



Background information

How clean and plentiful is our region's water?

Overall, water quality in the Wellington region is generally good, but there are some exceptions. In some areas water quality is deteriorating largely due to stormwater pollution and agricultural run-off. Water quantity is often an issue during the summer months, with some areas being more susceptible to droughts than others; e.g. the Kapiti Coast and the Wairarapa.

Some polluted or degraded water bodies in the Wellington region:

Waikanae River	Mazengarb Drain	Waiwhetu Stream
Porirua Stream	Ngauranga Stream	Makoura Stream
Waitohu Stream	Ngarara Stream	Kaiwharawhara Stream
Makara Stream	Owhiro Stream	Ruamahanga River

Common causes of pollution:

Paint	Chemicals	Farm effluent	Silt from eroding banks and earthworks
Silage pits	Engine oil	Fertilisers	Grease
Dog and bird poo	Leaking storage tanks	Detergents	Rubbish
Herbicides	Sewage discharge	Subsurface drains	Pesticides

(Read the Pollution prevention, and Stream restoration leaflets and posters for more details).



A stream full of silt



White paint in a stream

Introduction

Water usage and wastage in our region

Just in Wellington, the Hutt Valley and Porirua alone, we use 54,000 million litres of water per year. That is the same as 27,000 Olympic sized swimming pools full of water, or more than two bath tubs full per person per day. Masterton uses 5,600 million litres of water per year and Kapiti uses 6,900 million litres. The Greater Wellington Regional Council collects water from several rivers and groundwater sources and treats it so that it is clean to drink. The more water we take out of our rivers and from under the ground, the more we put these natural systems at risk. We need to be careful that we look after these natural systems by not wasting water.

Common causes of water wastage

Watering the garden in the heat of the day	Leaking taps or burst pipes
Toilets and urinals without water-saving devices	Leaving taps or hoses on during tasks
Using the hose as a 'brush' to 'sweep' away materials	Excessive private water takes from streams

(Read our Water conservation leaflet for more details.)

How the Greater Wellington Regional Council looks after water



The Greater Wellington Regional Council works to look after water in a number of ways.

Water quality scientists test the water to see if it is clean. Hydrologists monitor river flow levels to make sure there is enough water to go around.

Engineers and scientists collect water from rivers, clean it and send it down pipes for you to drink.

Policy advisors and planners work with the community to set rules about how water can be used.

Consent officers make sure people who want to take a lot of water or build a dam or a bridge on a river do so properly.

Greater Wellington also works with community groups, businesses, and other local authorities to clean up or improve degraded water. We plant thousands of trees every year to prevent land slipping into streams and rivers. We also plant trees alongside rivers to make life better for the animals that live there and for people to enjoy.



We respond to calls from the public concerning pollution incidents. Pollution response staff visit the pollution scene and attempt to stop the pollution, clean it up, and discover who caused it. They can fine people on the spot.

If you see a pollution incident, call the 24 hour Pollution Hotline on 0800 496 734.