



Mayor's message

By now I hope you are all enjoying warmer temperatures and lighter, longer days as we ease into this beautiful time of year. I think we've certainly earned some rest and recreation and no doubt everyone is hoping for an uninterrupted summer of fun. However, Covid is ever present so please be safe.



A big issue for the Council at present is the looming 3 Waters Reforms proposed by the Government.

This would bring stormwater, waste water and drinking water all under more centralised control, and councils would no longer own the assets, although they would remain publicly owned.

Councils that opt out of this model will face much stricter penalties and must fund the upgrades themselves.

While the search for greater cost savings is understandable, our Council is struggling to get more information from the Government about how this will affect our district. By October 1 all councils are required to submit questions on how the 3 Waters model might affect their communities. Once the Department of Internal Affairs has reviewed this, we can commence public consultation. There is much more to come on 3 Waters but in the meantime, please see the Department of Internal Affairs website for more information, and a list of frequently asked questions on the Council's website.

There have been some real reasons to celebrate recently. Council has approved a change to the district plan which will enable the Wairarapa Dark Sky Association to apply for international recognition. Our libraries have wiped overdue fees for books forever from October 12. And work continues apace on the wonderful Five Towns Trails Networks cycle project.

Many fingers will also be crossed that Covid restrictions won't stop our usual host of summer events. A special mention to the Martinborough Madcaps drama group which kindly gave up its slot at the Martinborough Town Hall this month to allow a postponed four-concert classical music series with Michael Houston and friends to go ahead.

Enjoy your spring!

Alex Beijen
Mayor

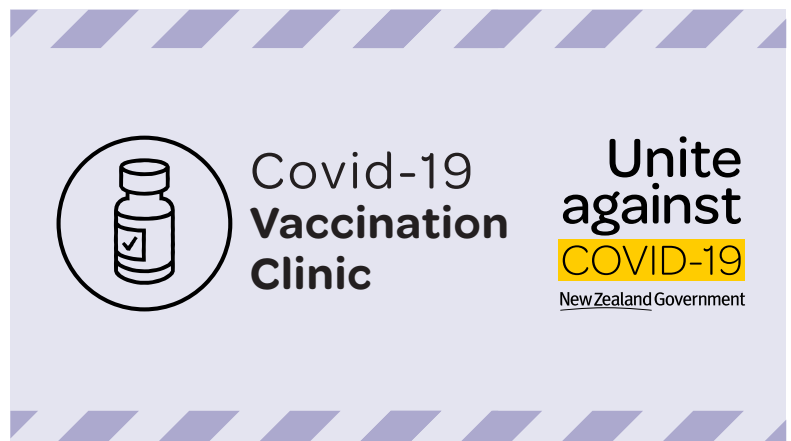
Covid vaccinations

Residents in the outlying communities in our district have been proactive in getting vaccinated at Featherston or Masterton clinics, and although the Featherston drive-thru clinic has ended, vaccinations at the local community centre continue.

We know many in the community have been actively helping friends and neighbours who do not have transport to get to a clinic. The DHB will provide outreach vaccinations in the home to people who are housebound due to physical or mental conditions – this can be arranged by email:

CVC@wairarapa.dhb.org.nz.

The DHB is also planning its mobile vaccination rollout. There will be vaccination opportunities in Martinborough and other rural areas throughout the region between now and December, so keep an eye out for information about this over the next few months.



Library changes

Major changes are happening at our local libraries. From October 12, overdue charges and reserve fees are being discontinued at the four libraries in Carterton and South Wairarapa districts.

This follows a similar decision to remove fees for children and young adult borrowers in 2019/2020, as research indicates overdue fees are a barrier to people using libraries rather than an incentive to bring items back on time.

The fee changes are part of a larger change which will see a new library management system at the Wairarapa Library Service and the libraries becoming part of the SMART collaboration.

Existing members will be able to swap their current library card for a SMART library card which will provide access to the collections of 26 libraries across the wider region, specifically those attached to Masterton, Hutt City, Porirua City, Kapiti Coast, and the WelTec and Whiteria polytechnics.

