



Evolving Trade Waste in a Changing World

Introduction



What is Co-Lab?

Co-Lab is a council-controlled organisation (CCO) owned by councils across Waikato and Bay of Plenty. Our vision is that council collaboration through Co-Lab maximises community wellbeing. Our purpose is to support our councils to achieve this vision by helping them identify and realise shared opportunities.



Water Services



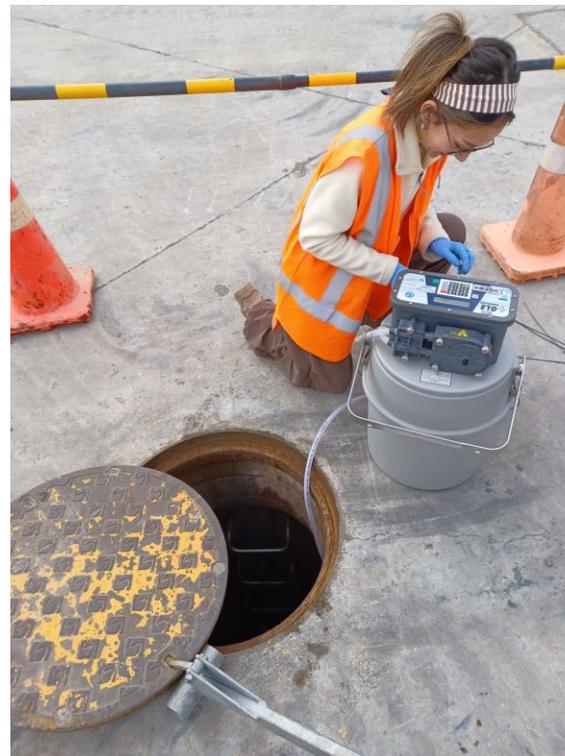
Smart Water



Water Services



Sampling and Analysis



Water Services



Trade Waste



Foul Sewage Pumping Station - 1956



Initially approximately 34 ft. square hole, excavated to natural water level (approximately 5 ft. below ground level.)

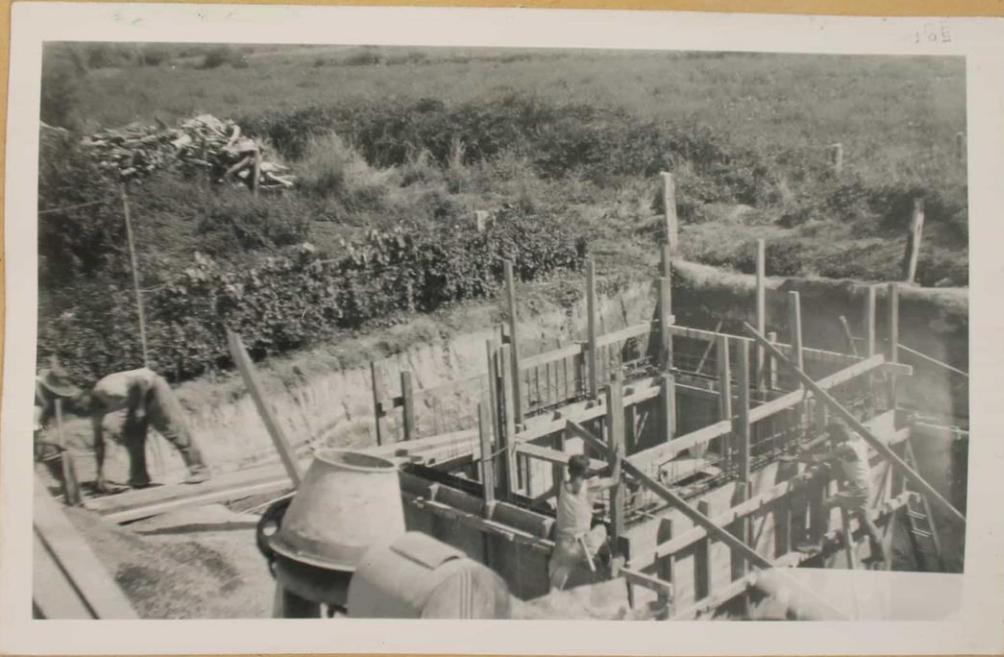


Floor slab laid.



First concrete pour on walls.

