

Whiringa-ā-nuku October 2023

## Northland roading improvements ramp up

Northland councils are gearing up for a major road repair programme ahead of the summer construction season. This follows an extremely wet 2022–23 summer, which allowed for just five clear weeks of construction time.

Over winter, roading crews have focused on temporary repairs to keep Northland motorists moving while they planned permanent repairs for spring, summer and autumn.

Northland Transportation Alliance (NTA) General Manager Calvin Thomas is hoping a break in the weather will allow crews to undertake uninterrupted critical work across the district. The three district councils in Northland plan to invest \$200 million in repairs, maintenance and improvements to local roading and transport networks over the next 12 months.



More road works are planned for the months ahead now that the wet weather is easing.

Following Cyclone Gabrielle, crews completed approximately \$25 million of emergency repair work out of an estimated \$89 million across the Far North, Whangārei and Kaipara road networks. Slip repairs continue, but with more than 100 significant slips remaining across the region, some will take several years to complete.

Key Far North roading projects due in the coming months include:

- Road rehabilitation for approximately 16 unsealed roads, including Diggers

Valley, Gumfields, Tokawhero, Remuera Settlement, Orira, and Ngawhitu roads.

- Rehabilitation on sections of sealed roads including Cumber, Gill, Kaitāia-Awaroa, Ngapipito and Pipiwai roads.
- Bridge renewals, including Churtons Road, Quarry Road, Wekaweka Road culvert, Hihi Road and Matai Road.
- New seal will be laid on sections of Ruaroa and Hautapu roads.

Visit our website and search for 'severe weather road repairs' for more information.

## Far North gets road funding increase

Work to repair and maintain the Far North's damaged road network has received a funding boost after Waka Kotahi increased its Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) to 71 per cent.

The Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency Board agreed in June that the share it pays towards road works in the Far North over the next three years (2024–27) will increase by 2 per cent, taking its co-funding share to 71 per cent.

Waka Kotahi co-funds approved road works undertaken by all local authorities across New Zealand through its FAR. This covers a minimum of 53 per cent of a council's total land transport and transport services budget but can be increased to as much as 75 per cent.

Waka Kotahi confirmed its decision reflected changes to the district's roading network since 2019. This included an

increase in the total length of the road network, increased capital value of the network, and an increase in the number of ratepayers.

Waka Kotahi has also applied a special FAR of 100 per cent to work included in the initial response to cyclones Hale and Gabrielle in 2022 and 2023. An 89 per cent FAR will apply to emergency road works in the 2023/24 financial year.

## Gear up for regular roading updates

🚧 'At a glance' graphic updates on work to repair Far North roads will be published monthly on the council's website.

🚧 Working with the Northland Transportation Alliance, we will publish an easy-to-understand graphic breakdown of key road works achieved in the previous month. (The September graphic is displayed to the right).

🚧 Regularly publishing updates on repairs and maintenance to Far North district roads recognises how important this work is to residents. It will also give residents a clearer picture of the mahi being carried out by roading contractors.

🚧 Go to the 'Road maintenance' section of our roading webpage to see the graphics – [fndc.govt.nz/Roads](https://fndc.govt.nz/Roads).



**Rates processing update:** After receiving more than 1500 rates-related enquiries since July and assigning extra staff to process this backlog, most rating queries have now been cleared. The focus of our rating team now can turn to rates adjustment objections and rates rebate applications. Please be patient while staff work through this next lot of enquiries.

# Water restriction reminders



Remember water restrictions? According to weather experts, we could be seeing them again with predictions of a dry summer ahead. Here's a reminder of what our water restriction levels and signs mean.

We apply restrictions to our water supplies to protect our water sources – rivers, streams and aquifers – to ensure continued supply of water during extended periods of dry weather.

## The four levels

We have four water restriction levels:

- Level 1 (a full glass): There are no water restrictions but please use water sensibly.
- Level 2: You cannot use outdoor sprinklers.

- Level 3: You cannot use any outdoor sprinklers or hoses.
- Level 4 (an empty glass): Essential water use only – cleaning, cooking and washing. There is no outdoor water use from council supplies.

To check exactly what you can do at each restriction level visit our website and search for 'Water supply restriction levels'. Scroll down to the 'Restriction guidelines' drop down menu for an easy to follow guide.

## Our signs

With weather forecasters predicting a dry summer, we'll be asking local retailers across the district to display our shopfront signs of the water glass images. Water levels in the glass tell you which of the four water restriction levels is currently in place. A full glass means we're okay. An empty glass means we need to conserve water immediately.

Level 1 signs will begin appearing outside supermarkets, petrol stations and other outlets in a town near you by early December.

If water restriction levels change, the shopfront signs will change. Please keep an eye out when visiting your local supermarket, petrol station or other outlets for signs displaying the water restriction levels.



Keep an eye out for these signs at a retailer near you from December.

## Save water now

As well as the shopfront signs displaying the water glass images, we will install large 'Save water now' signs in communities if Level 2 water restrictions are put in place. These large billboards provide tips on how to save water – turning off dripping taps, flushing toilets less, having shorter showers and only doing full loads in washing machines.

You will see these signs installed at key roadside locations when Level 2 restrictions begin and they will remain in place until Level 2, 3 and 4 restrictions have ended.

If Level 3 restrictions are applied to your town you may also see 'Save water now, supplies are low' signs popping up. These smaller signs are installed at eye level to reinforce the message that saving water is becoming

critically important in your community. 'Supplies are low' signs will remain in place until Level 3 and 4 restrictions have ended. Water restriction signage helps communities in each town know when saving water is critical and how to do it. In past years, water restrictions have helped communities achieve up to 25 per cent savings in water use and have been key to averting serious water shortages.

Similar water restriction systems have been applied in Whangārei and Kaipara districts in the past, as well as in the Far North.



## Managing water

So who is making these decisions about our water supplies? The council gathers a group of water experts together, from FNDCC and Far North Waters Alliance, to

assess our water supplies when droughts look likely.

The Water Shortage Management Committee analyses information about the health of our water sources, river flow levels, weather forecasting, and also gauges what the demand for water is likely to be over the summer months.

The committee makes recommendations based on the latest data from our water sources, and considers the consenting levels set by the Northland Regional Council. The committee will make the best decisions about protecting our water supplies based on that information, but we do need your help.

So please take note of what levels are displayed around your town and be sure to start saving water in the ways suggested. Help us save water to ensure our water supply is available for everyone.



Our 'Save water now' signs are installed at key roadside locations when Level 2 restrictions are in place.



Our 'Supplies are low' signs are installed at eye level when we reach Level 3 restrictions.

View a short video on how valuations affect your rates at [fndc.govt.nz/propertyvaluations](http://fndc.govt.nz/propertyvaluations)