



Media Release

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Council gives Green Light to the Drinking Water Strategy

The introduction of water metering could become a reality for all Council's drinking water schemes.

Central Otago District Council's Operations Committee gave the green light, in principle, to having a Drinking Water Strategy at its meeting on Wednesday.

Council's Assets and Contracts Manager, Murray Washington, said "a drinking water strategy was needed to address upgrading Council's drinking water supply. He said there was now a legal requirement for Council to comply with the drinking water standards under the new Health Amendment Act 2007, which was estimated to cost Council in excess of \$8 million.

For Council to be able to afford the drinking water upgrades, Mr Washington said finding ways to drive down demand was high on the agenda. With responsibility of water supply being delegated to each Community Board. The final decision on the introduction of water meters will rest with each Board.

Already attempts to reduce peak demand by 10 percent over 5 years using voluntary methods have largely been unsuccessful. According to the report prepared by Opus International, having a universal user pays system has already proven to significantly reduce demand in other regions.

Before the water upgrades and metering gets underway, Council will meet with the Community Boards to go over the implications of the proposed strategy, then get approval for the initial investigation and installation of meters for each drinking water scheme and funding for the 2008/09 budget.

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