## Protecting the environment

### Mairangi Bay pump station replacement

- \$21.5 million
- 230,000 litres storage capacity
- Under construction
- Mairangi Bay
- To be completed by: November 2023



#### What are we doing?

A new pump station and wastewater pipe are being built to increase the resilience of current infrastructure and reduce overflows at Mairangi Bay Beach. The new pump station will replace the current wastewater pump station which can overflow up to 10 times per year. It will include larger pumps and additional underground storage to hold wet-weather flows until they can be pumped to the Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant.

#### What have we done so far?

Work on the pump station on the corner of Sidmouth Street and Montrose Terrace is well underway. Once it is completed, it will be able to handle almost double the amount of flows per second compared to the existing pump station's one.

#### What's next?

Work on the wastewater pipe on Montrose Terrace will help improve the flow of wastewater to the new pump station. The pipe is expected to be completed by November 2023.

The wastewater pipe on Montrose Terrace will help improve the flow of wastewater to the new pump station.

## Building resilience

### Kahika wastewater upgrade

- \$22 million
- 2km long pipe
- Under construction
- Birkdale
- To be completed by: Mid-2024



#### What are we doing?

We're upgrading the wastewater network to reduce the risk of overflows into local waterways and to support population growth in the Bayview and Beach Haven areas. We're building a new wastewater pipe that will replace the existing 50-year-old one that has experienced failures over the past two years. Once complete, it will be able to carry twice as much wastewater as the current pipe.

#### What have we done so far?

Construction of the new pipe from Kahika Pump Station to the existing pipe from Easton Park Parade is currently underway. We are also diverting four local network catchments away from the existing wastewater pipe for it to be removed from service. Large sections of the current pipe will also be decommissioned.

#### What's next?

The construction of the new pipe will be completed early next year with the remaining diversion and decommissioning works on track for completion by mid-next year.