Items can be reserved, borrowed and returned to the most convenient library.

Also going live will be a new website and Facebook page on October 12.

A rethink on water

Much focus is being put at the moment on water, as local and central Government take a fresh look at how water is provided across the whole region.

South Wairarapa's water services are managed by Wellington Water, an entity which is owned by six councils including ours.

Wellington Water is currently drawing up a 30 year plan, which includes a look at water meters and big ticket items such as new water sources and energy from waste water by-products. A draft is expected to be ready in November.

At the same time, councils throughout the country are also weighing up the Government's proposed Three Waters reforms, which would centralise wastewater, stormwater and drinking water services.

Smart Meters

Meanwhile, in Greytown, some residents will be the first in South Wairarapa to trial household smart water meters, that will help create a more resilient and efficient water network.

Residents from 250 properties around Greytown are invited to have a free smart meter installed that will allow leaks to be identified and repaired more quickly.

The meters will record real-time water use and detect higher than normal water flow.

Participants in the trial will also have access to real-time data through an online customer portal.

South Wairarapa District Council chief executive Harry Wilson says the cost of supplying water will not change.

"Around 40 percent of South Wairarapa water is lost due to leaking water pipes. Using this smart technology to

detect leaks will mean repairs can be made faster, helping to conserve more of our region's water."

Wellington Water's chief advisor - drinking water, Laurence Edwards, says findings from the trial will be shared with other councils.

"The meters going into Greytown enable us to provide water consumption information back to customers through user portals, as well as provide information to Wellington Water to help find leaks.

"So, what we learn in Greytown about smart meters will be useful to other communities looking at how they can conserve water," he says.

Meanwhile, annual water meter readings are now complete and invoices have gone out for those households that have exceeded their allocation.

Each property in South Wairarapa that pays serviced water rates is allocated 350 cubic metres of drinking water per annum per rating unit. Or in layman's terms, 350,000 litres per connection. You can check whether you are paying serviced water rates on the back of your rates statement.

To check if you have a water leak, turn off all taps including the one for the hot water cylinder, look at the meter which is with your toby and if the meter is ticking over, even slowly, you have a leak. The toby is usually under a blue lid on the property boundary.

To apply for a waiver, contact the water team on water@swdc.govt.nz or phone 06-306 9611, ext 874.

If you do not have a leak, and you are struggling to pay for the water rates, please contact the team to discuss repayment options.

The Water Team at SWDC



Te Hōkai Nuku Wairarapa Regional Positive Ageing Strategy

As spring arrives, South Wairarapa District Council is marking its first year of implementing the Te Hōkai Nuku Wairarapa Regional Positive Ageing Strategy.



It's a great time to have a look at what has been achieved. The Council:

- Is testing improved accessibility of website partnering with Digital Seniors
- Hosted an older persons' workshop in its Long Term/ Spatial Plan planning processes
- Gathered information about areas that older people frequent, to use in their footpath repair prioritisation process
- Attended disability awareness training in recognition of the 59 percent of people over 65 who have a disability
- Installed exercise equipment into parks
- Developed relationships with a range of organisations such as Age Concern, St Johns, Nuku Ora (Sports Wellington) and the Wairarapa District Health Board
- Supported the promotion of Neighbours' Day

You can read the full strategy here: swdc.govt.nz/community/joint-wairarapa-councils-positive-ageing-strategy.



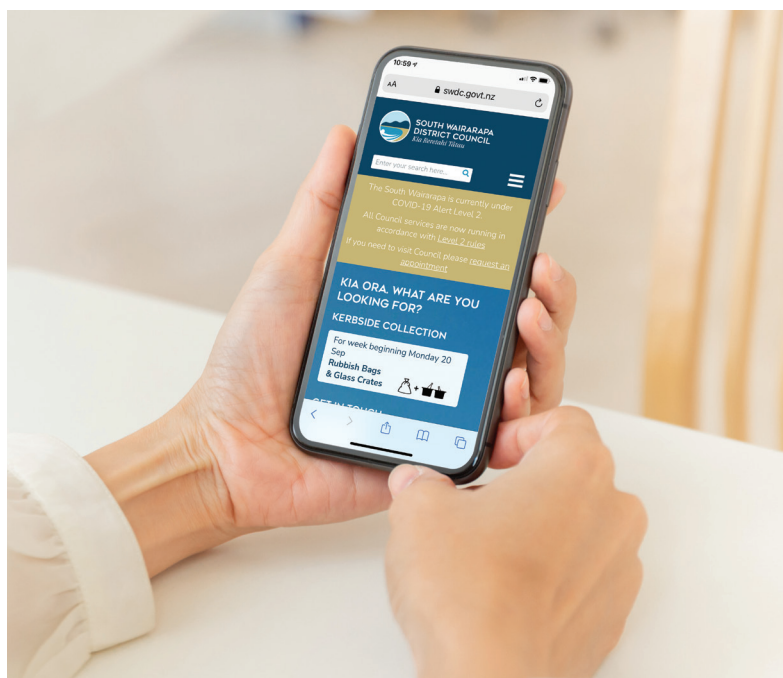
For more information, contact Lisa Matthews, Regional Positive Ageing Strategy Co-ordinator lisa@cdc.govt.nz or 027 444 1887.

Keep in touch!

We are keen to improve communication with our residents on important matters. What is your preferred method for receiving information from the Council? Do you prefer to receive a letter, an email, a Facebook alert or text?

If you would like to receive important updates, please email enquiries@swdc.govt.nz with the Subject line as *Preferred channel* and tell us your preference.

We will need your name and address, mobile phone number and email address so we may update our secure residents' database for use with important and/or urgent Council communication.



Rebates 2021/22

The Rates Rebate Scheme provides a rebate of up to \$665.00 for low income earners. Ratepayers must have been living in the home they own on 1 July 2021.

1. Your rebate will be calculated based on your gross income from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, your rates, and the number of dependants you have. The income eligibility for a rebate is \$26,510-\$42,000.
2. You must provide details of income from your income provider for ALL forms of income, including interest and dividends. If requested by the Department of Internal Affairs you must provide proof of this income. Application forms will be sent to those who have received a rebate in 2020/2021 and are also available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, the Council office and online www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms and can be obtained by calling 06 306 9611 ext. 858.

Get your rates invoice by email

If you wish to receive your rates notice by email contact rates@swdc.govt.nz

We encourage you to take up this option to allow Council to use the postage savings on projects to benefit the district.

Having trouble paying your rates?

Please contact us as soon as possible so we can work with you on a payment plan. Council's policy is to approach banks and legal representatives to assist us in recovering arrears at the end of the rating year.

For any queries regarding your rates, please contact our rates team at the following email address: rates@swdc.govt.nz

Payment by direct debit

Council encourages ratepayers to pay rates via direct debit as this ensures the correct amount is paid and you avoid paying penalties for late payment.

Based on feedback from ratepayers, we offer **weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly direct debit options** to pay rates. Direct debit is the easiest way to pay your rates as we withdraw the funds directly from your bank account at the very last minute. That way you will get the benefit of your funds for the longest time and avoid

penalties. If you would like to pay using this method, forms are available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, as well as the Council office and on our website

www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms. All you need to do is complete the form and send it to SWDC, PO Box 6, Martinborough 5741, scan and email it to rates@swdc.govt.nz or drop it off at either the Council office in Martinborough or at the Featherston or Greytown libraries.

Rates 2021/22 Instalment two

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Enclosed with this newsletter is the rates invoice covering the period 1 October – 30 December 2021.

The last day for payment is 22 November 2021. Please pay by this date to avoid the 10% penalty.

Please help us to process payments by ensuring you include the property valuation number for all properties you are paying. If paying online please make a separate payment for each property.



**GET IT
SORTED**

Something needs fixing?
Let us know...

To South Wairarapa District Council,
P.O. Box 6, Martinborough 5741

From:

First name

Surname

What's the problem?

Where exactly?

Street, Road, Number

Your phone number (Should we need to contact you to clarify the details)