



Special update: Key information about water services legislation changes for suppliers and operators August 2025

The Local Government (Water Services) Bill has been enacted, including regulatory changes separated out into the associated 'repeals and amendments' bill. Find out about key changes for drinking water suppliers and drinking water, wastewater and stormwater network operators.

We're working to update our website to reflect the changes below by mid-September.

Drinking water

Registration renewal timeframe changes from annually to every five years

Registered drinking water suppliers are now required to renew their registration with us every five years, rather than annually.

What this means for drinking water safety plans

Suppliers will now also re-confirm that their drinking water safety plan (DWSP) is up to date, or provide us with an updated one, when they re-register five-yearly. During these five years, suppliers are still responsible for updating their DWSP on file with us whenever they make a significant update to it. However, DWSPs are no longer required for supplies that serve 25 or fewer people.

Date for unregistered drinking water supplies to be registered is extended to 2028

Drinking water suppliers now have until November 2028 to register any unregistered supplies and until November 2030 to meet the full legal responsibilities for these supplies (the fundamental responsibility to supply safe drinking water already applies).

Any new supplies set up since we became the water services regulator on 15 November 2021 must be registered and meet all relevant legal responsibilities from the time they are established.

People who provide drinking water to small households are no longer suppliers

Household supplies (also called shared domestic supplies or domestic self-supplies) that provide water to 25 people or fewer are no longer considered drinking water supplies and don't need to register with us.

Other types of supplies that serve 25 or fewer people still need be registered by November 2028 to ensure public health is appropriately safeguarded. This includes unregistered supplies:

- that provide drinking water to buildings used by the community or public (e.g. marae and community halls)
- managed by businesses that supply drinking water as part of their operations.

If you manage a household drinking water supply that's registered with us and serves 25 people or fewer people, please [contact us](#) to talk about de-registering.

Te Mana o te Wai

The requirement for drinking water suppliers to give effect to Te Mana o Te Wai (where applicable) as they carry out their supplier responsibilities, has been removed from the Water Services Act 2021.

Exemptions

Updates to legislation enable drinking water suppliers to apply for an exemption from one or more of the requirements listed in section 57 of the Water Services Act 2021. Previously, suppliers had to apply to be exempt from all requirements listed. Exemptions must still be consistent with the main purpose of the Water Services Act, which is to provide safe drinking water.

Wastewater and stormwater

National wastewater environmental performance standards

We have been working toward establishing New Zealand's first set of nationally consistent wastewater environmental performance standards, which aim to drive national consistency and make consenting wastewater infrastructure more cost efficient for communities while protecting public health and the environment.

The legislation makes changes to how the standards work as part of the resource management system (e.g. moving from minimum standards to 'single' standards which means that consenting authorities cannot impose more or less stringent conditions on wastewater consent), and changes how the standards will be implemented. It also provides extra time to meet requirements to those with consents expiring soon.

Since consulting on initial proposed standards earlier this year, we have been analysing feedback and working with technical experts to develop a final set of proposed standards for Cabinet consideration. This is expected to take place in October 2025.

Infrastructure design solutions (IDS), and National Engineering Design Standards (NEDS) and Codes of Practice

These solutions and standards aim to save network operators time and cost by making water services infrastructure investment and maintenance more consistent and efficient.

- IDS do this by providing councils with wastewater and stormwater infrastructure blueprints to enable faster consenting.
- NEDS do this by establishing standardised, performance-based requirements and national codes of practice for water services infrastructure that dovetail with local bylaws and controls on infrastructure connections to public networks.

We plan to map out our future work programme for these new instruments in the coming months – prioritising the actions that will best support water service providers adjusting to the new service delivery arrangements. The aim is to make things more efficient and effective for suppliers, operators and their communities.

For more information

To learn more about the Local Government (Water Services) (Repeals and Amendments) Act, visit the Department of Internal Affairs website: dia.govt.nz/Water-Services-Policy-and-Legislation

If you're receiving this email update because you're a drinking water supplier or network operator and have duties under the Water Services Act 2021 and you don't

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