



Short & Slappy

Kia Ora,

“Survive to ’25” became a familiar slogan in recent years, following the impacts of COVID-19 and global financial uncertainty. That challenge only deepened with the cost-of-living crisis affecting communities across New Zealand. Over the past year, we’ve seen long-standing businesses close, leaving local communities uncertain about the future. Others have struggled to stay afloat, with downsizings, liquidations, and widespread redundancies—or roles simply not being replaced. Amongst all these challenges, water infrastructure reforms continue to trickle on.

As 2025 draws to a close, a range of new water service organisations have been agreed upon, and their formation is underway. These entities now face the challenge of establishing themselves while tackling ageing infrastructure and finding ways to fund critical upgrades amid rising costs. On top of this, further government reforms add complexity and pressure. The road to reliable, sustainable water services remains far from certain.

2025 has been a positive year for NZTIWF and the Board. Despite councils and businesses tightening budgets, we were thrilled with the strong attendance at our successful conference in August. A small group of dedicated Trade Waste Officers (TWOs) have continued to organise and host their regular bimonthly online meetings. These sessions play a vital role in building connections and sharing information among TWOs. The ongoing discussions, both during the meetings and through the chat group highlight just how valuable these interactions have become.

Thank you for your support and contributions to NZTIWF.

The NZTIWF Board wishes you a Mere Kirihimete and a safe, healthy, and relaxing summer break with time to enjoy it with whanau and friends.

Ngā mihi

Jennifer Leadley - NZTIWF Executive Officer



Liquid & Hazardous Wastes Code Compliancy

Congratulations to the following company that have recently renewed their code compliancy status.

- PARKINSON & HOLLAND LTD.
- PUMP IT MANAWATU LTD.
- REVOLVE ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS LTD.

Industrial Waters Conference 2025

“**Engaging, Informative, Inspiring, Interesting.**” are all words used by delegates to describe the 2025 Industrial Waters conference.

Feedback from delegates at the 2025 Industrial Waters Conference, held at the Lower Hutt Events Centre, was very positive. Attendance remained steady compared to previous years, despite ongoing budget constraints for councils and the wider sector. Delegates enjoyed a diverse lineup of speakers, including Riki Ellison (Māori Advisory Group, Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai), who delivered an informative presentation on iwi and hapū freshwater rights and interests. The Hon Simon Watts, Minister for Local Government, provided an update on water reforms, while Rodney Wong (Awapuni Rotary Club) emerged as a crowd favourite. His inspiring talk demonstrated how projects large or small can succeed through creative thinking and by bringing the right people on board.

Both the Trade Waste Officers’ Workshop and the Industry Workshop, which focused primarily on the review of the Liquid and Hazardous Waste Code of Practice, were well attended. The TWOs session featured a well-received presentation on sampling techniques, delivered by Prianshu Chawla (ALS Global) and Ben Darlington (WaterCare Lab Services), which prompted valuable discussion among participants.

A big THANK YOU to our sponsors, exhibitors, and delegates! Without you there wouldn’t be a conference.

BREAKING NEWS - NZTIWF Conference 2026

The 2026 Industrial Waters Conference will take place at the Palmerston North Conference Centre from Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 August 2026. Keep an eye on your inbox, additional details will be shared early in the new year.

NZTIWF Board

The NZTIWF Board for 2025-2026 were elected at the AGM in Lower Hutt. This year we welcomed five new members onto the Board. Thank you to those that have been re-elected for supporting the Forum, we appreciate your input.

We farewellled Komal Devi, Victoria Grant and Kerry Holtham from the Board and sincerely thank them for their input and dedication to the Forum.

2025/26 Board Members

Shaw Wilson - President

Geoff Young - Immediate Past- President

Fiona Sutton - Senior Vice-President

Mike Sahayam - Junior Vice-President

Jennifer Leadley - Executive Officer

Mike Sahayam - Treasurer

Claire Johnston - TWO Rep.

Bruce Holland - LWO Rep.



Board Members – Jan Godfrey, Todd Landers, Simon Paterson, Tracey Pantou, Wayne Plummer, Tersea Reynolds, Laura Rolls and Gary Soper.