Foul Sewage Pumping Station - 1956

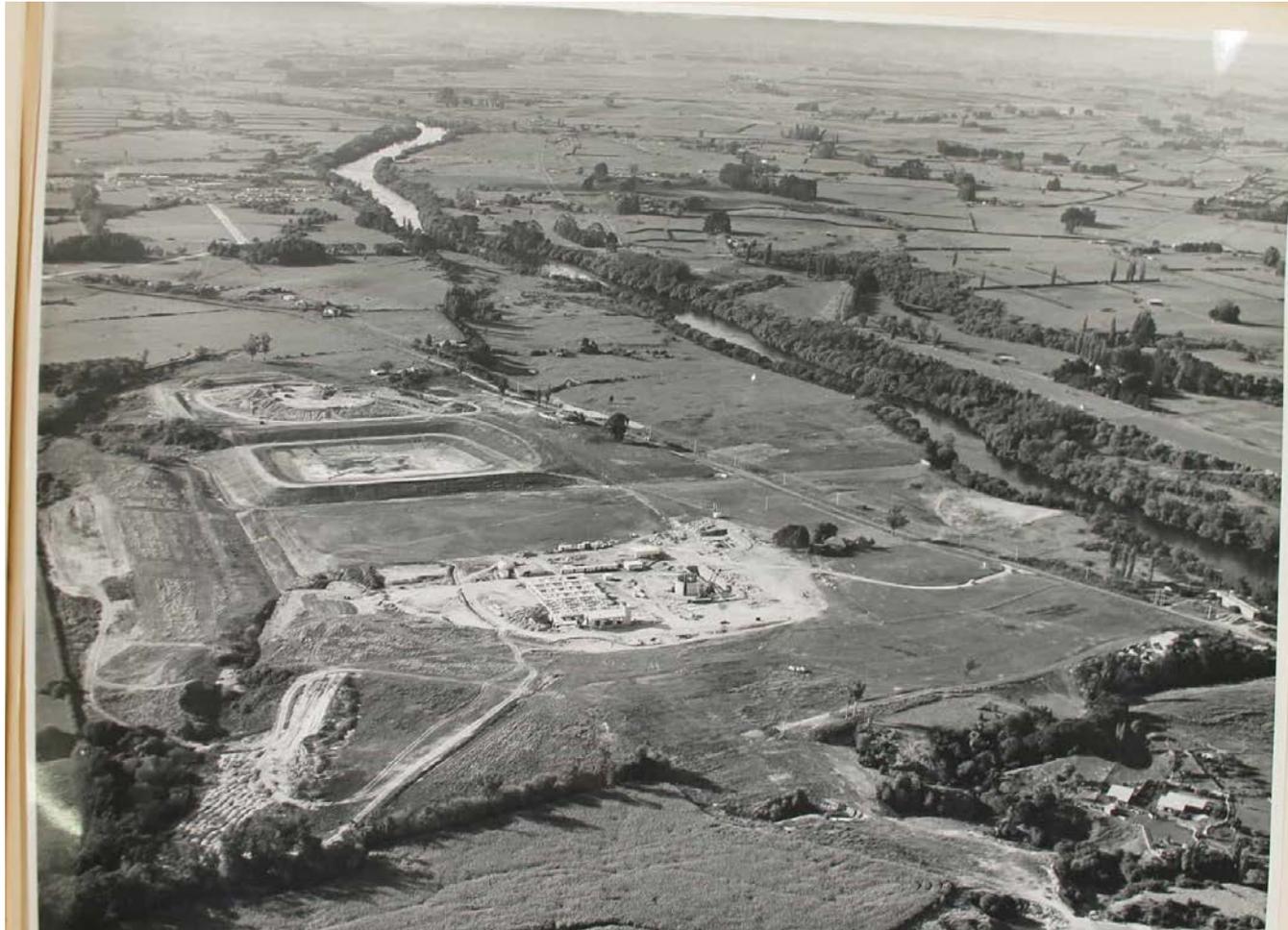


Third of four pours on walls.



