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Water still top Waikato issue



When it comes to environmental issues, the typical Waikato region person is most concerned about water pollution and quality.

This is according to a report just released by the Waikato Regional Council.

The report, entitled *Environmental awareness, attitudes and actions and new ecological paradigm combined survey: A survey of residents of the Waikato region* focuses on people's views and knowledge of environmental issues, and their pro-environmental actions. It is based on a telephone survey of 1005 adults from January to March 2013.

When respondents were asked about the most important environmental issue facing the Waikato region, 67 per cent of responses related to water pollution or quality.

The survey also shows the level of concern for water has increased significantly, by 56 per cent, since 2006 when the survey was last run.

Then, only 43 per cent of responses related to water pollution or quality. The increase could be partly due to the latest survey occurring during the 2012-13 summer drought.

Waikato Regional Council CEO Vaughan Payne said: “The survey suggests the people of the Waikato are right behind our work to address water quality issues.

“Addressing water quality issues is an organisational priority. We are making major strides to align strategic and operational programmes across the organisation, whether that be setting the right policies, improving discharges through consent conditions, improved compliance monitoring and enforcement, or increased fencing of waterways and riparian planting.

“For example, our current major water quality policy project, Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai, is about working with iwi, the Waikato River Authority and stakeholders to develop policy to help restore and protect the health of the Waikato and Waipa rivers. This project recognises that addressing water quality is a complex issue requiring strong collaboration with all those who have different tools available to develop and implement long term solutions.

“Eighty eight per cent of respondents agreed that we should enforce rules to make sure the environment is well looked after, so the majority support our role in developing environmental policy and regulations and enforcing them.”

At least 70 people from each district in the region were surveyed, and the results provide a maximum margin of error of +/- 3.09 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence interval.

View the full report at www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/EAsurvey.

People turn out to 'have a go' on the buses

Meet Denise Cook, pictured, who was among a number of people who turned up last week to 'have a go' on our accessible buses.

The Hamilton East resident is not currently able to drive and so has been reliant on others to get to her to appointments, her favourite shopping destinations and lunch with friends.

But she says after spending time boarding both an Orbiter and Hamilton urban route bus,



she has the confidence to travel by bus to some of her destinations in the future.

The 'have a go' day was held last Tuesday and timed to coincide with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. It was organised by Waikato Regional Council and CCS Disability Action, with support from contracted bus operators Pavlovich and Go Bus, for older people and those with disabilities.

Top 5 'must dos' for safe summer boating

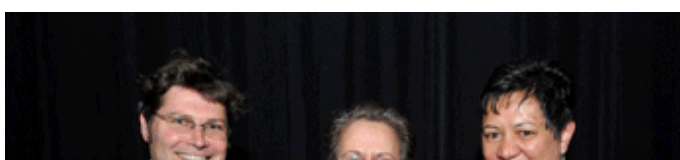


Waikato Regional Council's harbourmasters will be out on some of our busiest waterways over the festive season, They've put together the top five safe boating 'must dos' for summer.

1. Wear a lifejacket – make sure it is a good fit and securely fastened.
2. Carry communication devices – check for coverage and make sure they are waterproof so you can get help when you need to.
3. Avoid alcohol and boating – save it until you're back on dry land.
4. Check the weather, tides and swell before you head out – it's better to know what is happening than playing roulette with people's lives.
5. Use the 1/3 - 1/3 - 1/3 rule with your fuel – a 1/3 for your trip out, a 1/3 for the trip home and a 1/3 just in case.

Anyone unsure about Waikato's new navigation safety rules can contact their local harbourmaster by calling 0800 800 401. Information is also available on the regional council's website at www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/boatsafety.

Council wins te reo award





Waikato Regional Council is 2013 winner of the Māori Language Commission's award for excellence in te reo Māori and long term commitment to Māori language regeneration.

Presented at the Gisborne Showgrounds Event Centre last month, the award was won in the local government and institutions category.

The award application highlighted the work carried out through the learning and development portfolio run by the regional council's kaiwhakarite, Carol Henry (pictured on the right).

The organisation has taken significant steps to improve the knowledge and application of te reo Māori through a dedicated weekly class, the karanga and the mihimihi groups.

Photo: Waikato Regional Council's Cara Graham (centre) and Carol Henry with the award, alongside editor of the Gisborne Herald, Jeremy Muir, who presented and sponsored the award. Photo courtesy of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori.

Committee structure and membership decided

Waikato regional councillors have agreed on their committee structure and membership.

"We've spent some time getting to know each other over the past month and I am confident we have fairly distributed the workload across the councillors," said council chairperson, Paula Southgate.

