

Local Water Done Well

Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQs

1. Will my water services be affected ?	<p>No. As Council goes through this process, we will continue to deliver drinking, waste, and storm water services as we already do while we explore the best service delivery model under the LWDW model.</p> <p>Our focus is on ensuring our communities receive quality and value in water services delivery now and in the future.</p> <p>If Council decides to opt for a different delivery model for water service delivery, it will not impact the water services you receive. It just may mean that someone else will be responsible for delivery.</p>
2. Will I be paying more for water?	<p>Under any delivery model, water bills will likely increase. While we've made some good investment decisions in the past about our three waters, we need to continually invest to maintain our assets, meet demand, and ensure we're continually compliant with changing rules and standards.</p> <p>The Government is introducing a new economic regulator and water quality regulator to help ensure that prices are fair and that there is sufficient investment in our network.</p>
3. Will water services be privatised?	<p>No. Under Local Water Done Well, the Government is taking steps to ensure that water services will remain in public ownership. No matter which of the two options is chosen, water services will remain owned by our council.</p> <p>The Government, via legislation, is ensuring there are stops to prevent privatisation of water, and ensure that it remains in public ownership. Councils and water organisations will not be able to privatise water services. The Local Government (Water Services) Bill states that a water organisation must be owned by a council (or councils).</p>

<p>4. Will we all be paying the same amount for water across NZ?</p>	<p>No, water charges will not be the same across the country. We all pay different amounts for water at the moment, and some communities pay with water meters or fixed charges.</p> <p>If we create a joint water services organisation, it would determine how water would be charged, and also how much. In the short term this is not expected to change, but over time, water charges may become more consistent between areas as service levels become more consistent.</p>
<p>5. Does this mean that all properties will get a water meter?</p>	<p>Water meters are highly likely under all possible future models of water services, where the services are provided by council or a joint WSO.</p> <p>Water meters are critical to helping identify where water loss is occurring, and to help people manage their water usage.</p> <p>The Government has signalled, via proposed legislation, that in future, water charges will have to be based on levels of use rather than being based on property values (as they generally are now) and water meters help to identify usage.</p> <p>Water meters will not be applicable for those on private supplies.</p>
<p>6. Why do things need to change, and what do I need to do?</p>	<p>The Government has introduced legislation, and new requirements, that mean changes coming to how we manage water services, and the standards we need to meet, are inevitable. But we have choices about how we do this.</p> <p>Ensure you have your say on the proposed Water Services Delivery Model options during consultation (15 April 2025 – 15 May 2025).</p> <p>The future of water service delivery is a significant and lasting decision, with intergenerational impacts for our communities. It is important your views are heard on the future of water service delivery in your area – not only for yourself, but for future generations.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please attend one of the community catch up sessions which will take place at each of the main</p>

	centres in Thames-Coromandel district. These can be found via tcdc.govt.nz/lwdw
7. Is the mandate to introduce fluoride part of Local Water Done Well ?	<p>No - Fluoride treatment of drinking water is governed by national legislation, not by councils or water service providers. Any decisions about fluoridation are made at a government level, and councils must comply with these regulations.</p> <p>For more details on fluoride in drinking water and government policy, visit the Ministry of Health website: www.health.govt.nz</p>
8. If I have a private supply, how will this affect me ?	There will be no immediate changes to your arrangements. As part of the legislation, there are provision for Water Service Organisation (or councils) to provide support to smaller private schemes if a significant problem occurs.

Process FAQ's

9. What are the key dates ?	<p>15 April 2025 – 15 May 2025: Consultation starts and finishes.</p> <p>24 June 2025: Council will decide on its options to be included in the Water Service delivery Plan.</p> <p>3 September 2025: Council will submit its Water Service Delivery plan (and implementation plan) by this date.</p> <p>September 2025 – December 2025: Minister of Local Government will confirm the Water Service Delivery plan is acceptable.</p> <p>From early 2026: Councils will initiate changes in line with the submitted implementation plan.</p> <p>From 1 July 2028: Council (or Joint WSO) to ensure the delivery of water services is financially sustainable.</p>
10. What needs to be contained in a Water Service Delivery Plan ?	The intention is for councils to provide an assessment of their water infrastructure, how much they need to invest, and how they plan to pay for and deliver it through their preferred water service delivery model.

	Plans are a way for councils to demonstrate their commitment to delivering water services that meet regulatory requirements, support growth and urban development, and are financially sustainable.
11. How will stormwater be handled under Local Water Done Well ?	<p>Under the Local Government (Water Services) Bill, all three waters are included in this legislation, including stormwater.</p> <p>Stormwater is more complex than drinking water and wastewater because it is interwoven with parks, reserves, and roads.</p> <p>Councils will retain responsibility for stormwater, regardless of the new model. Future discussions will determine how much of stormwater management (if any) is included in a water services organisation.</p>
12. When do we need to move to another model?	<p>By 3 September 2025, Council must submit a Water Services Delivery Plan.</p> <p>A transition period will follow, with the new model expected to begin operating by 1 July 2028.</p>

Options FAQs

13. Can TCDC proceed with an 'In house' unit for water services	Yes, detailed analysis has been completed by independent consultants confirming that this is a viable option for TCDC. See detailed options report by visiting tcdc.govt.nz/lwdw
14. Can TCDC start with an 'in house' unit and then move to a joint Water Service Organisation later ?	<p>Yes, this is an option for TCDC. There are pros and cons for joining a Water Services Organisation (WSO) later.</p> <p>If TCDC were to join a WSO earlier, it would be able to influence the set up and design of the organisation, ensuring that the requirements for TCDC are considered as part of the set up.</p> <p>If TCDC were to join a WSO later, it would need to accept that it will not have as much influence on the set up of the organisation, however any set up risks would likely have been addressed.</p>

15. How are decisions made within a Water Service Organisation?	<p>Water services organisations must give effect to a Statement of Performance Expectations. This is a document that sets out what it must do, how it works with the community, and what investment priorities should look like. This document is written by the councils that own the organisation.</p> <p>Each council involved would be a shareholder in the Water Service Organisation.</p> <p>A Board of Directors would be appointed based on competencies and expertise, not political affiliations.</p> <p>Councils would set priorities, ensure the Water Services Organisation meets performance expectations, and retain ultimate control over water assets.</p> <p>The economic regulator will monitor investment and prices.</p>
16. Will mana whenua be part of the Water Services Organisation?	<p>The LWDW model allows for iwi participation in governance but does not mandate iwi participation. The influence of iwi needs to be discussed by Council and our iwi/hapū partners and agreed with any Water Service Organisation partners.</p> <p>TCDC has reached out to local iwi to engage with them and seek feedback on the proposed Water Service Delivery Options.</p>
17. How will the Water Services Organisation be any different to entities such as Wellington Water ?	<p>Wellington Water is a management-only council-controlled organisation. It is not a water services organisation and it does not own the water assets. It is reliant upon the councils for funding and subject to their funding cycles.</p> <p>Water services organisations have bespoke legislation and must take direction from councils via a Statement of Expectations. Importantly, they are self-funded.</p>
18. If TCDC is a 'smaller' shareholder in a Water Services Organisation, how will our	<p>The new legislation is proposing that the councils who own the new organisation will be able to influence the direction of the new Water Service Organisation through a Statement of Expectations. This gives councils the ability to comment on and potentially modify the water services strategy that the water organisation prepares and board appointments. These powers</p>

local voice be heard ?	aren't necessarily based on shareholding, but rather how we agree to come together as councils and owners to make these decisions. We are in a relatively 'strong' position to be able to protect and promote the interests of Thames-Coromandel communities.
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