

New Fire Depots

As the summer heats up in Central, Dunstan and Tarras volunteer rural fire fighters are warming to new premises.

The CODC Rural Fire Authority has recently moved its fire appliances in both Alexandra and Tarras into two new purpose-built depots.

The new Alexandra fire depot on Boundary Road (opposite Central Otago Wastebusters) offers the voluntary rural fire force at least twice the space it had before to house its fleet – including two appliances, a water tanker, ute, fire service command unit, motorbike, trailer and slip-on unit, plus pumps and monsoon buckets.

Better still, both the Alexandra and Tarras volunteers now have an office and the “luxury” of an ablution block when they get back to HQ after they’ve been called out to protect our district.



Fire crew outside the new fire depot in Alexandra.

The new Tarras fire depot replaces a Skyline garage that was erected 30 years ago and was not up to today’s standard. It is located near the Tarras Hall, housing its fleet consisting of a water tanker and an ex-NZ Fire Service appliance.

Central Otago District Council Principal Rural Fire Officer Owen Burgess says the

two new “bigger and better” depots are a “great asset” to the community.

The voluntary rural fire forces are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you think you’re up to the challenge, for which you’ll be given plenty of training, contact Owen at the Council Office, on (03) 440 0612.



From the Mayor’s Desk

Some of you may have seen my recent comments in the local papers about rates rises and Council debt. Most of our communities want better quality water, the regional council wants us to improve the quality of our waste water discharges and prudent borrowing is

seen as a good way of spreading the cost of a project over its real life. All these things signal rates rises that will be above the level of inflation, if we do not alter any of our other levels of services.

For this reason it is extremely important that you take an interest in the draft long term plan that we are looking to release mid-April. It is also up to us to give you good information on the true cost of services so that you can take the opportunity to give us meaningful feedback on what you want and what is affordable.

We can not sit back and watch some of our communities become unaffordable to live in. We may need to look at cutting back on some of the “nice” things Council funds so we can afford the essentials.

We need to search together for solutions and these will not come by doing things the way that we have always done them in the past. 2012 will not be a year for sitting on the fence. It’s time to have an opinion and voice it.



Waste Plan

Feedback taken on board

Community response to the Draft Waste Minimisation and Management Plan, which generated 207 submissions, has been very constructive. A number of people acknowledged we needed to stop making so much rubbish due to its high cost to manage and its negative environmental impacts.

Consultation on the plan took place over two months and included six public meetings. Feedback was carefully considered by Councillors at a special hearing in December and amendments to the plan will be made before final approval later this year.

The wheelie bin rubbish collection was discussed at length and it was recommended that a fortnightly rubbish collection would be introduced in 2013. A review of the Council service collection area will be undertaken to look at bringing in those communities not currently serviced by Council. It was also recommended that recycling options be increased and more public awareness campaigns launched after feedback from the community suggested these were high priorities.

Glass Recycling

The much anticipated glass recycling programme is now available at the Roxburgh, Ranfurly, Naseby, Patearoa, Oturehua, Omakau and Tarras Recycling Drop-Offs. This trial is only available to households and not for commercial use.

This new trial needs the local community to help keep the facilities clean and tidy. Glass must be separated by colour, and free of any other materials like cardboard boxes and plastic bags.

Glass recycling will continue in Alexandra, Cromwell and Clyde as part of the usual kerbside collection and drop-offs are also available at Cromwell Transfer Station (10am-5pm daily) and Central Otago WasteBusters in Alexandra.

Please note that glass recycling is strictly for bottle and jar-type glass only.

Private commercial glass recycling collection is available by arrangement from Central Otago WasteBusters.

Any enquiries please call Central Otago WasteBusters on (03) 448 9948.

Disposal of Gas Cylinders

A friendly reminder: Please do not put expired BBQ/camp stove or gas bottles in your wheelie bin. These can be very dangerous if crushed and taken to landfill without being degassed.

Central Otago WasteBusters accept gas cylinders for recycling or you can take them directly to your nearest transfer station where they will be disposed of safely.

Cycling

Our Place at Your Pace

A 16-page brochure on cycling in Central Otago has just been developed. Aimed at giving people a taste of what this region offers, the brochure combines stunning imagery with a captivating word picture of some of our region's key trails. It's designed to motivate people to seek out more information on the newly developed website www.cyclecentralotago.com.

Already into its second reprint, the brochure is proving to be very popular with visitor centres around the country. Pick up your own copy from one of our Central Otago Visitor Centres.