*The Mayor and
City Engineer inspect
the finished work.*

Pukete Treatment Plant Build – 1970's

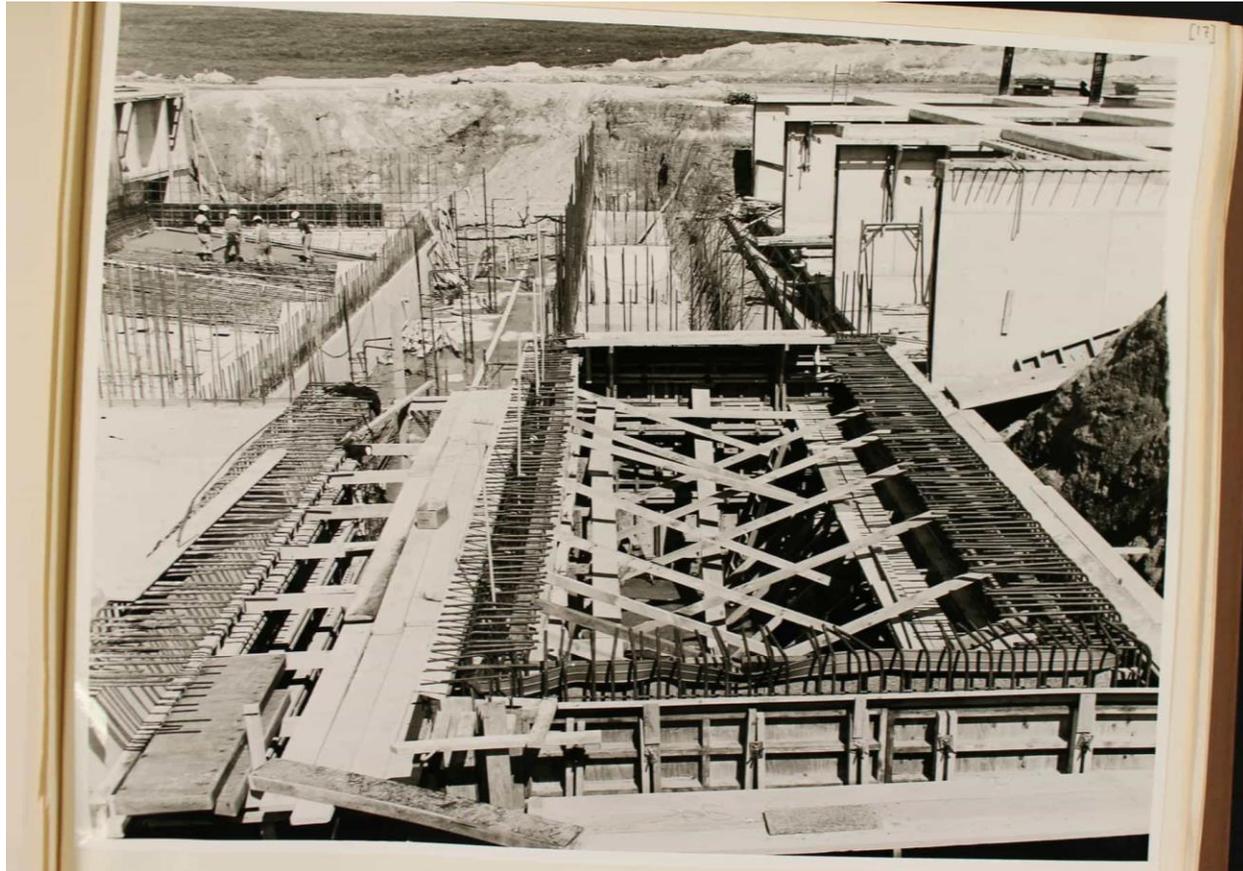


Pukete Treatment Plant Build- 1970's

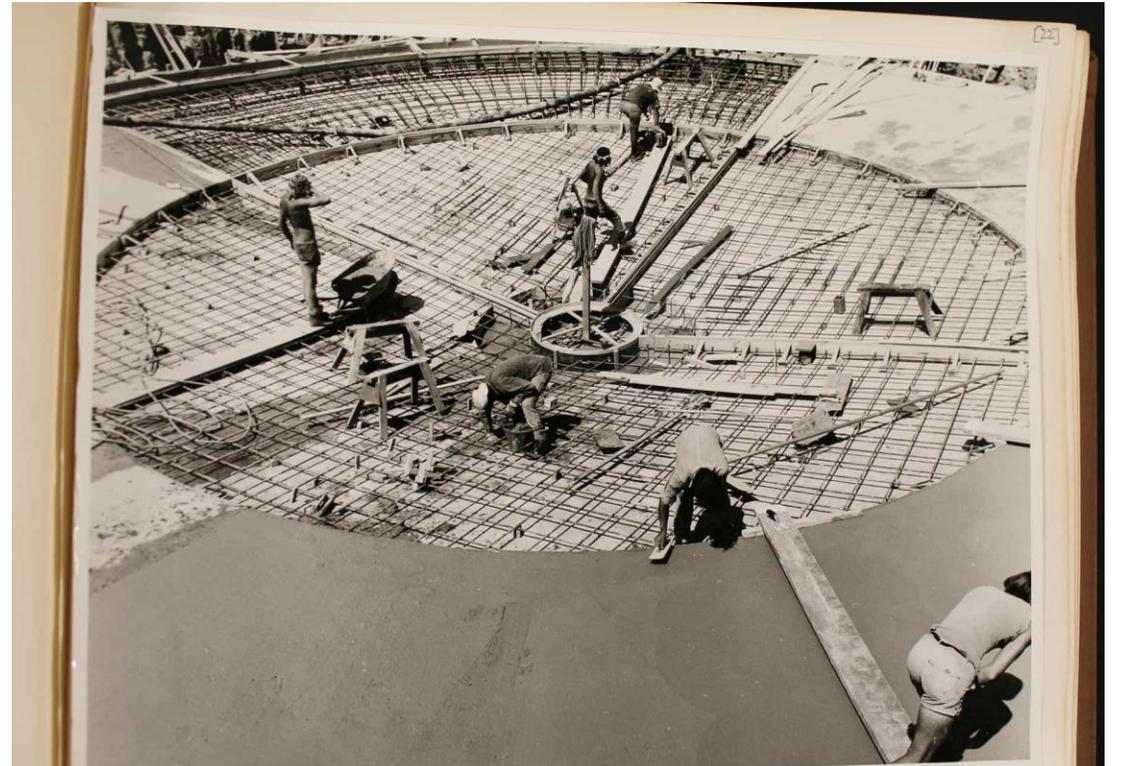


Pukete Treatment Plant Build- 1970's

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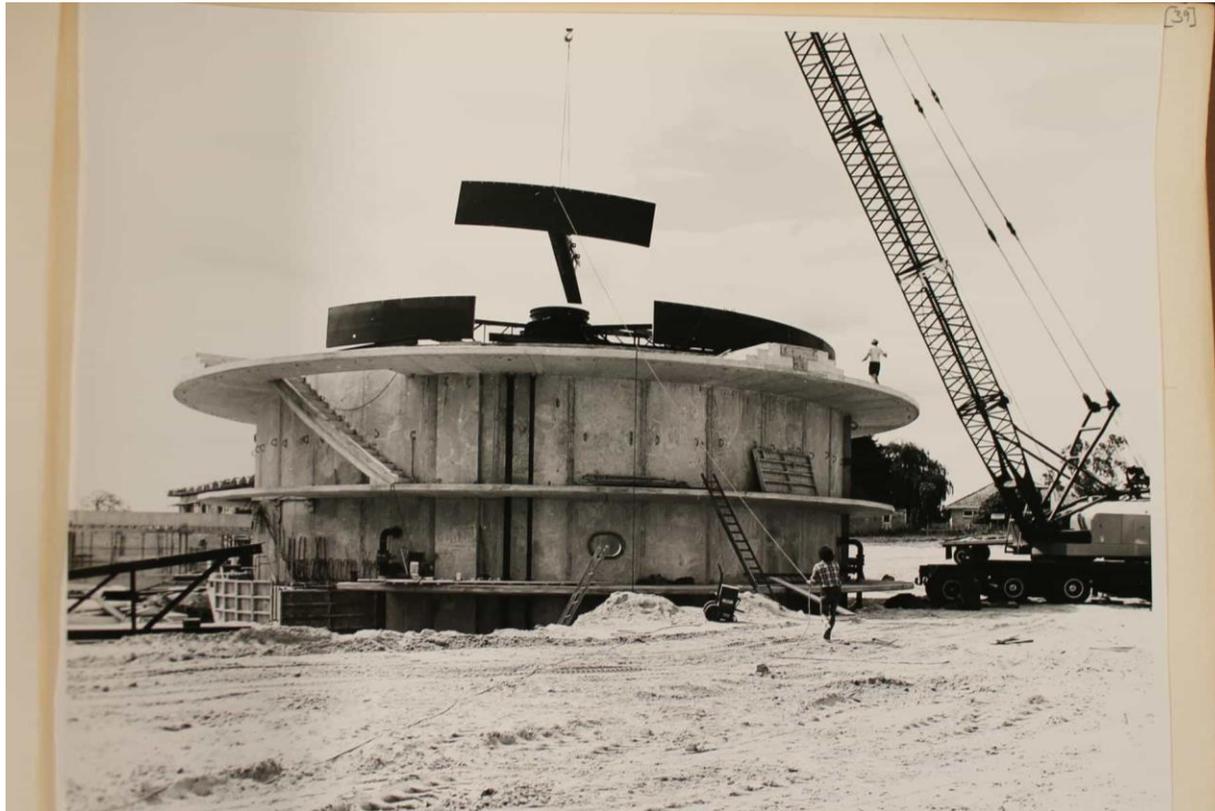
Pukete Treatment Plant Build- 1970's



Pukete Treatment Plant Build- 1970's



Pukete Treatment Plant Build- 1970's



Wastewater Pipe Install - 1975



Wastewater Pipe Install - 1975

CO-LAB



Pukete Treatment Plant - 2025



What is our Point of Difference?



