

Revised Water Safety Plans

Meeting: Audit, Risk and Finance Committee
Date of meeting: 11 June 2020
Reporting officer: Donnicks Mugutso, Waters and Waste Manager

Purpose/Ngā whāinga

To update the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee on the progress of the renewal of Kaipara District Council's Water Safety Plans, and to seek the Council's commitment to ongoing involvement and support for the effective management of drinking water quality.

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

Kaipara District Council, as a drinking water supplier, is required under the Health Act to have and implement a Water Safety Plan for each of its five drinking water supplies namely Dargaville, Maungaturoto, Ruawai, Mangawhai and Glinks Gully. Four Water Safety Plans are due for renewal now with Mangawhai not due till 2023.

In December 2018 the government introduced a new New Zealand Drinking-water Safety Plan Framework and the Handbook for Preparing Water Safety Plans in May 2019. By December 2021, all Drinking Water Suppliers in New Zealand are required to be compliant with the new Framework.

Under the new requirements, a Water Supplier's leadership is to provide support and long-term commitment for providing safe and secure drinking water. Leadership must understand and commit to legislative requirements to ensure Kaipara District Council's policies, strategy and actions support the effective management of drinking-water quality.

In 2019, Council staff submitted the four Water Safety Plans to the Northland District Health Board for review. To meet all the requirements of the new Framework, leadership's participation and commitment, including Elected Members', to the provision of safe and secure drinking-water is required. The report is a step towards ongoing involvement of the Elected Members in the water safety planning.

Recommendation/Ngā tūtohunga

That the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee:

- a) Notes that staff have developed new Water Safety Plans for Dargaville, Maungaturoto, Ruawai and Glinks Gully and the risks identified (Attachments A-D).
- b) Recommends to Kaipara District Council to commit to drinking water quality management by adopting water safety planning and other tools.

Context/Horopaki

Background

The Havelock North Inquiry investigated the widespread outbreak of gastroenteritis in Havelock North in August 2016, during which more than 5,000 people were estimated to have fallen ill, with up to four deaths associated with the outbreak. It should be noted that the water supply in question, although not treated, was compliant with the then Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2005 (Revised 2008) (DWNZ (2008)). It was later to be determined that the mere reliance on drinking-water standards compliance is not enough for the provision of safe and secure water for communities. A robust management of the catchment, ongoing processes and procedures was critical in ensuring the continuous supply of safe drinking water. This can be achieved through water safety planning among other tools. The Government, through the Ministry of Health set out,

among other actions, to review the compliance standards and management of the drinking water industry through the following actions:

1. Revised and published the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2005 (Revised 2018) (DWSNZ (2018))
2. In December 2018, published the New Zealand Drinking-water Safety Plan Framework (Framework)
3. In May 2019, published the Handbook for Preparing a Water Safety Plan (Handbook).

There are 10 components to the Framework, which are summarised below:

Components	Sub-components
1. Commitment to drinking-water quality management	Relationship of WSP to organisational policy and strategy Engaging stakeholders Engaging community
2. Assessment of the drinking-water supply system	Water supply system description and analysis Assessment of water quality data Hazard and hazardous event identification and risk assessment
3. Existing preventive measures for drinking-water quality management	Assessment of existing preventive measures and multiple barriers Identification of additional preventive measures
4. Operational procedures	Operational procedures Operational monitoring and inspection Critical control points Corrective actions
5. Verification monitoring programme	Drinking-water quality monitoring Consumer satisfaction Short-term evaluation of results
6. Improvement plan	Drinking-water quality management improvement plan
7. Management of incidents and emergencies	Incident and emergency response plans
8. Documentation and reporting	Management of documentation and records Reporting
9. Investigations	Investigative studies Validation of equipment, processes and practices
10. Oversight, review and continual improvement	Long-term evaluation of results Audit of drinking-water quality management Review by senior leadership

Water Safety Planning in Kaipara's Policy and Strategy

This report forms part of the fulfilment of component 1, where commitment is sought from Council to drinking water quality management. Kaipara District Council is legally accountable for providing safe drinking water. The provision of safe and secure drinking should be visible in the organisational policy and strategy.

Kaipara District Council's vision of "Striving Communities Working Together" captures "Maintaining and improving infrastructure" as one of its Community Outcomes. The Infrastructure Strategy (IS) 2018-2048 highlights the purpose of the water supply service as "to help to protect public health,

by providing readily accessible potable water to communities". The IS 2018-2048 also had the target (when it was written in 2018) of achieving compliance with the Drinking Water Standards 2005 (Revised 2018) within 1 year and this has since been achieved. All Kaipara District Council's Water Supply schemes are compliant. The Asset Management Plan (AMP) provides budgets for renewals to the Water Supply schemes thereby showing commitment to maintaining the assets that bring potable water to our communities. The AMP also highlights the one responsibility of Council as "the duty under the Health Act 1956 to improve, promote, and protect public health within the districts".

