

## Mangawhai EcoCare Wastewater Scheme Council in Partnership with Water Infrastructure Group



***The purpose of EcoCare is to maintain our environment, particularly the Mangawhai Estuary.***

Many of you will have recently received notice about how the EcoCare Scheme will affect your rates and may have some questions. Here are some explanations that may be helpful

**My letter says the sewers will be available by October 2009 (or in some cases January 2010). Can I please have a more specific date?** Unfortunately, due to the nature of construction we can not be more specific. Many of you will have a sewer available for use well before October 2009. However, for the purpose of rating we have determined as best we can whether the public sewers serving your property will be available in either the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (by October), or 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (by January) of this coming rating year which starts in July. You may actually end up with some months of free sewer service. Please note that rates are levied on whether you have sewer service available, rather than if or when your private property drain connecting your dwelling to the sewer is made.

**How will I know when the sewer is operational?** We will let you know when the sewer for your property is available for use.

**Then what do I need to do?** This depends on whether your property is eligible to benefit from the sanitary works subsidy granted to Council by the Ministry of Health.

If you are eligible for the subsidy, then you have or will soon receive a letter from us outlining how we propose to use the subsidy to connect your existing wastewater facilities to the public sewer. With your consent we will construct your property drain stopping short about 1 metre of making the final connection upstream of your septic tank. When the sewer serving your property is ready to use we will return and complete the final connection.

For properties not eligible to benefit from the sanitary works subsidy, or if you do not consent to our proposed route for your drain, then you will need to arrange and pay for a registered drainlayer to carry out your private drain connection to the sewer including Building Consent.

All property owners connected to the sewers will then need to arrange and pay for decommissioning of the existing septic tank. Refer to Section 3.11 and the Appendices of the EcoCare Project Information Booklet, posted to you in December 2007 and available on our website for more information.

**Why has the timing changed from what we have previously been advised?** The initial scope and programme of the project was that some properties were to have wastewater service available in April 2009 with all 1200 properties serviced by end of August 2009. Very recently, negotiations for contract modifications have been finalised to increase the scope of the project, including design and construction of private property drains and sewerage to service an additional 700 properties. These modifications along with the impact of moving the treatment plant as a result of appeals against the Project resource consent in 2007, have resulted in time extensions. Please note that none of these changes have resulted from poor performance from our contractor, rather Water Infrastructure Group are performing well to achieve demanding deadlines. Remember construction of the wastewater scheme started only 15 months ago.

The overall effect of these contract modifications on the programme is that the initial date for sewerage service will now be around mid-2009 rather than April, but it is still planned that 1200 properties will still be serviced by the end of August 2009 as per the original programme. We aim to have another 450 properties serviced by October 2009 and a further 250 properties by the end of December 2009. Please remember that events outside of the control of the Contract still may affect these dates.

**So what is left to do to get EcoCare up and running?** For the initial scope, there is only a short length of sewer left to construct. Northpower are working on providing power supply to the pump stations and treatment plant so that mechanical testing can soon begin. Most of the mechanical parts of the treatment plant are on site and being assembled. The reclaimed water transfer pipeline has now reached the Council Farm on Brown Road and has a short distance to extend to the reclaimed water storage dam on the farm. The earthworks for the dam are near completion and the liner will soon be installed. Construction of the first stage of irrigation on the farm will also start soon.

**What about reinstatement?** Reinstatement is ongoing and we do appreciate your patience. Only once we are satisfied that the reinstatement is complete will we request your sign-off. This process has started in some areas.

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*For further information please refer to the Project Information Booklet from November 2007, or the EcoCare website [www.kaipara.govt.nz/mangawhai\\_ecocare.htm](http://www.kaipara.govt.nz/mangawhai_ecocare.htm)*