



Water Services Authority - Taumata Arowai update September 2025

Good morning

It's been a really busy few months, with many of you finalising Water Services Delivery Plans, preparing for the current local government elections and working on year-end activities. With summer approaching, community suppliers will be turning their minds to the challenges that hotter weather brings in terms of surges in holiday visitors and potential drought conditions.

Here at the Authority, we have been progressing some important initiatives and making changes in line with enactment of the Local Government (Water Services) Bill. You can find out about key changes for suppliers and operators on [our website](#).

More choice for suppliers with new Acceptable Solutions

We have launched an improved set of [Acceptable Solutions](#) which means many of you are now able to choose this option to help ensure more people have safe water when they turn on the tap. The changes we've made were informed by your feedback to ensure the Acceptable Solutions are as fit-for-purpose and cost-effective as possible.

New-look website makes life easier

We have redeveloped our website to make finding information much easier for you. It is the end-result of extensive rescopeing, user testing and fine-tuning of content. The new site navigation means information is in a logical place and a significantly improved search function makes it easier for you to find what you need.

If you're new to being a water supplier, our new 'What type of supply do I provide?' [decision tool](#) guides you through a series of questions to determine your supply type and leads you to a dedicated page with all the key information you need to operate your supply. We hope you can take a few minutes to explore the site to see the changes we've made at www.taumataarowai.govt.nz.

Come and see us at the IWA Aspire / Water New Zealand Conference 2025

We're looking forward to seeing many of you at this year's conference in Ōtautahi Christchurch, 29 September to 3 October. As you'll know, this year's event is combined with the International Water Association Conference, making it a highlight of the 2025 water sector calendar.

As the regulatory partner for this year's conference, we're hosting informal briefings on some of our key projects at our stand. Our team will be on hand to help you with any questions you may have – so please come have a chat and find out more.

We also have a good lineup of people presenting. I'm on two panel sessions talking about the changes across the sector and what's on the horizon. Our Board Chair Raveen Jaduram will give a keynote on how our regulatory environment compares internationally. We are hosting a 90-minute 'thought leadership' session where we will talk through some of our upcoming priorities, and our Head of Operations Steve Taylor will unpack our recently released Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) strategy.

Helping candidates understand water's role in local governance

You may be interested in a resource on the Water New Zealand website that we've helped create for all 2025 local body candidates. It's a resource to help candidates understand how they can contribute to safe, sustainable and equitable water outcomes for their communities. The [online hub](#) has been created in partnership with Water New Zealand, Āpōpō, Commerce Commission and Department of Internal Affairs. Check out the short videos and key insights at www.waternz.org.nz/lwdw.

Boil water advisories

In recent months, we have worked with a number of councils on the need to issue boil water advisories to communities to ensure public health is protected. Often these relate to longstanding issues of inadequate microbial barriers.

It has been heartening that several of the councils have worked hard behind the scenes to bring forward infrastructure upgrades or put in place temporary solutions like UV disinfection to ensure their communities have access to safe drinking water.

We want to encourage all drinking water suppliers to become familiar with our [Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Strategy 2025-2028](#) and know what our expectations are.

We are taking a balanced approach in setting clear expectations and helping providers improve, while also stepping in to protect public health where required. Our goal is for all suppliers – from community suppliers to councils big and small – to have basic barriers in place by 2028.

Wastewater standards are coming soon

Thanks to everyone who made a submission on the wastewater environmental performance standards consultation we held earlier this year. We have developed the first set of proposed standards incorporating your feedback. This included us commissioning additional technical advice and undertaking targeted engagement to test refinements.

We are now working with legislative drafters on development of the regulations and developing advice to Ministers and Cabinet to inform final decisions on the revised proposals. Based on current timing, we expect the standards will be enacted sometime in the next few months.

Many councils have wastewater treatment plants with resource consents that have expired or will expire soon. Please note that recent changes to the Water Services Act 2021 have introduced a three-year extension to these resource consents. This should give operators additional time to understand what the standards will mean for their arrangements.

100 water treatment plants installed

We want to applaud [National Infrastructure Funding and Financing](#) which has installed 100 water treatment plants under the Government's [Marae Drinking Water and Rural Drinking Water programmes](#). This is quite a milestone.

The Marae Drinking Water Infrastructure Fund provided funding for water treatment infrastructure at marae, kōhanga reo and papakāinga as well as training and maintenance to help these communities keep their drinking water safe. Many of the communities, such as [Te Hāpua](#), that have benefited from this investment are in rural or remote areas, far from council-supplied drinking water.

Network reporting due 30 September

If you're a public network operator, please get in touch (email measures@taumataarowai.govt.nz) if you have questions or need support to meet the upcoming **30 September 2025** deadline for submitting drinking water and wastewater network environmental performance data for 2024/25.

Alternatively, visit [our website](#) to download the reporting template and the full range of guidance, including recordings from recent webinars we hosted to provide support with reporting. Any data not received by the deadline will not be included in our next network environmental performance report, and this will be noted in the report.

Staff spotlight – Neil Shaw



In the spotlight this time is Neil Shaw who leads our Water Services teams in the North Island. The Water Services teams work at the frontline with suppliers across the country to help ensure the communities they serve have safe, reliable drinking water. They also take compliance action when public health could be at risk.

Neil joined the Authority three years ago. His knowledge and skills relevant to our regulatory work were first developed during his 20-year career in the New Zealand Police, where he qualified as a detective and spent nearly 10 years in the Criminal Investigation branch.

After leaving the Police in 2006, Neil worked in a number of operations and compliance roles including as an investigator with New Zealand Transport Agency – Waka Kotahi and an investigator at Waikato Regional Council.

When Neil joined us in 2022, the Authority was still in a start-up phase as a regulator and Neil took up the opportunity to be involved. Being part of developing a regulatory approach, building face-to-face relationships and engaging with the water sector through establishment was what drew Neil to this role.

He enjoys leading a team dedicated to making a real difference in people's lives and ensuring the provision of safe drinking water across New Zealand.

Many of our North Island suppliers will be familiar with Neil and his team and benefit from his committed leadership.

You can catch up with Neil and other members of our team at the IWA Aspire / Water New Zealand Conference 2025 from 29 September to 3 October. You can find us at stand 205, we look forward to seeing you there.

Yours sincerely



Allan Prangnell

**Chief Executive
Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai**