TIAKI WAI

Care in every drop | He wai whakauka

Tiaki Wai at a glance

Introducing the draft Water Services Strategy, Customer Charter and Significance and Engagement Policy



March 2026



Introducing Tiaki Wai

Tiaki Wai is a new organisation that is better set up to deliver water services for our communities. It will own and manage drinking water supply, wastewater and stormwater services from 1 July 2026.



Delivering water services

The water networks are in a poor state and reducing the risk of outages and failures will take many years. In 2026/27 Tiaki Wai will focus on maintaining assets to ensure services continue and progressing existing programmes of work.



Paying for water services

Improving water services means increased costs. In 2026/27 people will pay Tiaki Wai directly, rather than paying for water services through their rates. Charges will have to increase every year to fund the investment needed to restore our network.



Caring for our customers

Tiaki Wai aims to ensure that everyone in our communities can rely on safe, secure, and equitable access to water services.

In 2026/27 we will continue to develop our customer service, and keep you informed.

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About this document

Tiaki Wai is your new water organisation that will deliver drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services across Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington cities from 1 July 2026.

This 'at a glance' summary provides you with key information about Tiaki Wai, the strategy for the first year of operations and our commitment to our customers.

Full details are in the draft Water Services Strategy, draft Customer Charter and draft Significance and Engagement Policy. We are seeking feedback on all these documents before finalising them.

Water Services Strategy

The Water Services Strategy 2026/27 sets out:

- how we will address the challenges Tiaki Wai faces
- the service you can expect from Tiaki Wai in its first year of operation, while the organisation is being established
- long-term priorities for improving water services and an indication of the investment required over the longer term
- how services will be funded and how customer charges will change as costs shift from councils to Tiaki Wai.

This draft strategy is focused on the 2026/27 year. Further work is underway on developing the longer-term strategy for 2027-2037. We will seek feedback and publish the next strategy before 1 July 2027.

Customer Charter

Our Customer Charter reflects our purpose: to care for the people and places of our region by looking after the wai (water) and a water system we all rely on - today and for generations to come.

Significance and Engagement Policy

Our Significance and Engagement Policy sets out how and when you can expect to hear from us about decisions that may affect you.

Please share your feedback through the website

haveyoursay.tiakiwai.co.nz



Introducing Tiaki Wai

Our name, Tiaki Wai, means caring for water.

From 1 July 2026, Tiaki Wai will be responsible for delivering safe, reliable and sustainable drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services across the takiwā (territory) we serve.

Tiaki Wai is publicly owned and accountable to the community through a Partners Committee, made up of representatives from each shareholding council and our mana whenua iwi partners, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika. All three-waters assets remain in public ownership.

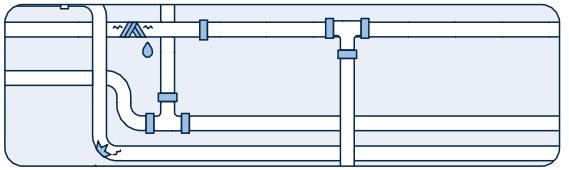
This is the start of a new chapter

Tiaki Wai is better set up to deliver water services for our communities. It is different to Wellington Water and the councils it is taking over from:

- Tiaki Wai will own the water assets, rather than manage them on behalf of councils.
- Tiaki Wai is a new type of organisation operating under new legislation with clearly defined statutory responsibilities, regulatory obligations and financial accountability.
- Tiaki Wai will have a single view of priorities and investment required to provide water services across the takiwā.
- Tiaki Wai has the independence and mandate to directly decide when and where to invest, set water charges, and comply with new national regulatory requirements.
- Staff from Wellington Water and the councils will transfer to Tiaki Wai, under a new Chief Executive and some new senior leaders.

This new set-up gives Tiaki Wai the resources, independence, and takiwā-wide perspective needed to improve the performance of water services for current and future customers and communities.

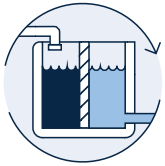
Tiaki Wai by the numbers



Over **6,800**km of pipelines



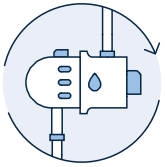
4 drinking water treatment plants



4 wastewater treatment plants



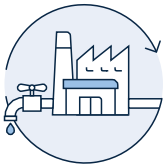
140 reservoirs for drinking water storage



354 pump stations



145,984 household water connections



8,741 business water connections



160million litres of water delivered each day



150million litres of wastewater treated each day

There is a lot to do and it will take time to see improvement

Tiaki Wai will become responsible for assets with long-standing issues that reflect decades of underinvestment and ageing infrastructure.

