



Information Sheet 9 - Provision Of Safe Drinking Water In Rural Areas

POLICY STATEMENT

The New Zealand Building Code requires that all buildings for human habitation must be provided with adequate and safe piped water. The New Zealand Drinking Water Standards (NZDWS) 2005 currently provide the standard for safe drinking water. When buildings are constructed or substantially altered in areas where there are no properly treated "Community Drinking Water Supplies" (Rural Areas) – or are not connected to available treated supplies, water provided for the purposes of food preparation, utensil washing, oral and personal hygiene and human consumption must be Adequately Treated by householders.

Adequate Treatment means filtering and disinfecting water to remove and destroy micro organisms and any harmful chemicals as specified in the NZDWS. The means by which water will be treated must form an integral part of any application for Building Consent.

Sources of Water for New and Substantially Altered Buildings Rainwater Supplies

Guttering and down piping must incorporate leaf excluders and first flow diverters to minimise the contamination of roof water storage.

Filtration through a 1 micron in-line filter followed by an ultra violet sterilisation unit or other approved means of treating rainwater are required.

Bore/Spring Supplies

In the case of bore/spring supplies, before this water is connected to buildings:

For Individual Supply: Ground water must be tested at the applicant's expense and a laboratory report from an accredited laboratory must be provided which indicates that the water is safe. Where water meets the requirements of the NZ Drinking Water Standard, two (2) further bacteriological samples are to be submitted to the Wairoa District Council to verify that ground water is free of significant contamination over a period of 12 months. Periodic bacteriological sampling should thereafter be carried out by the water user to verify that the source of supply remains safe.

For Community Supply: The safety of the supply must be established first by testing water from the supply on a monthly basis over a period of 5 years. The NZDWS also establish other criteria for the suitability of these sources. Ground water may be used if filtered down to a minimum of 1 micron and subjected to uv sterilisation or other approved disinfection regime.

Surface Water (Rivers, streams, lakes, dams etc)

These are not considered safe and water from these sources must be treated by filtration and disinfection as previously discussed.

RECOMMENDED FOR ALL RURAL WATER USERS

Unless drinking water (NZDWS) is obtained from a ground water source, which has proven to be "secure" it is recommended that all householders install effective water filters, and disinfection systems, maintain them in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations and monitor their ongoing performance. This can best be achieved by sending periodic samples of treated water in sterile bottles provided by an accredited laboratory for analysis. This should be carried out on a regular basis – perhaps quarterly. In case you require further information please contact the Wairoa District Council.

