

Resource Investigations Department Report

John Sherriff, Manager

October 1999

1. Resource Information

During the last six weeks only one special weather bulletin was received. This was received on 5 October and alerted us to heavy rainfall in the Rimutaka Range.

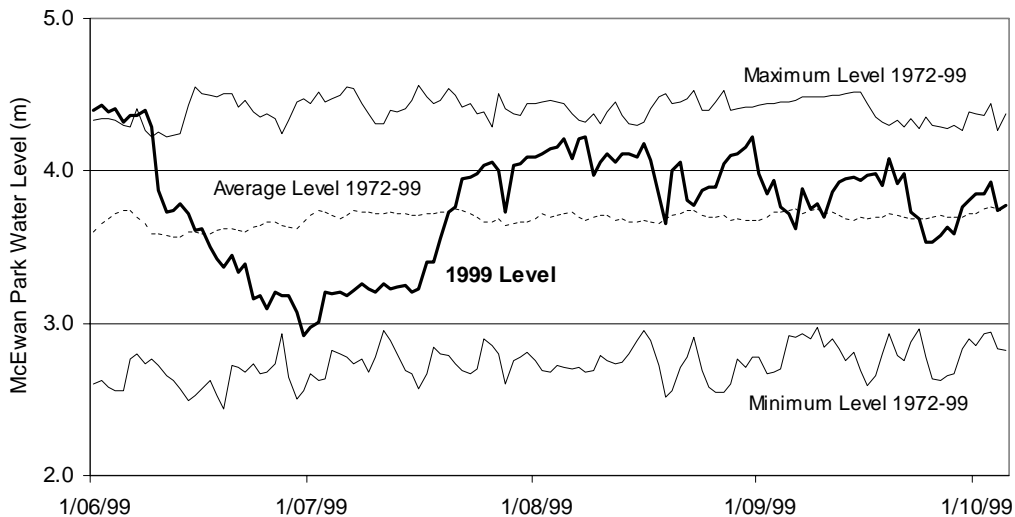
Two rainfall alarms were received during the last six weeks. These were:

7 September	Rainfall Alarm – Taungata
25 – 26 September	Rainfall Alarms – Kapakapanui, Oriwa, Taungata

2. Resource Analysis

2.1 Groundwater Levels

Groundwater Levels in the Waiwhetu Aquifer at McEwan Park have remained at or slightly above average over the past two months.



Monitoring results for the Kapiti Coast are yet to be processed.

We monitor a number of privately owned wells as part of our baseline groundwater monitoring programme. We are about to send the owners of these bores copies of the monitoring results from the last year and a letter acknowledging their co-operation.

2.2 Rainfall and River Flows

During September, rainfall in the western Wellington Region was below average. Waikanae received 80% of its normal September rainfall; the Mangaroa, Wainuiomata and Orongorongo areas received around 85%, while in Wellington City rainfall was less than 50%.

The effect of this low rainfall was noticeable in the Region's rivers. The average flow in the Porirua Stream during September was 45% of its normal levels. Flows in the Wainuiomata, Waikanae and Akatarawara Rivers were about 70-80% of those normally experienced.

Our analysis suggests that weather conditions during spring and summer will be similar to those experienced last year. Consequently, we are expecting lower than average rainfall and river flows in many parts of the Region.

2.3 Freshwater Quality Report

Work is progressing on the Annual Freshwater Quality Report. Its completion has been delayed by the departure of key staff. We hope to have it ready for presentation to the Committee at its next meeting

3. Resource Quality

3.1 Pollution and Non-compliance Complaints

The demand for our Pollution Response service continues to increase. The total number of complaints received to date this year is 50% higher than for the same period last year. A summary of pollution complaints and our performance in responding to them will be reported to the Committee at this meeting.

3.2 Agricultural Chemicals

Staff recently met with territorial authorities of the Region to discuss hazardous waste management issues, and specifically agrichemical collection. The meeting showed an overall reluctance by territorial authorities to enter into a collaborative project with the Regional Council for collecting these wastes. This is despite the territorial authorities having the primary responsibility for providing waste management services in their districts. A full report on this issue will be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

3.3 Pollution Prevention Brochures

Pollution prevention brochures addressing discharges to stormwater and odour management have recently been printed. These brochures will be used by Pollution Response staff to inform industry and the public about measures to prevent inappropriate discharges into the stormwater system and control the emission of odours. Copies of these brochures will be displayed at the meeting.

4. **Staffing**

Jason Wills has returned from a year's leave and resumes his role as Section Leader Resource Quality. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Nik Aitken who has been the Acting Section Leader in Jason's absence.

Brydon Hughes, our Groundwater Scientist, leaves the Council later this month to take up a similar position with the Southland Regional Council.