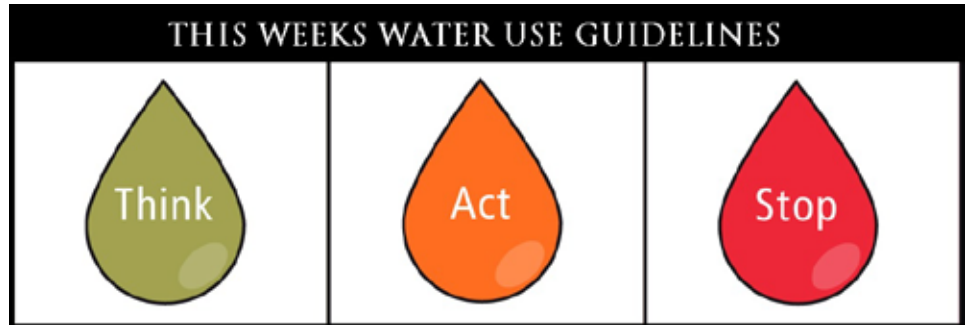
Watch Summer water use

During January and February, we can just about guarantee the weather gets hotter and water use goes up. Peak demand can be so great that Council water supplies struggle to keep up and this can affect availability of water for essential services like fire-fighting.

Look for the coloured rain drops published each week in *The News* and on Council's

website - www.codc.govt.nz. The coloured drops signal whether you need to just think about how you are using water (green), take action to reduce unnecessary water use (orange) or stop using any unnecessary water (red).

Formal water restriction will only be put in place if water use is not managed voluntarily.



Using Water Wisley

More than 75% of the water we treat over the summer months goes on gardens and lawns. There is a direct cost to ratepayers of that use – pumping and processing water is a significant annual cost on rates.

Understanding just how much water goes onto your garden might help reduce demand and save money. Reading your water meter over a 24-hour period when you irrigate and comparing it to 24 hours when you don't will give you an idea of just how much is going on your garden. If you are not sure how to read your meter, go to www.codc.govt.nz or call for advice on (03) 440 0056.

Here are some things you can do to make the most of the water you use:

- Make sure your sprinklers are only sprinkling where you need it – avoid watering concrete, asphalt and buildings.
- If water is running down the gutter, you are using too much or using it in the wrong place.
- Soak your garden once every few days rather than sprinkling lightly every night. This encourages the roots to go deeper into the soil to seek out moisture.
- Irrigate at night or early in the morning when the air is cool and still.
- Don't over water – too much water can be as bad as too little.
- Use fine sprinklers to water lawns and gardens.
- Install efficient automatic irrigation systems.
- Use pebbles or stones as ground cover and plant dry tolerant plants.
- Let your grass grow taller to provide shade for roots and soil.
- Use mulch on gardens and around trees and shrubs.

Fire Risks

Make sure you keep your sections mowed and cleared of long grass to help minimise the risk of fires. Higher than normal rainfall last year has resulted in more vegetation, which in turn has increased the fire risk.

Normally at this time of year the prohibited fire season is enforced in our district – this includes both rural and urban areas. This means there is no burning in open areas except for gas BBQs.

For up-to-date information please refer to Council's Notice Board in *The News*.

We can all do our bit to help protect this special place.

Enviroschools Update

We are very proud to have four Bronze Enviroschools in Central Otago. Congratulations to Tarras, Goldfields, The Terrace and Alexandra Primary School. At each school the children in the Envirogroup, lead teachers and principals, along with Steve Brown the Enviroschools Facilitator, met and reflected on the school's Enviroschools journey. In every case we were amazed at the range of sustainable actions happening throughout the school that help make these places healthy, happy and more sustainable environments.

A number of our Enviroschools are involved in Project Gold initiatives. Cromwell Primary featured in the DVD to launch the project with DOC, Clyde School planted natives at the start of the river track, Roxburgh Area School planted Kowhai trees in the school grounds and Alexandra Primary pupils are learning to germinate and nurture Kowhai seeds to plant in their grounds.

Once again the Enviroschools tent at Thyme Festival was a hive of activity, with a different school hosting each day. Visitors to the tent made bird feeders, decorated pavers, paper bricks and newspaper planting pots, prepared and planted seeds, wove flax putiputi (flowers) and caramelised yummy walnuts.

The Terrace Primary School senior pupils held their own election and the children invented parties and policies on making Terrace a more sustainable environment. These were very entertaining and thoughtful as well as being a wonderful way of building sustainability into the curriculum.

