

Local Waters Done Well – What does it mean for Mackenzie?

In this edition of the Messenger I want to make you aware of an important piece of work that Council is undertaking in relation to water services.

The Coalition Government came to power and agreed with us that Councils and the communities they serve should retain their property rights in their water assets.

They have released their plan to address New Zealand's long standing water infrastructure challenges and have started introducing the relevant legislation.

We need to give effect to the current and future legislation of "Local Waters Done Well". As part of this reform, we are required to decide on an appropriate structure for delivering water and wastewater (two waters). We must also decide if stormwater is included or not (three waters).



Key decisions for our Council will be around the governance, delivery structure and financing arrangements for the ongoing delivery of two or three waters for our community. This includes considering joint structures with neighbouring Councils to deliver the services.

I believe this will be a once in a generation decision and the importance of getting the decisions right cannot be underestimated. We must ensure the financial sustainability of these services and that we can meet the new economic regulation requirements.

We have until 1 September 2025 to compile a Water Services Delivery Plan for approval from the Department of Internal Affairs. I am concerned that this means we have less than 12 months to complete an important and significant piece of work.

Given the magnitude of these decisions, there will be a need for ongoing engagement and consultation with our community at the appropriate times. I implore you to participate in opportunities that Council will provide for you to offer your input.

The future costs and affordability of water services for our community, along with the extra compliance costs such as professional commercial governance, and future economic regulation, will likely mean that future costs of water will escalate. Affordability for our community will be a prime concern.

The third piece of water services legislation is to be released in December 2024 and will set out a comprehensive regulatory scheme, with full economic regulation, to govern the Three Waters sector into the future.

In August 2024 a document 'Water Service Delivery models: guidance for local authorities' was published by the Department of Internal Affairs.



You can find this online on their website at www.dia.govt.nz under Central and local government on the front page.

You can also read more details about this in the Local Waters Done Well paper presented to the Council meeting on 1 October 2024 (item 8) and 29 October (item 8.2) in the agenda. There is a link to meeting agendas and minutes on the front page of the Council's website: www.mackenzie.govt.nz.

Look out for more from us about this topic as we work through developing our Water Services Delivery Plan.

On a different note:

We are approaching the festive season, and I hope that we are all taking some time off to catch up with family and friends.

Wherever you are and whatever you are doing, take the opportunity to enjoy the district and some of the fabulous things it has to offer. Stay safe on the roads, and a Merry Christmas to you all.



Mayor Anne

Rates in the Mackenzie District

Rates are the way that everyone pays for those essential community services that we all use every day. When most of you turn on the tap, drive on a local road, flush the toilet or go for a walk in the park, you're using a service you've helped pay for.

As part of the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan, for 2024/25 the average total amount of rates collected by the Council increased by 14.7%. Your individual rates bill may have increased by more than this or less depending on the services you receive at your property and the value of your land and improvements compared to other properties.

Rates are due and payable in four equal instalments on the following dates during the year:

| Instalment | Due Date |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 20 September 2024 |
| 2 | 20 December 2024 |
| 3 | 20 March 2025 |
| 4 | 20 June 2025 |

Any outstanding amount unpaid at the due dates will attract a 10% penalty.

You can choose to pay smaller amounts on a more regular basis as long as they add up the full instalment amount by the quarterly date. If you would like to pay regular small amounts, please contact our rates team to discuss the details.

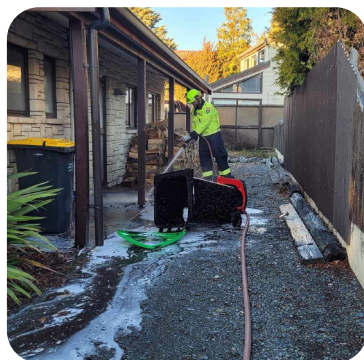
You can pay your rates via direct debit (EasyPay), credit card, internet banking, online on our website, or in person at one of our offices.

Are you eligible for a rates rebate?

The Rates Rebate Scheme provides a partial rebate for eligible, low income ratepayers who pay rates on their home to the Council.

The maximum rebate you can received is \$790 which is available as long as your gross (before tax) income is \$31,510 or less.