These issues will not be resolved overnight. Addressing them will require sustained effort over many years, alongside increased investment, and improvements to how investment is planned and prioritised.

Tiaki Wai is starting with core systems that are not fit for purpose. A technology investment programme is underway to build the core IT and operational systems Tiaki Wai needs to make good decisions and function effectively — including project management, asset management, investment decision-making, customer support and billing and financial systems.

As our systems, processes, data and understanding of the network improve, we will refine our plans and budgets.

This Water Services Strategy is for one year, and Tiaki Wai will deliver a more detailed strategy by 30 June 2027. There'll be an opportunity for public feedback before that strategy is finalised.

Customers will be able to easily contact and pay Tiaki Wai, with behind the scenes support from shareholding councils through interim arrangements until new systems are in place.



Delivering water services

We face serious challenges across the drinking water supply, wastewater, and stormwater networks.

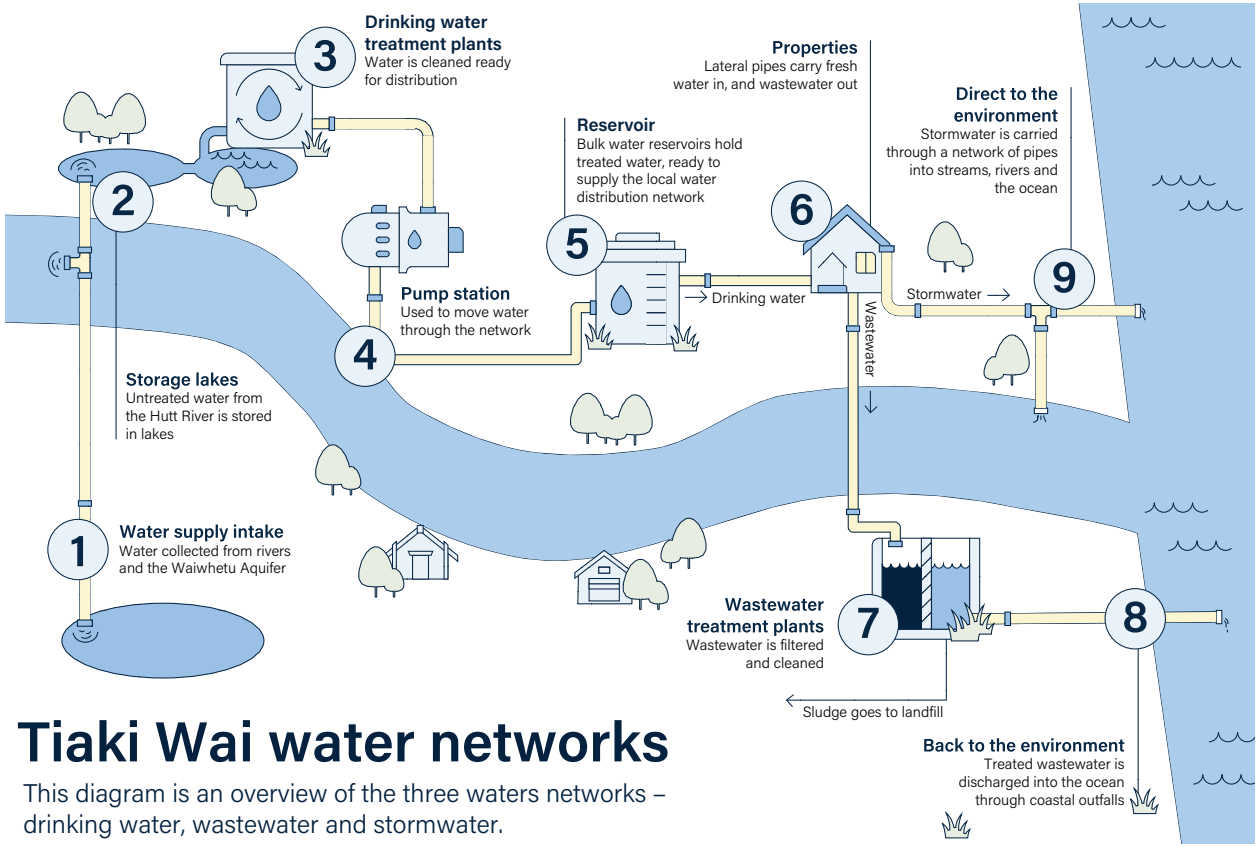
Many critical assets are in poor condition and beyond their useful life presenting a significant risk of failure. Service performance is variable, and regulatory compliance is not always met.