- + Managing Trade Waste across the Waikato region for 7 Councils.
- + Opportunity to compare industries between regions.
- + A 'One-Stop-Shop'.



Beautiful abundant Waikato! Check out these landmarks from the towns our trade waste team visit on a weekly basis!

The Right People for the Job



Teamwork makes the Wastewater Net-Work!

- + One of the largest trade waste teams in the country.
- + Our roles include Technical Support Officers, Trade Waste Officers and Senior Leadership.
- + Completed 2,319 audits and issued 477 consents in last financial year.
- + Total 2975 active consents across 7 councils.
- + A 'no man left behind' approach.
- + Share a range of diverse skillsets.

The Right People for the Job



Diverse Backgrounds

Not all of us had the Trade Waste dream, nor a science degree.

- + Environmental Sciences - in-depth understanding.
- + Government/Public Sector - de-escalate situations and overcome objections.
- + Customer Service - empathy and interpersonal skills.
- + Aviation - compliance awareness and operational discipline.
- + Logistics - systematic thinking, reliability, an eye for detail.

With Our Powers Combined – We are Captain Trade Waste!



Trade Waste Management - TSO's

A screenshot of a software interface titled 'Register Details'. It contains various input fields and dropdown menus for data entry. The fields include: Register Type, Description, Year, Number, Part, Date Received, Due Date, Price, Date Written, Parcel, Assessment, Sequence, Property Description, Property Title, Parcel Address, Owner, Applicant, Workflow, Officer, Action, Determination Code, Date, Created, Modified, and Operator.

How my role as a Technical Support Officer (TSO) contributes to managing Low Risk Trade Waste

'An epic administration platter with a side of Grease'

- + Providing Customer Service
- + Administration and data entry
- + Information gathering
- + Outreach to potential new customers
- + Supporting the Trade Waste Officer
- + Auditing low risk sites

Ongoing Challenges in Trade Waste

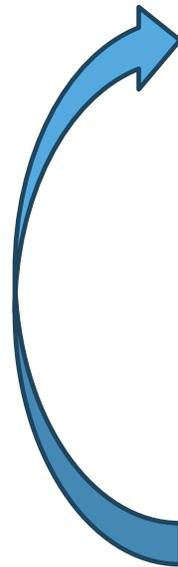


Challenges

- + Reluctance to apply for a consent
- + Resistance to paying fees
- + Non-compliant with consent conditions
- + Language barriers
- + Lack of awareness

Overcoming Objections

- + Education – the why?
 - + Prevent blockages
 - + Protect environment
 - + Increase in costs (e.g. plumbing bills)
 - + Disruptions to daily operations
- + Transparency – what fees contribute to
 - + Maintenance of wastewater network (treatment plants, pump stations, pipes)
 - + Protection of environment
- + Reinforcing
 - + Pretreatment maintenance frequency (servicing)



Co-Laboration and Networking



+ Compliance:

- + Stormwater issues - customers discharging down stormwater drains
- + Investigations - blockages, overflows or customer complaints

+ Environmental Health:

- + Environmental Health registered businesses provide opportunity to approach new Trade Waste customers
- + Notification of new premises

+ Building and Planning:

