

Easy reminders for safe festive season

Creating a safe and happy holiday environment for the Wairoa District is the responsibility of the whole community. To help achieve this aim Council would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of a few areas of compliance and general health and safety that often come under pressure during the summer months.

Compliance officers will be out and about throughout the holidays to offer assistance where required.

Fire

A restricted fire season is in place for the entire Wairoa Rural Fire District, which means no open fires are to be lit in that area without a permit. This includes everything from barbeques and hangis, to large burn-offs. There is no cost attached to getting a permit – it's just a matter of calling into the Council offices on Queen Street. It may take up to three days to get the permit, so plan ahead. In the meantime, people are advised to exercise extreme caution when lighting fires due to the increasingly dry conditions.

People are also reminded that the burning of plastic, rubber and any other material capable of generating noxious fumes is not permitted at all. Doing so may result in significant fines.

Animals – pets and stock

Providing shelter, food and water are the basic requirements for

responsible pet ownership. People are reminded to consider these needs, paying particular care not to leave pets in cars in the summer heat. Those going on holiday need to make sure arrangements are in place to care for pets that are left behind.

Dog owners also need to remember that their pets are usually territorial and might need to be kept in check when visitors arrive.

Please remember that leashes are required when walking dogs in public places – nobody likes to come in from a swim to find their towel has been soiled by a wandering dog.

Farmers are reminded that in the interests of public safety, permits are required to graze stock on the roadside, or if stock is to be on public roads for more than a 24 hour period (eg droving). These are available from Council offices on Queen Street.

Civil Defence

A well-rehearsed team is constantly on stand-by should any Civil Defence emergencies occur, but people need to be prepared. Even if you're on holiday, have a plan in place for your family. Natural warning signals are of key importance in response to local

source tsunami and they may be the only warnings possible for local or regional source tsunami. Signs include strong earthquake shaking (i.e. it is hard to stand up or walk steadily, there is significant household

contents damage and building damage), weak, rolling earthquake shaking of unusually long duration (i.e. a minute or more), out of ordinary sea behaviour,

such as unusual and sudden sea level fall or rise, and loud and unusual noises from the sea, especially roaring like a jet engine. When experiencing any of the above go immediately to high ground or, if the surrounding area is flat, go as far inland as possible. The first wave may arrive within minutes. Once away from the water, listen to a radio station for information from local civil defence about further action required. Do not wait for an official warning. Instead, let the natural signs be your warning and wait for official all clear before returning.

Water

Households relying on tank water

need to be vigilant about avoiding contaminated water in the summer months. A simple way to ensure water is clean is to add a small quantity of Janola (common household bleach) to destroy harmful bacteria. The following quantities are recommended:

Tank Size	Quantity of Bleach
1,000 litre	60ml
5,000 litre	330ml
10,000 litre	660ml
20,00 litre	1330ml

This form of chlorine treatment is unlikely to kill Giardia and Cryptosporidium, which require a filter capable of filtering down to 1 micron. Boiling water for 10 minutes will kill all harmful micro-organisms.

Households on both private and public water supplies need to be aware that some plumbing fittings have the potential to allow minute traces of metals to accumulate in fittings for several hours. Although the health risk is small, the Ministry of Health advice is to flush a mug of water from the drinking water tap each morning before use.



Staff farewells



Bill Dickin



Linda Cook



Neil Cook

The snaking path of Route 66 is calling for Bill Dickin, who is exchanging his job as WDC Consents and Licensing Officer for a life on the road.

Retirement holds plenty of adventures for Bill, although he will continue to assist wife Sharron to run the Riverside Motorcamp in between road trips.

His council career began 32 years ago with a position as Noxious Plants Officer for the Wairoa County Council. The merger between county and borough in 1986 saw Bill trade this role for Rural Fire Officer, followed by a move to the building department to take on the job of licensing inspector in 1993. After many years in the role, Bill is well-qualified to comment on how the sector has changed over the past couple of decades.

"I've seen things tighten up over the years in the building arena, and the Sale of Liquor Act has also undergone major shifts," he said. Like many who were around at the time, Cyclone Bola featured on Bill's

list of memorable moments during his career.

"It was a time when the community came together in a way that there is rarely occasion for, giving us all a glimpse at the true heart of this place that you just don't forget," he said.

As well as travelling along America's most famous road next year, Bill also plans to spend time exploring New Zealand in his motor home. Engineering Manager Neil Cook is moving on to take up a new position in Fiji next month.

Mr Cook has been a valued member of staff for the past seven years, during which time he headed up some major projects, including the Mahia Community Wastewater Scheme, realignment of the Wairoa water pipeline and several significant roading projects.

"I have gained a lot from my time here at council, and from being part of the Wairoa community in general. It was a weighty decision to make, but Fiji is a challenge we are all looking forward to," he said.

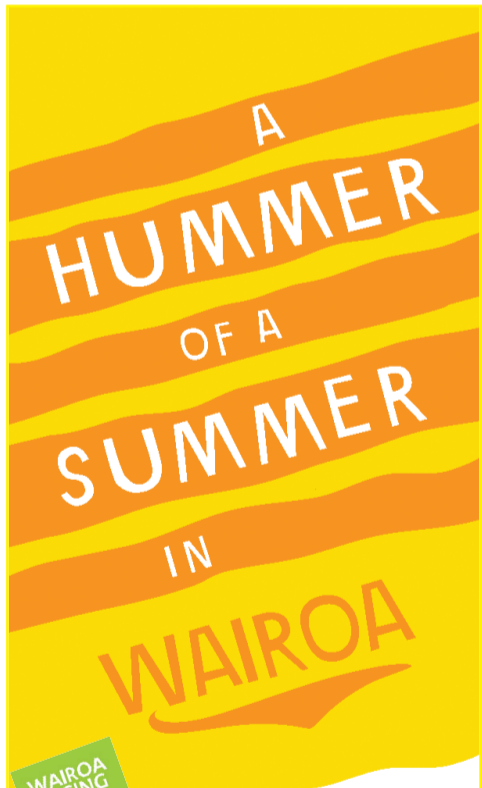
Neil officially left WDC on December 21. He will be joined in Fiji at a later date by his four children and wife, Linda Cook, who will leave her role as District Planner.

An engineer by trade, Linda says opportunity and interest led her to take up the planning job back in 2007.

"Being the sole planner has been challenging, but the variety of work this presents has been great," she said.

It's also time to say goodbye for WDC Policy Analyst Sonia Anderson, who has already moved to Auckland to take up a new role. Tasked with ensuring council is on-track with upholding and creating policies, Sonia has been a vital cog in the WDC machine.

"I've enjoyed my time here in Wairoa – it's been a bit of a nostalgia trip for me," she said. Although she will miss family, it is time for the skilled analyst to return to the challenge of working for an international company.



Wairoa District Council offices are closed and will reopen at 9am on Monday, January 7 2013. For emergencies, phone (06) 838 7309.