

TAPPED IN

Bringing you news, updates and information from Watercare



Mangatangi Dam in the Hunua Ranges, July 2020.

Thanks!

Thanks for reducing your water use over the past few months. Since water restrictions were introduced in response to the drought in mid-May, our customers have collectively saved over two billion litres of water. That's enough to fill over 20 million bathtubs! It shows that when everyone saves a little, together we save a lot.

From 1 November 2019 to 31 May 2020, Auckland experienced its worst drought on record, receiving only 60 per cent of the normal rainfall. While we welcomed some wet weather in July, our water sources are still recovering from the big dry. This means it's important for you to maintain your water-efficient habits throughout winter and spring.

At Watercare, we're responding to the drought by expanding our Waikato and Onehunga water treatment plants, and by returning a former dam in Papakura and an aquifer in Pukekohe to service. Together, these projects will provide an additional 40 million litres of water per day by Christmas. To put this into perspective, 40 million litres per day could supply a city the size of Dunedin.

We have also accelerated our leak detection programme, which uses acoustic methods to find leaks in our network that are not visible on the surface. This, along with other network improvements, will minimise water wastage.

While we are responding to the drought, we're also continuing to invest in maintaining and expanding our infrastructure to stay ahead of population growth. Over the past 12 months, we've spent \$175 million on water assets and \$356 million on wastewater assets.

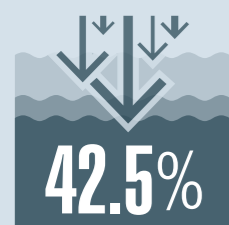
Find out more about our drought response and infrastructure projects in this edition of *Tapped In*. Make sure you check out the competition on the back page too!

Drought by numbers

From 1 November 2019 to 31 May 2020, Auckland experienced its worst drought on record. Here's a snapshot of the situation.



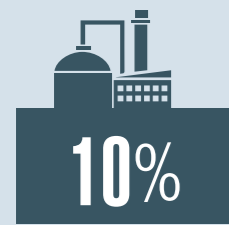
Auckland received 60 per cent of the normal rainfall during the drought.



The lack of rain saw the volume of water stored in Auckland's dams fall from 89.5% on 1 November 2019 to 42.5% on 25 May 2020. While the wet weather in June has improved the situation, the large dams in the Hūnua Ranges are still recovering.



Aucklanders are still encouraged to reduce their water use indoors by at least 20 litres a day throughout winter and spring.



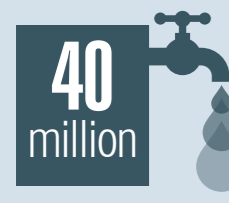
Businesses are still encouraged to reduce their water use indoors by at least 10% throughout winter and spring.



Mandatory water restrictions limiting outdoor water use were implemented. Information about these restrictions, including how they apply to domestic and commercial customers, is available at watercare.co.nz.



Auckland has saved over two billion litres of water since water restrictions were implemented in May.



Watercare is carrying out work to increase the volume of water available by 40 million litres a day by Christmas.

Building better for a bigger Auckland



Project Manager Faiz Salim checks progress on the Pukekohe East Reservoir (concrete tank) in Runciman in July 2020.

Two water supply projects will reach major milestones in August and September: the Waikato Water Treatment Plant expansion will be completed along with the first stage of a project to return Hickey Springs Bore in Pukekohe to service. Together, these projects can deliver an extra 30 million litres of water a day to Auckland.

The Waikato Water Treatment Plant expansion required the construction of a 50-million-litre storage reservoir in Runciman. This reservoir adds resilience to the southern water network by ensuring that if the Waikato plant shut down temporarily – for example, because of a power cut – we could still maintain supply to customers. While this expansion project has been underway for several years, the timing of its completion helps our drought response effort.

From the outset, the Waikato Water Treatment Plant was designed to expand over time to stay ahead of population growth. When it opened in 2002, it could treat 50 million litres a day. Over the 18 years that followed, it has been upgraded six times – lifting its capacity to 175 million litres a day.

At any one time, we have dozens of infrastructure projects underway across Auckland to ensure we not only cater for population growth but also protect the local environment. We align our work with Auckland Council's development priorities – that means our projects are being done where and when they will be needed most.

Our current Asset Management Plan (AMP) outlines how we're investing \$5.5 billion in upgrading and expanding our infrastructure between 2018 and 2028 – \$1.9 billion for water and \$3.6 billion for wastewater. Our projects are paid for by a combination of water and wastewater service charges, infrastructure growth charges, and borrowings. We don't receive any funding from Auckland Council or the Government.