Significant volumes of water are lost through leakage; wastewater networks experience frequent overflows and treatment challenges; and stormwater regularly contributes to flooding and pollution. Water storage is limited and under pressure, and many critical assets are operating at or near capacity.

Getting started

In the 2026/27 year the focus will be on maintaining the assets to ensure services continue and progressing existing programmes of work. This will include replacing pipes across the network and continuing essential upgrades to our critical assets, including the wastewater and water treatment plants.

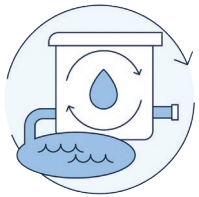
We'll make progress towards rolling out water metering across the takiwā. This is critical to better managing our essential drinking water supplies and better identification of leak reduction.



Tiaki Wai water networks

This diagram is an overview of the three waters networks – drinking water, wastewater and stormwater.

What you can expect from us in 2026/27



Drinking water

- Deliver safe and healthy drinking water.
- Keep looking for and repairing leaks.
- Progress planning for long-term water storage and supply.



Wastewater

- Continue to respond to overflows and blockages.
- Continued upgrades to critical infrastructure.



Stormwater

- Ongoing flood management and maintenance of stormwater networks.
- Environmental monitoring.

Investment priorities

In 2026/27 and over the longer term, investment will be prioritised to:

- catch up on the backlog of worn-out or degraded infrastructure
- keep up with asset renewals as they fall due and maintain agreed levels of service
- build network capacity to support housing and urban development
- clean up wastewater and stormwater discharges to reduce pollution into waterways and coastal environments
- fix faults as they arise
- improve the resilience of our water system to climate change and natural hazards.

How Tiaki Wai delivers against these priorities will be reviewed and reconfirmed in the next Water Services Strategy.

Significant projects in 2026/27

Drinking water

- Gear Island and Waterloo wells replacements - Part 2.
- Titahi Bay trunk main renewal - Stage 2.
- Totara Park Road bridge pipework seismic strengthening.
- Naenae No 2 Reservoir, outlet main and pipeline.
- Progressing the case for water metering.

Wastewater

- Moa Point remedial work.
- Seaview Wastewater Treatment Plant sludge dryer replacement.
- Hutt Valley Floor wastewater infrastructure to support growth.
- Victoria Street rising main renewal.
- Porirua Wastewater Treatment Plant solids handling upgrade.

Stormwater

- Hutt Valley Floor stormwater infrastructure to support growth.
- Te Mome Pump Station renewal and optimisation.
- Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (Riverlink) stormwater outlets upsized.

Paying for water services

Addressing the challenges and catching up on decades of under-investment comes at a cost.

Property owners are already paying for water services through their rates and other charges. From 1 July 2026, the cost of water services will instead be charged by and paid directly to Tiaki Wai.

For an **average** household, water services charges in 2026/27 will increase by about 14.7%. The current average residential water charges paid through rates across the four cities is $2100 and this will increase by around $310 (about $6 a week).

The exact amount will vary from city to city and property to property, in the same way rates vary, because for 2026/27 Tiaki Wai is using much the same approach as councils to calculate charges.

We are conscious that everyone is facing rising costs on all sides and intend to support residential customers who are temporarily unable to meet their water services charges. Read the Debtors Management and Hardship Policy on the Have Your Say website.

No household will have the water cut off just because they are struggling to pay their water services charges.

The table below gives an indication of the **median** water services charges for the median residential property, city by city.

Note these are indicative figures.

City	Median residential property CV 2025/26	2025/26 median annual water charges as part of rates	Median residential property CV 2026/27*	Indicative 2026/27 median annual water services charges	Increase
Hutt	$740,000	$1,978	$670,000	$2,327	$349
Porirua	$790,000	$1,911	$790,000	$2,279	$368
Upper Hutt	$770,000	$1,749	$700,000	$2,027	$278
Wellington	$920,000	$2,144	$920,000	$2,419	$275

*Median residential CV figures have changed for Hutt and Upper Hutt due to the three-yearly revaluation cycle.

For more information on water charges by capital value in each city, see the draft Water Services Strategy (page 59). You can find more detail on how charges are calculated in the Pricing Policy on the website.

Updated figures will be provided before 30 June. The first Tiaki Wai bill for water services is due to be sent in late July/early August 2026.