Even if your income exceeds the threshold, you may still be eligible, depending on the amount of rates you pay and number of dependants. If you think you may be eligible please contact Council on 03 685 9010.



Cool hot ashes before they reach your red bin

A reminder that all ashes are to go in the red rubbish bin, though only after at least seven days of cooling down in a metal bucket well away from buildings first!

The Lake Tekapo Volunteer Fire Brigade have had a number of callouts in recent months due to hot ashes being placed in bins.



Responding to a Mackenzie District power outage

On Monday 30 September a helicopter incident near Cave caused an unplanned power outage to around 3500 households in Albury, Fairlie and Tekapo areas.

This happened at a busy time for Tekapo as it coincided with Chinese Golden Week and school holidays.



Power was able to be supplied to Fairlie by Monday evening but Tekapo had to wait until the afternoon of Tuesday 1 October to be full reconnected, although the team from Alpine Energy were able to supply generators to central Tekapo on Monday.

On Tuesday Council staff opened the Lake Tekapo Community Hall and, using the community events trailer and a civil defence generator, were able to offer power and wifi so people could call in to charge their devices and or set up their laptops and do some work. Over 120 people came and made use of this service.

In the evening on Monday, The Godley Hotel held a BBQ for those affected by the power cut, with proceeds going to Lake Tekapo School.



2 Exterior Elevation - South

Public Toilet Block Redevelopment at Lake Pukaki Visitors Centre

The redevelopment of the public toilet block at Lake Pukaki Visitors Centre started in Mid-September, with the work taking place over the spring period.

Due to the work, the existing public toilet block has been closed, and a temporary toilet container block installed on site, located near the salmon shop area on the lake front side of the car park.

While this temporary toilet container block does not have as many toilets installed, the unisex toilets are regular flush, with hand-wash basins and push-button soap. The block includes an accessible toilet.

There is signage in place, further advising of alternative public toilets at Twizel and Tekapo. The cleaning frequency will continue as per usual.

We apologise for any inconvenience while this work is completed.



New Fairlie Water Treatment Plant

On 18 July the new Fairlie water treatment plant started operating. This is a project that has been more than 20 years in the making.

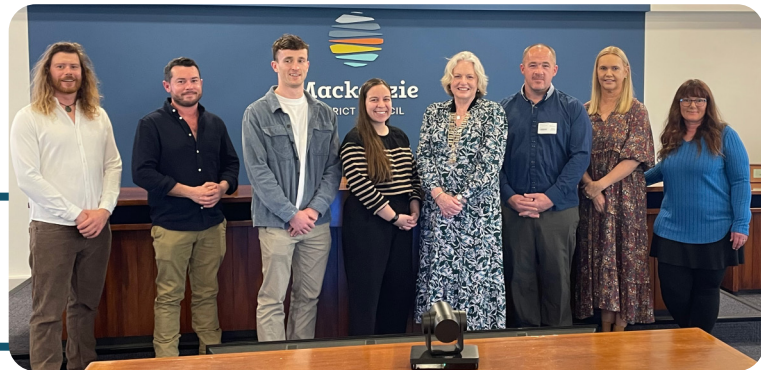
For a long time residents in Kimbell and Fairlie have been at risk of protozoan contamination, have had to boil their water at times, and have suffered distinctly brown water (turbidity) after prolonged periods of rain. Protozoal contamination was the cause of recent problems with water in Queenstown. Micro-biological contamination was one of the underlying issues in the Havelock North incident which resulted in New Zealand water quality compliance upgrades being undertaken in earnest.

The new plant contains a sophisticated filter system to remove dirt, bacteria and microbiology through a system that filters down to 1micron.

The plant has two new storage tanks that give us water storage for approximately 1.5 days in summer or 2-3 days in winter. This helps us manage water flow when turbidity is high and allows us to enable water to flow even after an event when power is lost.

Water is lightly chlorinated as an additional safety measure, and its pH can be corrected. Water pH is continually monitored and when it is mildly acidic a correction is added to make it neutral. This will help prevent metals leaching from pipework into the water, as well as 'bluing' of water caused by copper leaching.

