

Environment Court extends Akaroa wastewater deadline

The City Council has been given an extension on a deadline imposed by the Environment Court for a report on alternatives to discharging treated wastewater into Akaroa Harbour.

In late May it was found that a meter fault had resulted in misleading figures on the amount of water to be disposed of – meaning that the figures used in the calculations and proposals were known to be inaccurate.

New meters were then installed, and initial indications have been that the flow is approximately double the amount recorded by the faulty meter – calling into question the integrity of the whole design and consultation process.

Conclusions from the consultation were that all or nearly all of the treated effluent could probably be re-used for purposes such as irrigation of the Akaroa Recreation Ground.

“It appears the treated wastewater volumes will change significantly, which could have a significant impact on the size and cost

of options we consulted on” the Council’s Akaroa wastewater project team said in a statement.

“In light of this we anticipate needing to carry out more consultation with the community” the group said.

In the meantime the Council’s contracting company, City Care, is trying to work out how and where stormwater and groundwater are getting into the sewer system.

In a project involving 200 properties around Rue Balguerie fourteen places were found where there was stormwater infiltration.

The testing is being done by testing the temperature of water in the sewers using a very sensitive fibre optic probe.

When the temperature drops in wet weather this indicates that rain-derived water is leaking into the system, and a CCTV camera can then be used in the pipes to identify the actual source of the inflow.

Eleven of the inflows were from lateral pipes coming from private properties.

“We have not commissioned City Care to carry out further distributed temperature testing on other sub-catchments in Akaroa” Council waters and waste manager John Mackie said.

“Where problems are confirmed on private prop-

erty, property owners will be required to have the drainage faults repaired.”

Mr Mackie said that once wet weather infiltration work had been done, then more work would explore groundwater infiltration during dry periods.

Big rains

During July 655mm of rain was recorded in the one month - getting on towards half of the usual annual average.

At Magnet Bay on the Peninsula coast near Birdlings Flat a total of 145.1mm of rain was recorded

during July this year – over 100mm more than the 44.4mm during the same month last year.

The total for 2017 to the end of July was 588.4mm, which compares with 394.1mm during the same period last year.

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