

TAPPED IN

Bringing you the latest news, events and more from Watercare

Spring 2026

Latest news



Living well starts with water

With longer, warmer days ahead, more of us will be heading outdoors to enjoy Auckland's beaches, rivers and harbours. But keeping these places healthy takes more than meets the eye – and we all have a part to play.

There's something special about Auckland as summer approaches. Whether it's more time at the beach, a paddle on the harbour or a walk beside a favourite stream, so much of the city is shaped by water. Yet, it's easy to take the health of our waterways for granted.

Behind the scenes, looking after them takes constant care, careful planning and investment. At Watercare, kaitiakitanga – guardianship and care for the environment – is central to what we do. Alongside providing safe drinking water, we collect and treat Auckland's wastewater before returning it to the environment. And it's no small undertaking. Every day, more than 400 million litres of wastewater travel through a vast network of over 8000 kilometres of pipes, 518 pump stations and 18 treatment plants. It's a largely invisible system that plays an essential role in protecting public health and the environment.

As Auckland's population grows, so does the demand on this infrastructure. That's why we're proposing to invest \$15.2 billion over the next decade in more than 1,000 projects to renew ageing pipes, improve reliability, support growth and deliver better environmental outcomes.

Keeping the good things flowing

Caring for our waterways goes beyond what happens underground or at treatment plants. The everyday choices we make at home, school and work also play a part.

Every shower, load of washing and toilet flush sends wastewater on a journey through our network before being safely returned to the environment.

But when the wrong things enter our drains, they can damage pipes, and cause blockages and overflows. This can send untreated wastewater into the very places we love to swim, paddle and explore.

Healthy waterways don't happen by chance. They're the result of the work happening beneath our streets, continued investment in our city's infrastructure and the choices we all make every day. Together we can help protect the waterways that make Auckland a special place to live.

What goes down the drain matters

75% of overflows were due to blocked pipes in the past year.

Help keep wastewater away from waterways by preventing blockages.

DO flush pee, poo and paper



DO bin cooled fats and oils



DON'T pour fats or oils down your drain



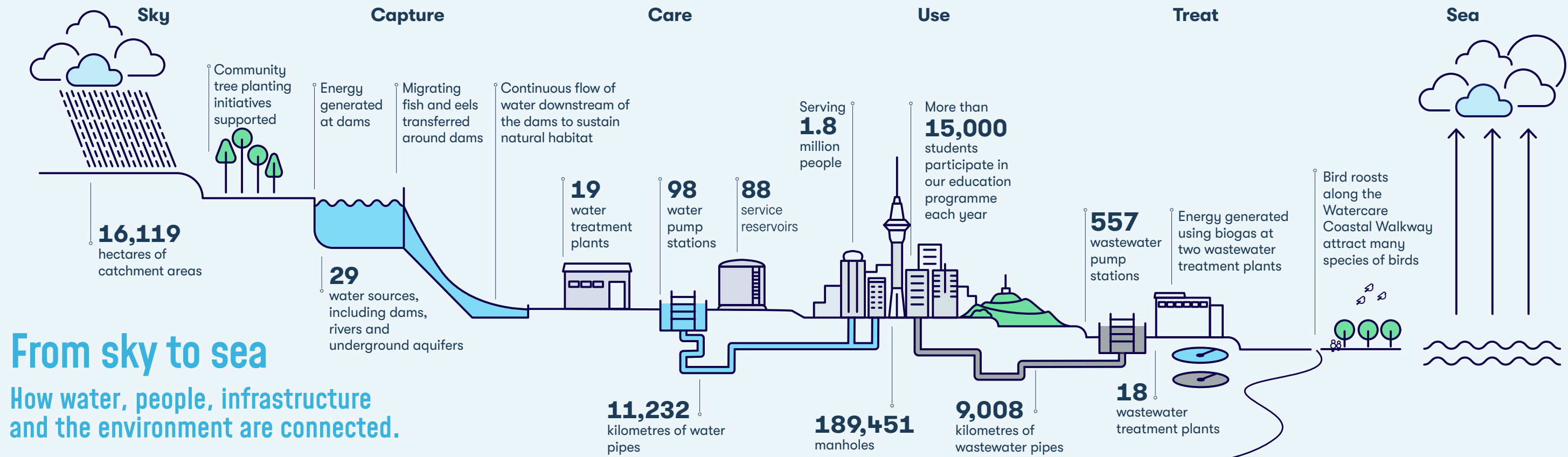
DON'T flush wet wipes, tampons, condoms, dental floss or cotton buds



DON'T flush pills or prescription medication



watercare.co.nz/keepitflowing



What's happening across Auckland

North

Waiwera water and wastewater upgrades

To help protect the Waiwera Estuary, work continues on the Waiwera water and wastewater project, which will end treated wastewater discharges and provide more reliable services.

Recent milestones include successful testing of the new wastewater pump station and connection of the new watermain to the Waiwera Hill reservoir.

Crews are also making progress installing the new wastewater pipeline to the Hatfields Beach pump station, with several new manholes now in place along the route. We're also extending works to include renewal of the pipeline connected to the pump station. The next stage is expected to start before Christmas.



Central

Herne Bay Collector project

Once complete, the Herne Bay Collector project will reduce the frequency and volume of wet weather overflows entering the Waitematā Harbour, helping improve water quality and deliver long-term environmental benefits for central Auckland communities.