"In making our decisions, we have given consideration to appropriate geographic representation on these committees, and a fair and democratic process," Ms Southgate said.

Head to the [regional council's website](#) for full details.

For farmers



We're hiring



Maaaaaate, get your new MarineMate

We have some pretty amazing waterways in the



Waikato. But before you head out this summer, download a specially-designed free new smartphone app which has all you need to keep you and others safe on the water.

The MarineMate application for iPhone and Android devices has up-to-date tide information adjusted for daylight savings, boat ramp locations, safe boating checklists, and regulatory information on 5 knot zones, towing lanes and swimming areas.



“Downloading this free app onto your phone means water users no longer need to carry cumbersome tide guides, or copies of multiple bylaws,” said Waikato Regional Council's navigation safety programme manager, Nicole Botherway.

“Boaties will often visit different locations across a number of regions, and some don't realise the rules change. MarineMate provides a one-stop-shop to updated information via their smartphone, no matter where they are heading to.

“It's quick, it's easy, and it will help to make our waterways safer,” said Mrs Botherway, who led a national project team to develop the application.

The app was developed with funding from Maritime NZ, the ACC, Land Information NZ and regional council harbourmasters, with support from Water Safety New Zealand.

People logging into the application for the first time are asked to complete five quick questions.

“This gives us good information on the types of activities people using the app are undertaking on the water, such as jet skiing, fishing and paddling. Completing the questions is not mandatory, but that information will help us to tailor MarineMate for the people using it,” Mrs Botherway said.

Updates to MarineMate will be released if rules change or additional information becomes available, such as the location of Telecom cables.

Top tips to keep safe on Waikato roads this holiday season

Think you know the rules around drink-driving? Test your knowledge in a short



quiz featuring on the Waikato Regional Road Safety Education Group's '**Reduce the Risk**' website and you could win a \$50 fuel voucher.

Top driving tips for the holiday season

We want you, your family and friends to make it safely to your destination and home again this festive season, so we've put together these top road safety tips.



If you're hosting a Christmas or New Year party:

- serve substantial food and have non-alcoholic drinks available
- keep an eye on everyone, especially young people
- arrange transport, ensure they have a sober driver or let them stay overnight.

And if you're heading away on a summer holiday road trip, consider the safety of you and your family by making sure your car is roadworthy.

- Prepare your vehicle – check your tyre pressure and condition, fluid levels, lights, and clean your windscreen.
- Prepare yourself – be rested before a long drive, plan the trip so you share the driving and take regular breaks to minimise fatigue.
- Ensure children are correctly restrained in an approved car seat.
- Check your load security and trailer coupling locks when towing a boat, trailer or caravan.

Let us drive you this summer

Avoid the parking hassles and let us drive you to your favourite shopping destination this festive season.

Before you head to your nearest bus stop, please check before you travel - visit www.busit.co.nz or phone 0800 4 BUSLINE (0800 4 2875 463).



A special Christmas timetable will operate on most regional and Hamilton bus services between Christmas Day and Sunday, 5 January 2014.

A number of Hamilton services will run on Christmas Day and many services throughout the region will continue to operate on public holidays.

New Year fare changes

Waikato Regional Council has decided against an across-the-board fare increase on its bus services, instead agreeing to adjust fares on three regional services in the New Year and reduce the price of a City Explorer ticket in Hamilton.

From 1 January 2014 the the cost of a City Explorer ticket will drop, when purchased with a BUSIT card, on the Hamilton urban network. [Read more.](#)

Fares on the Northern Connector and Pukekohe bus services will be adjusted next year to bring them in line with other regional routes. [Read more.](#)

Bus fares on the Taupō Connector service will rise in the New Year to bring them in line with other regional routes. [Read more.](#)

Merry Christmas from Waikato Regional Council



Our office hours during the festive season

During the holiday period, our offices will be closed from 3pm on Tuesday, 24 December 2013 and will reopen at 8am on Monday, 6 January 2014. While our offices will be closed, you can call our freephone 0800 800 401 any time to:

- report air or water pollution
- report unsafe water activities in or on a river, lake or harbour
- make a general enquiry or information request.

Counter service hours at Taupō office in the New Year

Counter services at our Taupō office will be limited to four hours each day – 10.30am to 2.30pm – from Monday, 6 January to Friday, 17

January 2014. Normal counter service hours (8am to 5pm) will resume on Monday, 20 January 2014. Although counter service hours are limited over this period, staff will be answering incoming phone calls during normal working hours (8am to 5pm).

We wish you and your family all the best over the upcoming holiday season. Merry Christmas.

Photo: Destination Great Lake Taupo

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