



TOI TE ORA PUBLIC HEALTH

Bay of Plenty + Lakes Districts



Toi Te Ora Public Health
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13 June 2019

The Chief Executive Officer
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Submission on Draft Water Supply Strategy and Water Supply Implementation Draft Plan

This submission has been prepared by Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora) which is the Public Health Unit for Lakes District Health Board (DHB).

The key role of Toi Te Ora is to promote, protect and improve population health, prevent ill health and minimise the risk of disease and injury through population based interventions. Designated officers within Toi Te Ora have responsibilities to reduce conditions within the local community which are likely to cause disease. In part this is undertaken by assisting councils with their responsibilities pursuant to the Resource Management, Local Government and the Health Acts.

Many of the influences that determine population health and wellbeing are not healthcare factors, but are environmental, social, cultural and political. Local government is one of the most important and powerful influences on the health and wellbeing of communities. Council decisions affect the determinants of health, meaning councils have the ability to improve the health of communities. This is reflected by the reinstatement of the four well-beings in the Local Government Act.

The provision of clean drinking-water is a vitally important measure for the protection of public health. For this reason we support Council's recognition that it is essential for their community to access enough safe fresh water. We support the water strategy outcomes, particularly Council's goal to ensure the protection of public health, and also support Council's implementation plan to have consistently good water supplied to people who are connected to a Council water supply.

Toi Te Ora proposes an additional goal which is for Council to improve access to safe drinking water for all communities in the district. This will help to achieve the outcome sought by

Council of ensuring the protection of public health across the district. Council has a responsibility for the health of everyone in its district, and as part of this responsibility should commit to a goal of continuing to increase the number of communities served by a Council water supply.

This goal could be achieved by actively encouraging more people and communities to connect to the high standard drinking water supplies that Council provides, and by providing information to people who are not currently connected to a Council supply. Community education would improve the knowledge of people who manage their own water supply. Council already provides similar services to encourage waste minimisation practices through subsidised composting equipment and information workshops. Council should also develop a needs based prioritisation approach for developing new drinking water supplies for communities that do not currently receive Council drinking water.

Toi Te Ora would be keen to work with Council to develop the content of the educational material and with the prioritisation needs assessment.

We appreciate this opportunity to submit and do not wish to be heard in support of the submission. However, we are willing to clarify and discuss any of the points made in the submission with Council staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Shoemack', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Dr Phil Shoemack
Medical Officer of Health

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