



Conserving water over summer



Conserving water over summer

Even though it falls from the sky, water is a limited resource. Earth is sometimes called the blue planet because of our abundance of water, but 97% of this is saltwater and unsuitable for drinking. If you filled a bath and imagined it was holding all the water in the world, the amount of drinking water we have available would be only half a teaspoon.

In South Taranaki, the Council has to apply to Taranaki Regional Council for consent to take water from our streams or underground sources (aquifers). The amount we are allowed to take is limited to a sustainable level. This ensures that stream habitats are not destroyed and aquifers are given a chance to recharge from rainwater soaking through the soil.

It makes good sense to conserve water all the time so that we have enough to go round and we protect our environment. In summer this becomes even more important. As the temperature rises, people, plants and animals all find they need more water. Demand then increases at the very time when we have the least amount of water available.

In South Taranaki our soils are porous and drain quickly, and we also experience drying winds. We can only go for ten days without significant rainfall before the land becomes very dry. We have a number of reservoirs throughout the district, some holding as much as 9 million litres of water. But these still only store enough water for about a day and half in each scheme (at peak summer demand). Since our largest reservoirs cost over \$1.5 million each, providing more storage than this would be very expensive.



Kapuni Stream intake, where we get water for Hawera, Normanby, Ohawe and Okaiawa.

Tips for the summer

- **Accept a dry lawn over summer.**
Grass becomes dormant during periods of drought, but rejuvenates naturally when winter approaches.
- **Let your grass grow slightly taller in the summer.**
Longer blades promote deeper rooting and shade the root zone, reducing water loss.
- **Use a broom to clean driveways and paths.**
Sweeping will get them clean without wasting water.
- **Cover your swimming pool**
This will reduce the amount of water lost through evaporation by up to 90%.



New water meter being installed

Using water wisely

Before the Council is allowed to take more water from streams or aquifers, we need to demonstrate that we are being responsible with it. If we focus on using water wisely, we can be more efficient in the use of resources we already have, as well as saving a lot of expensive investment where it may not be necessary. This makes sense from an environmental, cultural and financial point of view, and is also something we are required to do as part of our consent conditions.

As Council we do this by:

- Measuring where the water goes
- Checking for leaks on our reticulation
- Renewing our assets as they reach the end of their useful life
- Investing in capital projects
- Identifying losses at our treatment plants
- Promoting water conservation

Fixing leaks

We encourage people to have any water leaks on their property repaired as soon as they notice them. A leaking toilet might not be obvious, but it can waste thousands of litres of water. A dripping tap can easily waste 5 litres of water every day. Fixing leaks will not only save water, but also prevent potential damage to cupboards, walls or even foundations. If you see a leak, either on the Council network or on private property, please call us on

0800 H2O FLOW
(0800 426 356)

so that we know about it and can arrange to have it repaired.



Find out your water footprint

Once the water we deliver to consumers crosses the boundary into their property, it becomes their responsibility. We encourage people to conserve water whenever possible. The most important way to do this is to think about where your water is going, and try not to waste it. You can work out the Water Footprint of your home (an estimate of how much water you use every year) by visiting goblue.zerofootprint.net.

Want to know more?

If you want to know more about water conservation, you can visit us at www.southtaranaki.com.

South Taranaki District Council also has a Facebook page that you can follow for up to the minute information.



If you would like a brochure with more tips on how to conserve water, a free shower timer or a free toilet cistern weight come in and see us at 105-111 Albion St, Hawera or your local LibraryPlus.

Conserving water on your dairy farm

- **Check your meter regularly.** If your consumption seems higher than usual, you could have a leak that is wasting water and costing you money.
- **Check that ball cocks on troughs are set correctly** and have not been damaged. If a ball cock is set too high it could spill water during windy conditions or overflow constantly.
- **Re-use the pre-cooler water** that chills down milk.
- Use **wash down water** for irrigation.
- **Capture rainwater** and use it wherever possible.
- **Use correct pump and pipe sizes.** If your pipes are too small, they will restrict the flow of water. By using the appropriate pipe size, you can actually get more pressure with less flow.



Stock trough with ball cock set too high