

Report 03.405
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Committee Utility Services
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Unchlorinated Water Supply to Hutt City

1. Purpose

To advise the committee of the consultation with Hutt City as to whether the water supply to that City, that is currently unchlorinated, should continue or whether it should be chlorinated.

2. Background

In April 2002, the Utility Services Committee considered report 02.217 *Water Quality Risks in the Hutt Valley Aquifer* (Attachment 1). This report considered the risks to the water in the Hutt Valley from the time it enters the aquifer until it is delivered to Hutt City at the various points of sale, normally a reservoir inlet. There was also consideration in the report of the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2000 and the pending Public Health Risk Management Plans. The committee accepted the recommendation that Hutt City should be asked to state its preference as to whether or not the water supplied from the Waterloo Water Treatment Plant should be unchlorinated, as at present, or chlorinated.

3. Consultation with Hutt City

Hutt City was invited to indicate its preference on this issue relatively shortly after the committee meeting. A copy of report 02.217 was supplied to the City. Hutt City Council considered the issue on 27 May 2003 and responded in a letter dated 4 July 2003. Hutt City's letter and the report considered by the Hutt City Council are Attachment 2.

4. Comment

There are two areas of risk for Hutt City. Firstly the risk that the water it purchases from Greater Wellington Water will not meet the requirements of the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2000. Secondly, the risk of some

deterioration in water quality as the water is reticulated throughout the Hutt City system. Report 02.217 evaluates the risks in the wholesale water supply system and although these risks may be very low, it is not a risk-less situation. Officers of Hutt City have evaluated the second type of risk and indicated to the Hutt City Council the risk mitigation measures that are in place and concluded that the overall risks are low.

From a financial point of view, there are some savings in the wholesale water supply system by not chlorinating the water provided to Lower Hutt, Eastbourne and Petone. Hutt City though has to carry out additional testing, compared with chlorinated water, to meet the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2000. The overall societal cost then is probably neutral.

Officers of Hutt City made five recommendations to the Council. The Council accepted the first four without change but modified the fifth recommendation. Officers proposed that Hutt City carry out an effective public consultation programme to determine the wishes of the consumers prior to advising Greater Wellington of its preference on chlorination of the artesian water supply. The Councillors changed this recommendation to one of indicating to Greater Wellington that it prefers to retain its current water arrangements and that if the Greater Wellington Regional Council wishes to change to chlorination of the artesian water supply, then it should conduct its own public consultation with Hutt City residents.

The direction from the Utility Services committee on 30 April was to invite Hutt City to advise its preference as to whether or not the water supply from the Waterloo Water Treatment Plant should be unchlorinated as at present, or chlorinated. Officers of Hutt City have conveyed that Hutt City has passed a resolution that it prefers to retain its current water arrangements, i.e. an unchlorinated supply.

5. Communications

It would be appropriate for the Committee Chair to issue a media statement after the meeting, given the continued interest in public water supply issues.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. **receive** the report and notes its contents
2. **note** that Hutt City prefers to retain its current water supply arrangements
3. **direct** officers to continue supplying unchlorinated water to Hutt City's Rahui, Naenae, Gracefield and Point Howard reservoirs under normal operating conditions.

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Report 02.217 Water Quality Risks in the Hutt Valley Aquifer

Attachment 2: Letter from Hutt City Council to David Benham