There is some misinformation in our community about this project being significantly over budget. The costs on this project are close to expectations, being only 2.5% (\$200,000) over the budget. The team worked really hard to keep with the budget limit of \$7.3m, which was challenging given that the budget was set 2 years ago and inflation has been running significantly higher in the infrastructure space - in fact over 25%.



Welcoming new citizens

The Mackenzie District welcomed seven new New Zealand citizens at a ceremony on Tuesday 27 August.

From left to right: David Lewis from England, Joe Trundle from the United Kingdom, Cathal Guiney from Ireland, Elyse Gagnon from Canada, Mackenzie Mayor Anne Munro, Martin MacDonald from Scotland, Sue Larkan from South Africa, and Michelle Thompson from Australia.



New Dog Treats in Fairlie

Recently visitors to Council's dog park in Fairlie will have found several pieces of new equipment for their canine friends' enjoyment.

There is a tunnel to be run through, jumps for small to large dogs, platforms to balance on, a seesaw and more.

Building the new equipment was Toby Potter from Whitestone (Council's contractor in the parks and recreation area). Toby was on hand when the new equipment was tested by Rosie and Cookie when their owners (adults and children) took them to the park recently.

Also on hand were Carey Edmonston and Jenny Adorian (Cookie's owner) also from Whitestone, and the council staff involved in the project, Rachel Carr, Public Facilities. Parks and Places and Jordon King, Roading Manager, his daughter and Rosie's owner.

The project was funded by MDC out of capital works budgets.



Mackenzie District Pools

Strathconan Pool in Fairlie reopened for the 2024-2025 season at Labour weekend.

Twizel Community Pool reopens on Saturday 16 November.

Check the mackenzie.govt.nz website, Strathconan Pool Fairlie and Twizel Community Pool Facebook pages for the opening hours.



Safer Speeds For Our Community - School Areas

Safer speeds have been introduced around schools in our District.

This is a result of the Speed Management Plan that was approved by Council and New Zealand Transport Agency / Waka Kotahi in early 2024.

The first stage of this plan, which came into effect on 14 October, prioritises the safety and well-being of the community by targeting school areas, indicated by public feedback and conducted research while maintaining travel journey efficiency.

A 30km/h permanent speed limit has been put into place for streets and roads near schools throughout the district, areas indicated with speed limit signage.

Research shows that speed limits in school zones are most effective in areas that are between 300-500m in length. Drivers tend to slow down if the zone is between these lengths, we took this into consideration when developing the speed limit zones.

These speed reductions are crucial for our community; research undertaken within New Zealand and Australia shows that if a person walking is hit by a car travelling at 50km/h, the chance of survival is 20%, compared to if a person is hit by a car travelling at 30km/h, the chance of survival increases to 90%.

By implementing the changes, we aim to enhance road safety and create streets where people feel safe to walk, ride, drive and cycle.



Find out more, and view maps of the speed restricted areas at: mackenzie.govt.nz > Services > Roading and Transport > Safer Speeds For Our Community

Taking your pooch for a walk?

Taking your pooch for a walk? Unfortunately, there's no such thing as the dog poo fairy so please remember to pick up their poo.

If you are using our dog park in Fairlie, we provide free bags and a wastebin – please use them. No-one likes treading in dog poo, and it's particularly hard to see when it's hidden in the grass. Your dog's poo is your responsibility – Thank you.



Wilding Pines Guide

Wilding Pines are a pest tree throughout the Mackenzie District - disrupting ancient native landscapes, native ecosystems, and productive soils for high value sustainable land use.

A guide has been created by wildingpines.nz to identify Wilding Pines, highlighting the issues that they cause.

View the guide at wildingpines.nz > Wilding Species Guide



WILDING CONIFER QUICK ID GUIDE

Battery recycling

With batteries unable to be placed in the bin collection, our Resource Recovery Parks at Fairlie, Tekapo and Twizel offer FREE collection points for old batteries.



Batteries accepted are:

- Household batteries - AAA, AA, 9V, C, D
- Button cell batteries - i.e. watch and hearing aid batteries
- Re-chargeable batteries from hand held tools
- Automotive batteries

No
Excuse

For
Abuse

Please treat our Council team with respect

ZERO TOLERANCE:

Anyone giving verbal abuse to members of staff will be asked to leave immediately.