

Water stories in the news

Learning outcomes

- Students can explain the importance of water conservation.
- Students can explain the importance of healthy waterways.

Method

1. Students read the articles on the worksheets (**BLM 9a,b,c**) as a language or homework activity. They then complete the focus questions on the worksheets.
2. As a class, discuss the students' own experiences of water pollution and water wastage. How do they compare with the newspaper articles? Did the articles surprise the students at all?
3. The students could invent or mock up a news story about the results of the work of Waitohu Stream Care group. The story could address the following issues:
 - Who was involved in the Waitohu Stream Care group?
 - What have they achieved?
 - How does the stream look nowadays?
 - What is the greatest challenge to keeping the stream clean from now on?

Alternatively, the students could interview a local group of people who are caring for a stream, and write their story.

Teachers' notes

This activity could be done as part of a language exercise. In this way it is possible to integrate environmental education throughout the curriculum. Links can also be made to the Arts (murals, posters, cartoons), Health and Physical Education (safety plans), Technology (production of water-saving devices), Mathematics (estimating and measuring water use), and Social Studies (how people view and value the environment) Curricula.



Waterway sick, says survey

The lower Waitohu Stream is one of the sickest waterways in the Wellington region, according to a Wellington Regional Council survey.

The main contamination problem is the Mangapouri stream, which flows through the middle of Otaki and into the Waitohu, carrying high levels of faecal coliforms -- indicating contamination from sewer pipes. WRC are working with KCDC to find the source of contamination, possibly cross connection problems between sewer and stormwater pipes. The stream is also polluted by farm run-off.

The local Waitohu Stream Care group have been monitoring the stream and preparing to plant the banks, working with help from the WRC.

"It's a shining example of local determination to restore the environment," said Kapiti regional councillor Chris Turver.

Resident doing her bit as Kapiti water crisis continues

Chalanga resident Nan Sweeney, 87, has been saving used water and carrying it outside to her garden in an effort to save her plants during Kapiti's drought.

She has been abiding by the council restrictions and doing her best to reuse water for her plants outside.

"So far I have saved about two-thirds of the plants by reusing washing up water. I have even restricted my showers to about twice a week and have put a hose in the shower to catch the water."

Ms Sweeney would rather be using a hose but knows she has to do her part to conserve water.

"It's doing my best but it's an awful job taking all the water outside especially when you're 87."

Ms Sweeney said she would take advantage of free hose water being offered at Chalanga and Waiwaka Beach by Kapiti Coast District Council.

Another Chalanga resident Harry Coburn said it was good people were being offered the water.

He said people had to be careful not to drink the water as it was untreated and had high levels of iron and manganese.

Council operational services manager Iain McIsaac said "Even though the town water supply is off limits to everyone for outside use, in almost all cases there are other ways to carry out the activity or alternative sources of water that can be tapped rather than the hoses at Chalanga, Waiwaka Beach or even Otaki."

"So with a little bit of effort it can be done and the council appreciates those people making an effort to help the community."

Water has been restricted to household use only throughout most of the district which has affected both businesses and home gardens.