Crews are making steady progress on the underground control chamber beneath Point Erin Park and preparing sites for the arrival of Domenica, the micro-tunnel boring machine used on the Central Interceptor project.

Domenica will excavate and install the 1.7km-long Herne Bay Connector tunnel, connecting wastewater and stormwater to the Central Interceptor.



West

Whenuapai and Redhills wastewater project

The Whenuapai and Redhills wastewater project is helping prepare northwest Auckland for future growth.

The Redhills section is now complete, delivering new wastewater pipelines.

This project will connect into the Northern Interceptor, directing wastewater to the Rosedale wastewater treatment plant.

Planning is now focused on the Whenuapai sections, with detailed design and construction planning underway.

Construction is expected to begin in 2027.

Residents, businesses and landowners will be kept informed as the project progresses.



South

Ōtara wastewater upgrades

To support growth and reduce wet-weather overflows to the environment, we're investing \$95 million in upgrading Ōtara's wastewater network.

The project includes building a new pump station on Hannah Road and installing seven underground storage tanks at the existing Ōtara pump station in Billington Reserve.

Once complete, the two pump stations will be connected by a new wastewater pipeline that will take wastewater flows from the new Sandbrook pump station in Hannah Road to the underground storage at Billington Reserve.

Construction is expected to finish in late 2028.



East

Dunkirk Road wastewater upgrades - stage two

The connection of the Tangaroa Street pump station to the Eastern Interceptor will enable the pump station to operate at full capacity, supporting future growth while reducing wet weather overflows and helping improve the health of local waterways.

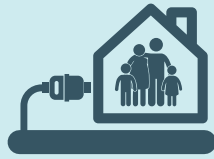
We've completed the first five sections of the 1.3km wastewater pipe and early excavation works are now underway on Tripoli Road. Construction on this stage is expected to be complete mid-November before we move onto Torino Road.

The new connection remains on track to be commissioned by late next year.



Watercare at work

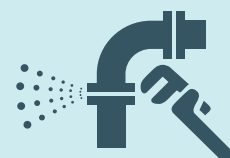
1 July – 30 September 2026



39.98
billion litres
of water
produced



3,700+
new
properties
connected to
our networks



6,227
number of
leaks fixed
across
Auckland

In the know

Spot the difference: Stormwater vs wastewater

Water disappears down drains every day, where does it all go? In Auckland, stormwater and wastewater usually take different journeys. Stormwater is rainwater that runs off roofs, roads and other surfaces into drains and waterways managed by Auckland Council. Wastewater is used water from homes and businesses, including water from toilets, showers and sinks. At Watercare, we collect and treat it before safely returning it to the environment. Most of Auckland has separate stormwater and wastewater networks, but some older areas have combined pipes that carry both. Even in separate networks, rainwater can enter wastewater pipes through cracks, damaged connections or incorrectly connected downpipes.

In wet weather, rainwater from the average roof is equivalent to the wastewater flows from more than 40 households. This extra water can put pressure on the network and contribute to overflows. We're investing in upgrades to improve capacity, reduce overflows and help protect Auckland's waterways. Learn more at: watercare.co.nz/stormwater

Before you head to the beach, check Safeswim

Aucklanders love making the most of our beaches, especially as the weather warms up. Did you know water quality can change quickly, particularly after heavy rain?

That's where Safeswim comes in. It brings together the latest information on water quality, swimming conditions, tides, weather and lifeguard patrols, making it easy to find what you need to make informed choices about when and where to swim.

Heading to the beach this summer? Visit safeswim.org.nz or download the Safeswim app to check before you swim.

Safeswim is a collaboration between Auckland Council, Watercare, Surf Life Saving Northern Region and Te Whatu Ora.



Where will biosolids go in the future?

During wastewater treatment, a soil-like material called biosolids is produced.

We currently use biosolids to help rehabilitate part of Te Motu a Hiaroa (Puketutu Island), which was quarried from the 1950s to the early 2000s.

As Auckland's population continues to grow, by 2035, we'll need a new long-term solution for biosolids.

We're exploring future options now. Curious? Learn more at watercare.co.nz/biosolids

Seasonal outlook: Stay waterwise

Auckland heads into summer with our dams about 90% full, which is average for this time of year. But with El Niño bringing the prospect of warmer, drier weather, it's a good reminder to keep up the waterwise habits that help preserve our water supply.

Small changes make a difference:

- 💧 Keep showers to four minutes or less
- 💧 Water gardens early morning or at dusk
- 💧 Use a trigger nozzle on your hose
- 💧 Check your home for leaks.

Learn more at watercare.co.nz/every-drop-counts



Catch Wonder Wai this season

Ever wondered how water gets from the sky to your tap – and where it goes next? Wonder Wai, our travelling discovery centre, is popping up at markets, events and festivals across Auckland.

Through interactive games and hands-on activities, explore the six stages of Auckland's water journey, from rainfall and water sources to treatment, everyday use, wastewater treatment and its return to nature. watercare.co.nz/wonderwai



Making sense of water at home



Are you trying to work out your Watercare bill? We break it down for you online at watercare.co.nz/my-bill

Reduce your water use at home by understanding your usage and making a few simple changes. Learn more at watercare.co.nz/water-at-home

If you or a loved one is facing difficulty and finding it hard to pay the bills, support might be available. Find out more at waterassistance.org.nz

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