Say Hello to Shaw Wilson, our new President



Originally from the Isle of Skye in the Scottish Highlands, I immigrated to New Zealand 25 years ago this month and have since built a career dedicated to environmental protection and sustainable practices.

I have been responsible for Trade Waste and Pollution Prevention at Whangarei District Council for the past few years.

I began my career in New Zealand at a wastewater treatment plant as a technician, where I developed a strong foundation in environmental management. As a qualified wastewater technician, a lot of what I learned has carried over into the trade waste space, especially my understanding of the receiving environment and its sensitivities. Prior to joining the water industry, I spent 15 years in the timber industry, holding a range of roles from timber treatment to kiln drying, and was involved in establishing new kilns and boilers at Wipapa Pine.

In 2022, I joined the NZTIWF board as Junior Vice-President and was recently elected President. NZTIWF has been a fantastic backbone in my learning journey within the industry, and the strength of the federation comes from its members—many of whom bring deep experience and practical insight into the challenges that arise from time to time.

A big thank you to Geoff Young, who served as the first president of the newly established NZTIWF in 2012. Geoff remained in the role for a combined total of approximately 10 years, stepping in to the role during some challenging times for the organisation. He leaves big shoes to fill.

Planning for the annual Industrial Waters Conference is well underway. Organising an event of this scale comes with its own set of challenges. Ongoing uncertainty around water reforms and tightening budgets across all sectors of New Zealand have added extra complexity to conference preparations. I look forward to meeting you at the Industrial Waters 2026 conference in Palmerston North.

NZTIWF Annual Awards

The annual NZTIWF awards were presented at the conference dinner. This year's recipients are;

Shaw Wilson (Whangarei DC)

Awarded the Bob McWilliams Award for a trade waste officer who shows passion & innovation.

Jan Godfrey (Dawson Waste Services Ltd.)

The Environment Champion award, in recognition of her work in the sector.

Todd Landers (Armatec Environmental Ltd.)

The Long Service award for his exemplary service to the industry.



Faces Behind the Forum- Claire Johnston



Claire Johnston is the Trade Waste Officer at the Horowhenua District Council and the TWOs rep. on the NZTIWF Board.

Many moons ago I moved to Wellington after finishing high school to study at Victoria University of Wellington. My tertiary study focused on education, and I hold a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (Primary) and a Master's in Education. I worked as a teacher for 5 years and I enjoyed it. In my fifth year of teaching, I became a real adult when we bought a house in Levin and that is how ended up in Taitoko.

One day I was curiously looking at Seek and long behold I saw the role of a Trade Waste officer at Horowhenua District Council. I forgot about it and went on with life. A few weeks later I saw the job posting again and was drawn in by the education section and thought why not. What do I have to lose. Well, here I am now 11 months into my role as the first Trade Waste Officer at Horowhenua District Council and now also the TWOs rep on the board.

My passions outside work include but are not limited to baking (currently going through a sourdough phase), running, tramping, gardening, reading, anything arts and crafts and finding any reason to treat myself. I really enjoy slowing down and smelling the flowers. I also enjoy keeping people on their toes but most importantly spending time with family and friends.

Something that I'm currently working on at work that might be of interest is creating engaging educational content about Trade Waste to engage not only current business owners, but our future business owners as well who are currently still in school. I enjoy that each day is never the same (unless it's an office day). Not so much a challenge, but a learning opportunity on how to prioritise my time and energy. There's only one of me so how can I utilise the time I have at work efficiently to conduct site visits, process business registrations, issue consents, answer queries and any other projects or tasks that are given to me.

Mutterings from the tractor shed.



Personal thoughts and comments from Geoff Young, NZTIWF Immediate past-president. More from Geoff can be found on his LinkedIn profile, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/geoff-young-36486839/>

Is there a plan?

It's been about seven years since the 3 Waters Reform discussion kicked off, seven years in which the whole water sector has been in a holding pattern. Seven years during which politicians from all levels and all political perspective have waxed lyrical about how an industry they know little about should be structured.

Seven years of acknowledgement of the national issue followed up with statements about how the issues didn't apply to the local situation "because our council have done a perfect job". A statement that from my experience had no basis in fact. Seven years in our industry of absolute confusion, stalled projects and continued decay of infrastructure with no meaningful end in sight.