- + New builds provide opportunity to approach new Trade Waste customers



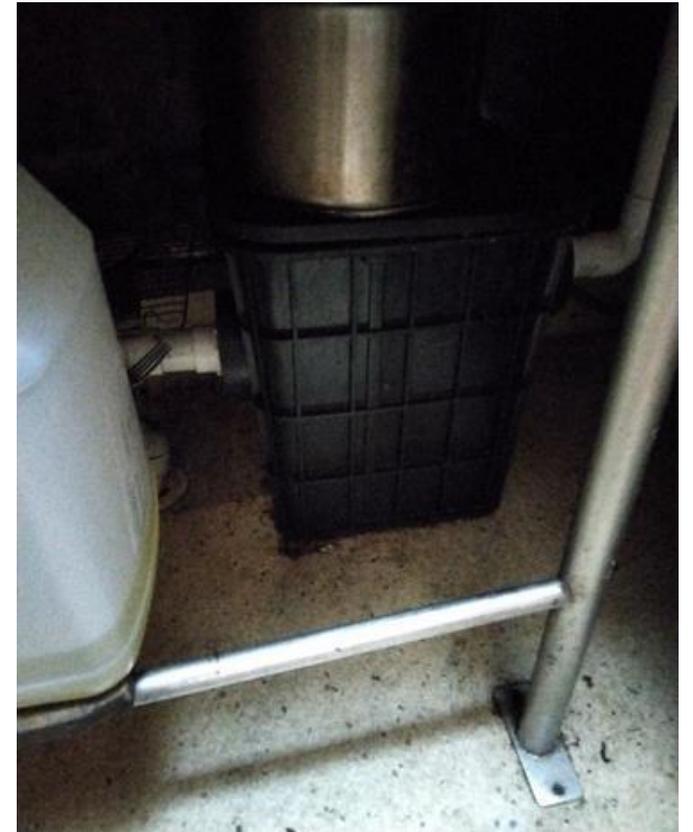
Compliance



- + 4 Trade Waste Officers.
- + Responsible for audits, consenting, investigations and breaches, and are the team's technical experts.
- + Sources of breaches:
 - + Self-monitoring
 - + Random sampling
 - + Incidents and complaints
 - + Issues noticed during audits



Compliance



Compliance

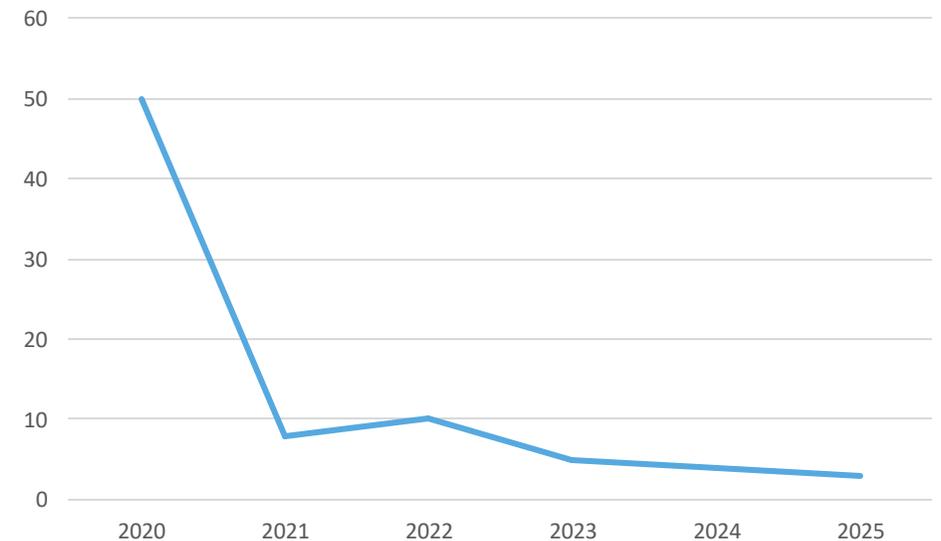
- + Trade Waste Officers investigate the majority of breaches.
- + Sources of breaches:
 - + Self-monitoring
 - + Random sampling
 - + Incidents and complaints
 - + Issues noticed during audits
- + Breaches can be caused by operator error, process or mechanical failures, or lack of pre-treatment servicing.