While there is some degree of visibility for the provision of secure and safe drinking-water within the Council documents, water safety planning is not expressly identified in the organisational strategy and plans as required in the Framework. This poses a risk in that DWNZ compliance only has historically been a target (as highlighted in the Havelock North contamination case) whereas excellence in Water Safety Planning should be at the core of Kaipara District Council's business of provision of safe and secure water supply.

One way of achieving the visibility of Council's commitment to the provision of safe and secure water supply is to include within the Water Safety Plan:

1. A statement regarding the organisation's commitment to the provision of safe and secure drinking-water.
2. An explanation of how the organisation is putting this commitment into practice through policy, strategic plans, the adoption of water safety planning, budgets and relationships.

Kaipara's Water Safety Plan Journey under the new Framework

While our four Water Safety Plans have been submitted for review by the Drinking Water Assessors (DWAs) from the Ministry of Health (MoH), it should be noted that prior to expiry of the Water Safety Plans, Kaipara sought to extend the validity of the old Water Safety Plans while waiting to incorporate the new Framework and Handbook on preparation of Water Safety Plans. The MoH through the DWAs accepted the request noting that Kaipara continued to execute water safety planning. The Council was advised to submit the revised plans by December 2019 and the DWAs decided that these would be reviewed under the "old" framework as more work on commitment from the Leadership and engagement with stakeholder and the community was still required. It should be noted that we were among the first 12 nationwide submitters at the time and none had met the criteria. However, there is now a new deadline for all Water Safety Plans to be reviewed under the new Framework by December 2021, so for Kaipara, with the addition of Component 1 to our Water Safety Plans we target to achieve compliance under the new Framework by December 2021.

Leadership and Elected Member involvement

In developing a policy or statement on drinking water quality, it is an important step in formalising the level of service to which we are committed and provides visibility and focus on water quality management throughout Kaipara.

The following six fundamental principles of drinking-water safety in New Zealand (Government Inquiry into Havelock North Drinking Water 2017) should be incorporated in developing the policy or statement:

- Principle 1: A high standard of care must be embraced
- Principle 2: Protection of source water is of paramount importance
- Principle 3: Maintain multiple barriers against contamination
- Principle 4: Change (including changes to processes and hazardous events) precedes contamination
- Principle 5: Suppliers must own the safety of drinking-water
- Principle 6: Apply a preventive risk management approach.

An example of a statement or policy is the following:

Kaipara District Council is committed to managing its water supply effectively to provide safe, high-quality drinking-water that consistently meets the expectations of the *New Zealand Drinking-water Safety Plan Framework* the requirements of the Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Act 2007 and *Drinking-water Standards for New Zealand*, and consumer and other regulatory requirements.

To achieve this, in partnerships with stakeholders and relevant agencies, **Kaipara District Council** will:

- 1 embrace a high standard of care to manage water quality at all points along the delivery chain from source water to the consumer to provide a continuous supply of safe drinking-water
- 2 maintain a personal sense of responsibility and dedication to providing consumers with safe drinking-water
- 3 integrate the needs and expectations of our consumers, stakeholders, regulators and employees into our planning
- 4 use a preventive risk-based approach in which potential threats to water quality and quantity are identified and managed
- 5 acknowledge that protection of source water is of paramount importance in protecting consumers against drinking-water contamination and illness
- 6 maintain robust multiple barriers against contamination appropriate to the level of potential contamination and harm
- 7 acknowledge that contamination is almost always preceded by some kind of change (including changes to processes and hazardous events), and will monitor and always respond to change
- 8 develop appropriate contingency planning and incident response capability
- 9 establish regular monitoring of the quality of drinking-water and effective reporting mechanisms to provide relevant and timely information, and promote confidence in the water supply and its management
- 10 participate in appropriate investigative activities to ensure continued understanding of drinking-water quality issues and performance
- 11 continually improve our practices by assessing performance against corporate commitments, stakeholder expectations and regulatory requirements.

All managers and employees involved in the supply of drinking-water are responsible for understanding, implementing, maintaining and continually improving the drinking-water quality management system.

Dated

Signed by responsible officer

The statement above is only a guide and can be changed and adjusted as the leadership see fit.

Discussion/Ngā kōrerorero

Policy and planning implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Risks and mitigations

The proof of involvement of Council, other stakeholders and the community will form part of the requirements of Water Safety Plans under the new Framework. If this is not demonstrated, there is a risk that the Water Safety Plans may not be approved under the new Framework by December 2021. The submission of this report to the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee is a step in getting Elected Members' involvement in the water safety planning process.

Significance and engagement/Hirahira me ngā whakapāpā

The decisions or matters of this report do not trigger the significance criteria outlined in Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, and the public will be informed via agenda on the website.

Our community will be engaged, and feedback will be sought to highlight to them the Council's commitment to the supply of safe and secure water supply.

Next steps/E whaiake nei

Council staff to develop stakeholder and community engagement plans.

Attachments/Ngā tapiritanga

	Title
A	Dargaville Water Safety Plan risk table
B	Maungaturoto Water safety Plan risk table
C	Ruawai Water Safety Plan risk table
D	Glinks Gully Water Safety Plan risk table