Also, seven years of a stream of motivated talent in our industry emigrating elsewhere in frustration as the staff shortages, deferred maintenance and failing equipment finally pushes them over the edge. A generation lost.

With a few exceptions, Local Waters Done Well has resulted in little more than the same muck in a different bucket. In typical spin fashion, politicians at every level are busy congratulating themselves for implementing what they claim is meaningful change. However, change that will inevitably cost the community far more while making little difference in some of our most vulnerable communities.

No doubt Chinese whispers will convert this bucket of muck into a bucket of fertiliser and eventually a strong growth promotion package. We have had endless meetings of local elected officials with the usual totally inadequate understanding of the water sector making complex decisions as to what comes next. As the plans for what happens next gradually surfaced, we have had moving oratory from elected officials desperately trying to maintain the size of their mini empires preaching what a success for democracy this has been, while the current Government decides to chop out one level of democracy to replace them with a gaggle of Mayors potentially starting turf wars over which valuable parts of the decomposing carcass that was our regional councils should be reallocated to which "community initiative. The gaggle of Mayors of course are no better qualified to oversee our regional natural environment than the Regional Councillors had been.

I can give you lists of Regional Councillors who, in their previous roles as District Councillors, governed councils, and in a couple of cases where wastewater treatment processes breached consent conditions without any effort to remedy the situation. In one case, the council even voted that compliance costs were too high and decided not to take any remedial action.

The other issue I see is, Mayor's allegiance to their own jurisdiction provides them with a significant conflict of interest both in policy and enforcement of standards and compliance relating to their own jurisdictions. Finally, we have the political pressure that is currently applied to local government politicians by local larger employers to be kinder to business, all leading to a potentially broken and corrupt outcome.

I am no fan of regional councils; I have watched private operations be destroyed by regional council staff on some power trip or misguided overreach often started because of a perceived disrespect on the part of the business management or ownership. I have seen ridiculous and expensive glossy pamphlets and slanted surveys used as community engagement to tick some regulatory requirement, while minimising the actual need to make any form of change or opportunity. Or for that matter raise the issues the community were actually concerned about.

The thing is, it's not as though the issues in the water sector or indeed the whole local and regional governance space hadn't been seen coming. Back in the Helen Clark Labour Government days, Local Government New Zealand were warned that they needed to get their "muck" together in this space or it would be done for them. This led to assurances of leave it to local authorities, a bunch of meetings and once the Key Government took over, radio silence and business as usual.

In the early 2000s when discussing the Resource Management Act with a group of MPs, I pointed out that the shortcomings of the RMA were related to the failure of successive governments to put any tools in the saddle bags of the RMA in reference to National Standards and National Policy statements. The RMA itself was just a policy framework from which planning tools could be deployed. If these toolboxes had been used as intended, the monetarisation of the RMA by consultants and the law fraternity would have been seriously thwarted and many of the complaints about how fit for purpose the act is, or was, would have been academic.

In typical fashion, instead of servicing and maintaining the tools of planning and environmental management, it was ignored for 35 years and then when it ran out of oil and the motor seized, it was criticised as inappropriate and unworkable. The failure of the RMA falls firmly at the feet of the politicians at central and regional levels who didn't even understand their responsibilities under the act let alone attempted to carry them out.

Likewise, the failures of the water industry lie with all 3 levels of governance, Central, Regional and Local government who for five decades didn't even see the water infrastructure because it was all underground and there was nowhere to put the bronze plaque of immortality.

Some would suggest that this opinion piece is coloured by political bias, but those who know me well know that I have been a lifelong Tory but my confidence in the policies in our sector from this Government or any Government in the last 35 years is non-existent. No. I am not even go to mention the National Wastewater Standards! If there is a strategy on the part of this Government related to all this, I am damned if I can see it.

Now its time for me to go and join the other 3 Yorkshiremen and reminisce about old times, if you don't get the joke, google the four Yorkshire men.

*By Disney.com

Got a great news story to share with the industry?

We'd love to hear about it and help spread the word about the positive things happening in our sector! If you have a story, you'd like us to feature, simply send it through to us at execofficer@nztiwf.org.nz