Breaches

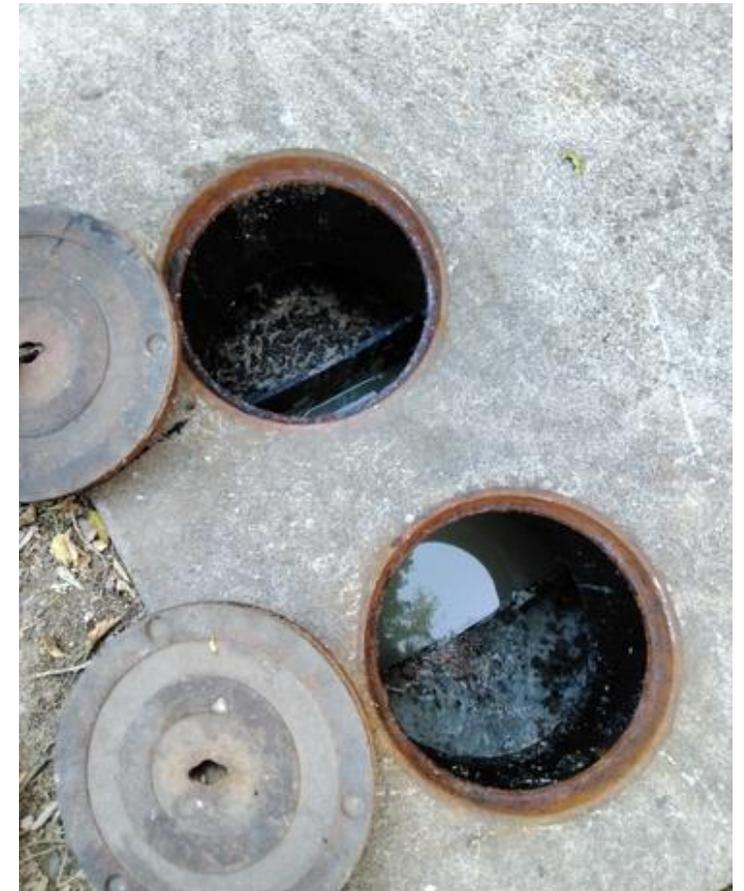


- + We ask the site to investigate what may have caused the breach, and how they will prevent it from reoccurring.
- + Most sites are able to find the cause of the breach.
- + One site was breaching constantly – 50 times in 2020, down to 10 in 2022 and 4 in 2024.
- + They rarely breach, but as they have improved so much all the obvious causes have been fixed and finding the cause is a lot harder.
- + They have started to use AI to help identify potential causes.



Physical Infrastructure

- + A supermarket was constantly breaching from one grease trap in particular.
- + The supermarket improved their processes, staff training, and servicing without any luck.
- + Turned out the grease trap was installed incorrectly.
- + New builds aren't immune, a brand new fast food outlet had the same problem.
- + Best practices and technology are no good if the physical infrastructure has problems.



Flow Control

- + Some sites need to use technology to control the physical effects of their trade waste on the wastewater network.
- + GIS layers showing capacity which can be used as a quick reference.
- + If a capacity issue exists, we may require a site to use level sensors and storage tanks to control the flow.



Water Efficiency



- + Growing focus on water efficiency.
- + Measures that reduce water usage can reduce trade waste volumes too.
- + One site has changed their pre-treatment and may save 100m³/day, another is making a series of changes to reduce their consumption and trade waste by 30%.
- + Reducing water consumption is beneficial from a water supply perspective but may have the unintended effect of concentrating the trade waste.



The future...

COLAB



The Rising Cost of Compliance



- + Waste disposal costs are increasing.
- + Economic pressures make compliance harder for businesses.
- + Servicing pre-treatment devices is costly but necessary.
- + Balancing affordability with regulatory requirements is key.

BUSINESS / EMPLOYMENT

Working from home: Hospitality businesses still struggle for customers

6:02 am on 21 July 2025

Share this     



Ke-Xin Li, First Up reporter

Adjusting for inflation

Around half of Council's fees and charges are proposed to increase (with rounding up or down) by the inflation rate we set in the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan.

Challenges with New Customers



- + Many unconsented sites lack pretreatment systems.
- + Financial barriers can hinder installation.
- + Under-bench systems offer cheaper alternatives.
- + Maintenance and future replacement costs are often overlooked.



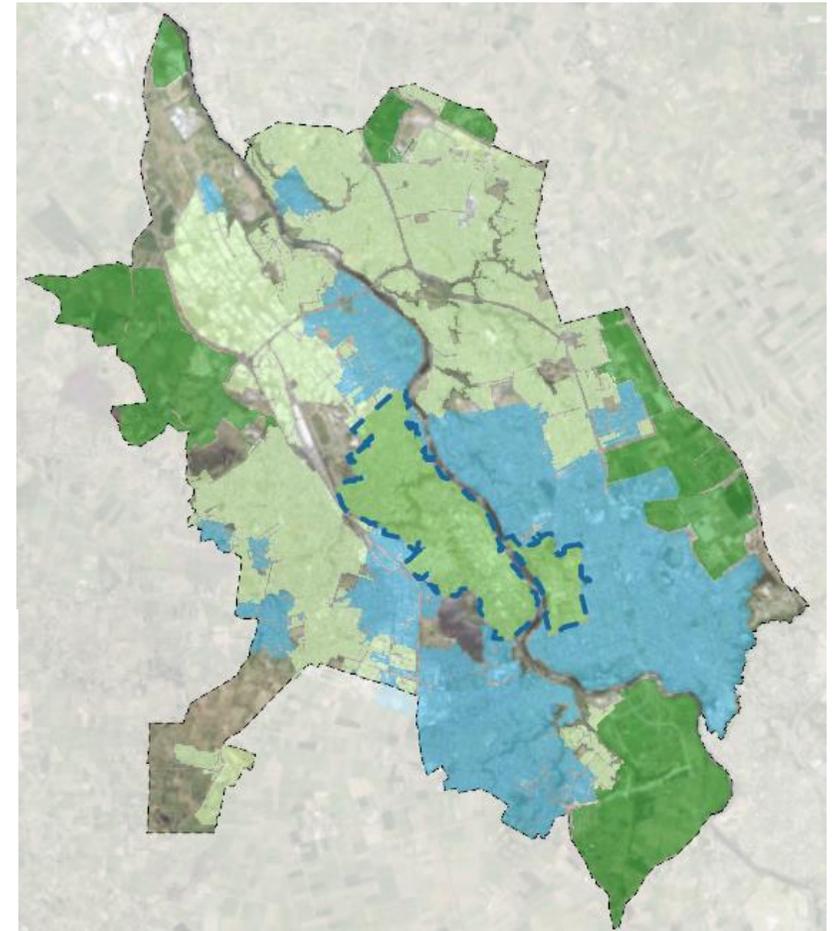
Infrastructure and Environmental Pressures