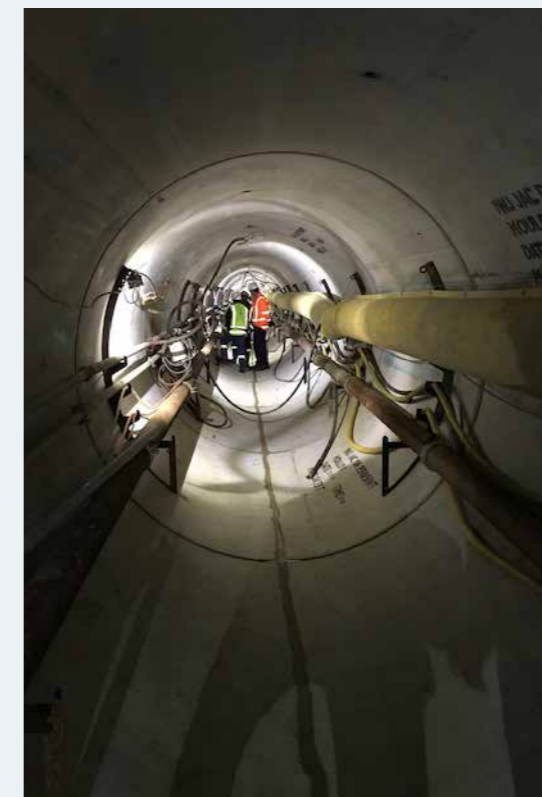
Below highlights some of the projects currently being rolled out. For more information on our projects, and for a copy of the AMP, visit watercare.co.nz/about-us.

Water:

- **Hūnua 4 watermain:** We are building a \$400 million watermain that runs from Manukau to central Auckland. The pipe is now in service up to Epsom, with the final section due for completion in 2021. This watermain caters for population growth and improves the resiliency of the wider water network.
- **Huia 1 watermain replacement:** We are replacing an ageing watermain that was built in the 1940s. The new watermain, which will run from west to central Auckland, is larger in diameter to cater for population growth. Work began last year and is being delivered in sections.

Wastewater:

- **Central Interceptor wastewater tunnel:** We are preparing to build a \$1.2 billion tunnel from Grey Lynn to our Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant. It will have several link sewers and shafts along the route for collecting and transferring wastewater into the tunnel. The tunnel will cater for population growth as well as reduce wet-weather overflows in central Auckland by up to 80 per cent. Currently, we are constructing shafts for the tunnelling operation. The tunnel boring machine is being built in Germany. It will arrive in Auckland towards the end of the year.
- **Northern interceptor wastewater tunnel:** We are building a new pipeline to enable wastewater from north-west Auckland to be treated at the nearby Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant. Currently, wastewater from areas such as Hobsonville travels south to the Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant. This will support growth in many areas of Auckland by freeing up capacity at our Māngere plant.



A peek inside the Hūnua 4 watermain during the tunnelling operation. This large pipe can carry up to 3,000 litres of water a second.

Top tips to reduce your water use by 20 litres a day

Spend a minute less in the shower...



save 12 litres

Turn off the tap when you brush...



save 4 litres

Fix a leaking tap...



save 33 litres a day

Use the half flush when possible...



save 6 litres every flush

Wash one less load of laundry a week...



save 122 litres

Big brands help Aucklanders to keep their showers short

We have partnered with Countdown supermarkets to give away 15,000 four-minute shower timers; and with Unilever to apply stickers with waterwise tips to 64,000 TRESemme, Dove and Sunsilk shampoo bottles.

Most people spend around eight minutes in the shower. If you cut yours to four-minutes, you'll save around 48 litres. If everyone in Auckland did the same, the region would save around 80 million litres of water per day!

Typically, the shower is responsible for around a quarter of the water use in a home. So it's a great place to focus your water savings efforts.

A big thanks to Countdown and Unilever for their support!



Share your top water-saving tip and be in to win

You've heard our top water-saving tip – “Keep your shower short, 4 minutes or less” – now we want to hear yours.

Follow us on Facebook and look out for our competition to win a water-efficient front-loading washing machine. We also have 10 power-shower packs to give away featuring a water-efficient showerhead as well as a 4-minute shower timer. The competition closes at midnight on Thursday 17 September. Not on Facebook? Visit our website to enter.



Installing a rain tank just got easier

Auckland Council has waived resource consent fees and streamlined the process of installing rain tanks.

Traditionally, winter is an ideal time to install a rainwater tank, when rainfall is at its highest. The rain that falls on roofs is captured in the tank and can be used for watering gardens, washing cars or flushing the toilet.

For more information and advice on the consenting process and basic compliance, visit Auckland Council's website to use the 'Do I need a Consent?' tool. Find out more at aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



Remember to flush your taps

The Ministry of Health recommends flushing 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.

The Ministry of Health recommends this simple precaution for all households on both public and private water supplies. 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 2005 (revised 2018) 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 www.watercare.co.nz.