The financial balancing act

Tiaki Wai has a lot of work to do over the next decade, and we need to fund this work in a way that is sustainable, and fair for customers.

To do this, we have to balance four things:

- how fast we invest
- what customers pay
- how much we borrow
- our capacity to respond to unexpected events.

Tiaki Wai begins in a challenging financial position. The organisation is taking on over $9 billion of water assets and around $1.7 billion of debt from shareholding councils. There are also new regulatory standards to meet along with the need to prepare for growth, climate change and emergencies.

Current revenue levels are low relative to debt and this must improve for Tiaki Wai to meet ongoing lending requirements.

Longer term pricing pathway

Tiaki Wai customers will need to pay more over time.

The Water Services Strategy focuses on establishing a stable financial and operational foundation for Tiaki Wai. This means setting a pathway that enables increased spending on servicing and maintaining the network to reduce the risk of outages and failures and setting a revenue pathway that improves the overall financial position.

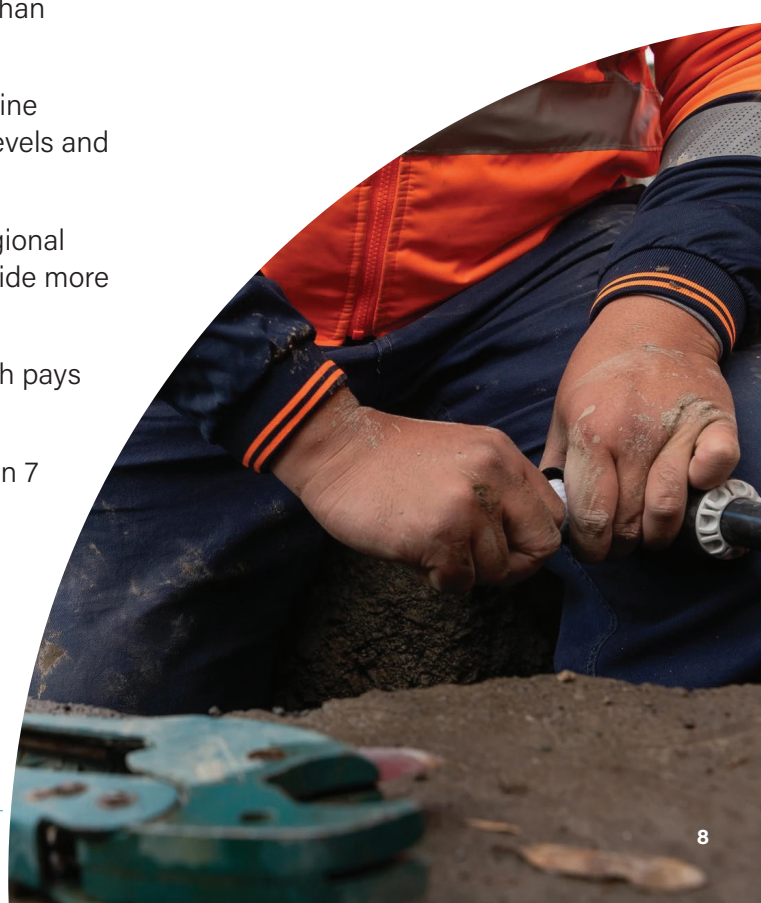
Current indications are that average water charges could increase by around 29 % in 2027/28 and more than double by 2036.

The next Water Services Strategy will further refine these projections as investment plans, service levels and financial assumptions are further developed.

We'll do more work on moving to a common regional pricing approach over coming months and provide more information in the next strategy.

We're also looking at how we ensure that 'growth pays for growth.'

Read more about our financial strategy in section 7 of the Water Services Strategy.



Caring for our customers

Tiaki Wai recognises that water is a public good, to be managed for the benefit of all.

Our aim is to ensure that everyone in our communities can rely on safe, secure, and equitable access to water services.