- + Development in Hamilton is limited by network restrictions.
- + Businesses may need to adopt new efficiencies and controls.
- + Climate change poses new risks:
 - + Severe weather events
 - + Droughts

Viewer Key

-  Wastewater Constraint
-  Central city and surrounds
-  Greenfield
-  Brownfield areas that generally have capacity for growth. Some streets will have local wastewater constraints.



Regulatory and Structural Changes



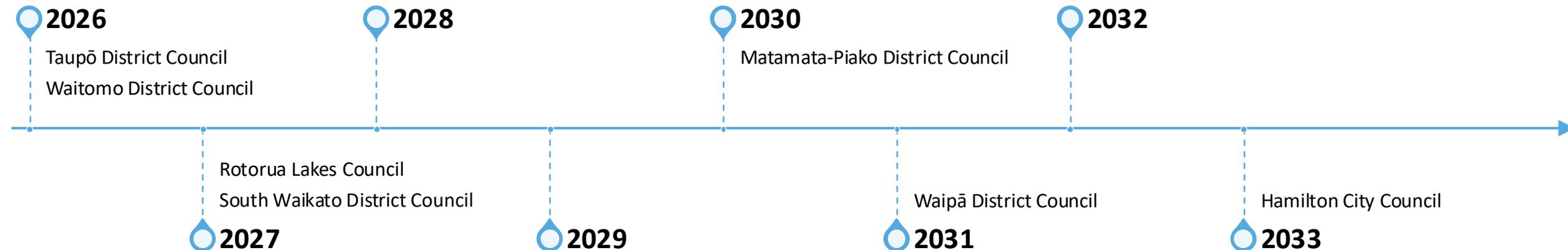
- + 4 of 7 partner councils must review bylaws by 2027.
- + Changes may affect service delivery and customer expectations.
 - + Inclusion of emerging pollutants and new industries?
- + National water reforms are increasing public awareness.
- + New regulations may lead to national trade waste standards.

New waters CCO directors and name announced

 Madeleine Powers | WAIKATO TIMES

June 24, 2025

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New Technology for Monitoring



- + Real-time monitoring could:
 - + Enable instant breach detection
 - + Help trace sources and alert WWTPs early
- + AI could help by:
 - + Identifying discharge patterns and anomalies
 - + Supporting proactive management of problematic industries
- + Cloud-based systems could:
 - + Track data from multiple different sources
 - + Compare and contrast customers' trade wastes



Identifying New Customers



- + Data scraping of different online databases.
- + AI could be used to detect:
 - + Closure of existing sites
 - + Opening of new businesses
 - + Changes in ownership
- + Early engagement improves compliance outcomes.

Take Away Restaurant

Permanently closed



Putaruru Community Group · [Join](#)

· 13 April ·

Hello Putaruru, We are a new store open in

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



Building Relationships and Education



- + Frequent ownership changes require ongoing education.
- + Staff turnover can lead to knowledge gaps.
- + Routine audits and information sharing are essential.
- + Better education leads to more proactive trade waste management.



Conclusion

The Passionate Bunch

- + Have you seen a blocked grease trap?
- + Have you come across a mystery smell from a manhole?
- + Have you come across a business with no trade waste consent?
- + Have you seen a stormwater drain used for washdown?
- + Have you been actively looking for new businesses that require Trade Waste?
- + Have you thought about the pre-treatment device of a restaurant you are eating at?
- + Have you taken photos of interesting manhole covers in your travels, locally or overseas?
- + Have you wondered why there wasn't a Trade Waste Officer Action Figure?





Thank you

Questions?

0800 357 358

tradewaste@colabsolutions.govt.nz