

Kia ora, we are

# Taumata Arowai

The Water Services Regulator

**If you're a drinking  
water supplier, here's  
what you need to know.**



TAUMATA  
AROWAI

As the water services regulator for Aotearoa New Zealand, we're here to help make sure everyone has access to safe and reliable drinking water every day.



# Tō mātou whakapapa

## Where we've come from

The 2016 Havelock North drinking water supply contamination caused more than 8,000 people to become sick from campylobacteriosis and resulted in the death of up to four people.

Havelock North was not an isolated incident, but it was a catalyst for change. Even today, a large number of communities need to boil their water because it is not safe to drink from the tap.

The Government's inquiry into the Havelock North incident recommended a significant number of changes to reform the drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater (Three Waters) sector.

### **The three pou (pillars) of the Government's Three Waters reform programme are:**

- 1.** The establishment of a dedicated water services regulator  
- Taumata Arowai.
- 2.** Introduction of new legislation - Water Services Act 2021.
- 3.** Changes to the way water services are delivered and managed.

**Ka hoki kōmuri ngā whakaaro kia anga whakamua te titiro.**  
**Turn our minds to the past to determine our way forward.**

# Ā mātou kaupapa

## What we are focused on

### **Our focus is to ensure that drinking water is safe.**

While all drinking water suppliers are required to supply safe drinking water, our current focus is on large urban suppliers such as local councils. These suppliers are responsible for providing most of the drinking water to most of the people in Aotearoa.

More than 80 percent of the population gets their drinking water from a local council supplier. These suppliers have been regulated previously (by the Ministry of Health under the Health Act 1956) and they already know what's expected of them.

We are working on understanding the needs of a broad range of smaller and rural water suppliers, including marae and papakāinga.

Many smaller suppliers are new to being regulated under the Water Services Act 2021. The Act includes a generous transition period for the registration of previously unregistered drinking water suppliers (by November 2025) and full compliance with the Act (by November 2028).

Over time, as we get to know the needs of smaller suppliers, we will provide the tools, guidance and support that they need.



If you own or operate an unregistered drinking water supply - the most important thing you need to do right now is to continue to provide safe drinking water.

Our approach will adapt to reflect the scale, complexity and risks that relate to different drinking water supplies.

For example, the testing and monitoring requirements for a water supply serving 10,000 people will be different to a community water scheme serving fewer than 100 people, or the requirements for a small farm supplying water to several other dwellings.

Our role is to work with suppliers of all sizes to make this journey smooth, sustainable, and achievable.

**Wai ora. Tangata ora.**  
**Healthy water. Healthy people.**

# Te Mana o te Wai

## It's at the heart of what we do

**A core responsibility of Taumata Arowai, along with all people who have duties and functions under the Water Services Act 2021, is to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai to the extent it applies to those duties and functions.**

Te Mana o te Wai is about restoring and preserving the balance between water, the environment and people by taking a whole-of-system approach to water. This means looking after wai (water) from ki uta ki tai (mountains to the sea).

By putting the health and wellbeing of our water first, we can also provide for the needs of our people and communities.

The application of Te Mana o te Wai will be different from place to place, and community to community. We are at the start of our journey to discover and understand how we can give effect to Te Mana o te Wai and guide the water services sector to do the same.



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# Am I a drinking water supplier?

If you own or operate a water supply that provides drinking water to more than one household, then you are considered a drinking water supplier under the Water Services Act 2021.

**All drinking water suppliers have a duty of care to provide safe drinking water to the communities or people who rely on their supplies.**

Some supplies such as those owned or operated by local councils were already 'registered' under the Health Act. These supplies are already registered under the Water Services Act 2021.

Examples of supplies that are often 'unregistered' are smaller community water schemes, marae, rural schools or community halls, or multiple dwellings such as farmhouses or baches that share a bore or water source.

If your household or dwelling has its own domestic drinking water supply and you don't provide water to another household, then you are not regulated by the Water Services Act 2021. You're not required to test or monitor your supply - but of course, you should ensure that your water is safe to drink.

# What does this mean for me?

## **Registered suppliers**

If you are a registered drinking water supplier, our focus is on working with you to help you meet your obligations under the Water Services Act 2021.

## **Unregistered suppliers**

If your supply was operating before 15 November 2021 but you weren't registered under the Health Act, you have time to find out more and get the advice and support you need. You have up to November 2025 to register and up to November 2028 to fully comply with the Water Services Act, including giving effect to Te Mana o te Wai.

These timeframes allow us to work with you to understand your needs and circumstances. As a water supplier, you know your supply best and you're best placed to understand and manage the risks.

If you are starting out as a new drinking water supplier after 15 November 2021, you'll need to get registered before your supply begins to operate.

With local teams across the motu (country), we're looking forward to working with you to help ensure the people and communities we serve have safe and reliable drinking water every day.

**If you've got questions or want to know more, just visit**

**[www.taumataarowai.govt.nz](http://www.taumataarowai.govt.nz) or email [info@taumataarowai.govt.nz](mailto:info@taumataarowai.govt.nz)**







# TAUMATA AROWAI

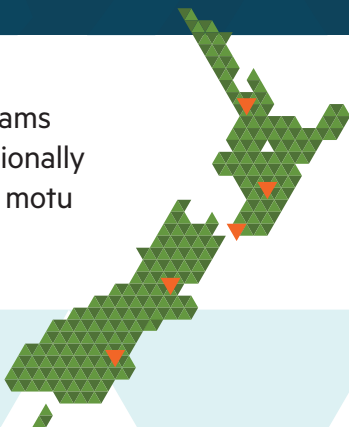
Water  
Services  
Regulator

Find out more at:

[taumataarowai.govt.nz](http://taumataarowai.govt.nz)

[info@taumataarowai.govt.nz](mailto:info@taumataarowai.govt.nz)

We have teams  
located regionally  
around the motu



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New Zealand Government