Our Customer Charter sets out commitments that you can expect Tiaki Wai to live up to every day across a number of areas including:

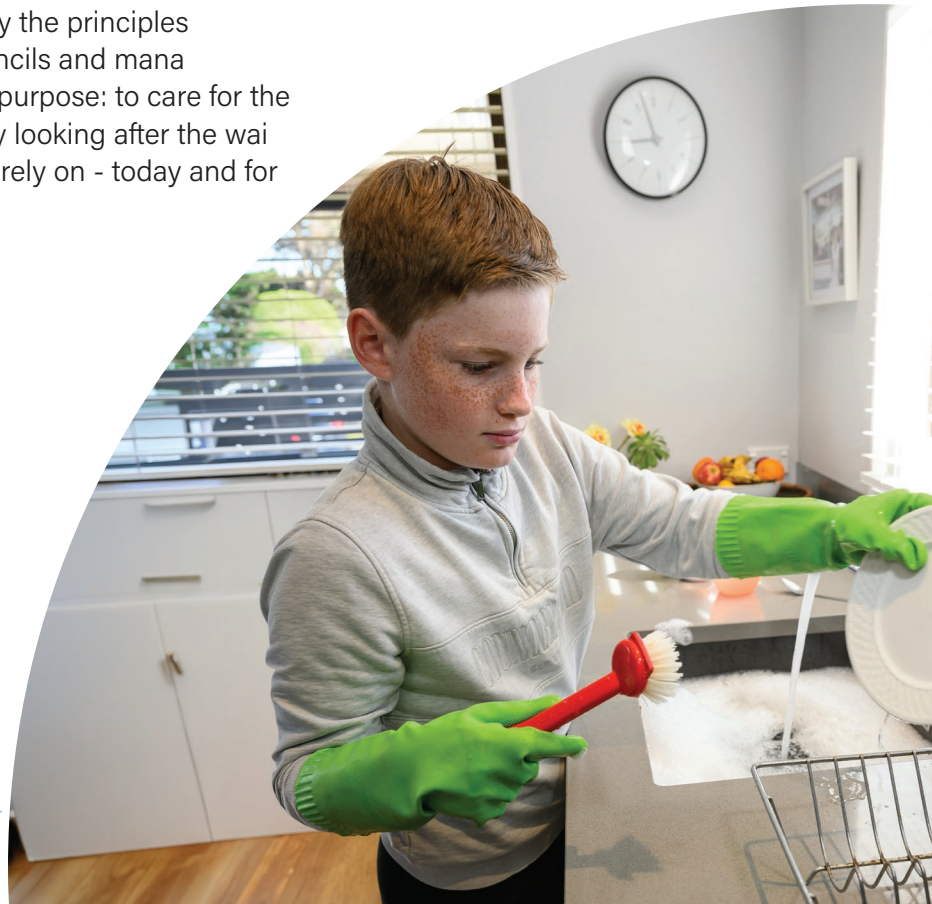
- safety and quality across drinking water supply, wastewater and stormwater,
- respect and integrity in our dealings with you
- responsive services: we're easy to contact, we respond promptly and communicate clearly if circumstances change
- environmental protection
- engagement and partnership; we involve customers and mana whenua in shaping our services
- fair and transparent pricing; clear communication over time about the direction toward more uniform charging and charges are set in an open and transparent way
- support for vulnerable or disadvantaged customers.

Tiaki Wai is committed to ensuring that all households have equitable access to essential water services, and to setting charges in an open and transparent way.

Tiaki Wai is a new organisation. As we mature over time, our systems, processes, and service standards will continue to develop and improve, and our Customer Charter will be updated.

Our Customer Charter is guided by the principles provided by our shareholding councils and mana whenua partners and reflects our purpose: to care for the people and places of our region by looking after the wai (water) and a water system we all rely on - today and for generations to come.

Read our Customer Charter here.



Engaging with you

The decisions Tiaki Wai makes will affect residents, businesses and communities in different ways. It is important that people who are likely to be affected by decisions are informed and have the opportunity to provide their views when necessary.

Our Significance and Engagement Policy set out how and when you can expect to hear from us.

We commit to engaging with you on the following:

- Water Services Strategy (this year and the next Water Services Strategy in 2027)
- significant Tiaki Wai decisions on projects or proposals, especially where they affect particular locations or communities
- any decisions relating to joint water service provider arrangements outside our current service delivery area
- decisions about significant contracts where the proposal or project hasn't already been subject to engagement, for example through the Water Services Strategy, and in line with legal requirements.

Read our draft Significance and Engagement Policy here.



We want your feedback

Visit our Have Your Say page

haveyoursay.tiakiwai.co.nz

- Take part in a short online survey, which will take about five to 10 minutes
- Email us at haveyoursay@metrowaterwellington.co.nz
- Write to us at

  Tiaki Wai feedback
  Private Bag 39804,
  Wellington Mail Centre,
  5045.

What happens next

Tiaki Wai will consider all feedback with an open mind. A summary of feedback and the final Water Services Strategy, Customer Charter and Significance and Engagement Policy will be published by 30 June 2026.