Build It Right



Changes to the Building Act

If you are planning a building project you need to be aware of changes to the Building Act, which take effect from 1 March 2012.

If your residential building work is structural or if it affects the weather-tightness of the building, the work may be "Restricted Building Work". Only Licensed Building Practitioner(s) (LBP) can design and carry out the restricted building work after 1 March.

The Department of Building and Housing's "Build It Right" brochure lays out the requirements in an easy to understand way. Copies of the brochure can be picked up from all Council Services Centres or you can find out more about the LBP scheme at www.dhb.govt.nz/lbp.

Heritage Blooms



Mayor Tony Lepper and Fran Rawling planting the heritage rose.

Set within Alexandra's Pioneer Park is a new garden specifically dedicated to heritage roses.

The beautiful fragrant garden, which features more than 100 roses, was officially opened in December by the Mayor and marks a work of collaboration.

The heritage rose garden was designed and developed by Murray Radka, the Vincent Community Board funded the preparation of the ground, paving and an information panel, the Radka family kindly donated the pergola and Murray's parents the seat, the Central Otago branch of Heritage Rose New Zealand purchased the roses and then a group of local heritage rose lovers helped to plant them.

Some of the roses chosen date back a thousand years and most of the species represented in the garden would have been known and loved by our early settlers.

To mark the garden's official opening, the Convenor of the Central Otago branch of Heritage Roses New Zealand Jean Britton presented the Mayor and Fran Rawling, the National President of the Heritage Roses New Zealand, a heritage rose to plant in memory of heritage rose enthusiast, the late Margaret Henderson.

Take a moment and discover this garden for yourself. Smell the roses and read the newly installed information board that captures the essence of heritage roses.

How well do you know your Community?

Community Civil Defence committees are being set up in Alexandra, Cromwell, Ranfurly and Roxburgh. This is a great opportunity to get involved in your community.

The committees will provide a forum for individuals and community groups to discuss civil defence in their local community. It will also provide a means of identifying resources and coordinating local volunteers in response to a major disaster. Meetings will be held at least twice a year and will be attended by local representatives of the emergency services.

If you are interested or have any questions please contact Hamish Keith at the emergency management office on (03) 440 0056 or email civil.defence@codc.govt.nz.

Meetings will be held at 7pm at:

Roxburgh Service Centre
Monday 20 February

Ranfurly Service Centre
Tuesday 21 February

Cromwell Service Centre
Wednesday 22 February

Alexandra Service Centre
Thursday 23 February



New Playground Equipment



The new climbing frame proves to be popular.

A new fun piece of playground equipment now takes pride of place at the Molyneux Park Playground. Thanks to the funds raised through New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT), a large climbing net was able to be purchased for the playground.

"NZCT is mindful of returning money to the community in which it was raised," says NZCT chief executive Mike Knell. "Our funding model, of local publicans raising funds for their community through responsible gaming, is pretty unique and it works well. Without it, thousands of sports and community organisations would struggle to survive or provide the equipment and coaching needed to keep their sport going. We are also interested in providing grants which offer long-term, sustainable benefits to local communities."

"No one would deny that sport and physical activity is important for building healthy communities, and that's why most of our funding goes towards amateur sport," says Mr Knell.

"The new playground equipment at Molyneux Park is a case in point. It will help young people develop physical strength and agility – and it will be a great community asset for many years to come."

Art and Cultural Funding 2012

Only a small window of time remains to get your applications in this funding round.

Applications forms are available at your local Council Offices. The closing date for applications is Friday 17 February 2012.

The next funding round will be in September 2012.

Application forms are available at all Council offices or by emailing judith.whyte@codc.govt.nz.

Successful Central Swim School

Central Swim School has had a very busy year with numbers steadily growing. It is also into its second year of the Swim for Life programme which is jointly funded by Central Lakes Trust. Through this programme local kids have had the opportunity to learn the basics for survival in water. Already there have been very positive comments about these programmes.

Unfortunately our Central Swim School Coordinator Ginny Hill has decided to do her OE. Ginny has worked at our pools for a number of years and would have been well known to many. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ginny and her team for their great work in helping local children learn to swim.

We welcome the new Swim School Coordinator Kirsten McIntosh who has recently been appointed to the role. Kirsten has significant experience in managing swim schools in both Christchurch and Auckland, and has also provided private swimming tuition to both children and adults. Kirsten comes from a strong swimming background having swum competitively for a number of years. Please keep an eye out for Kirsten at the pools and feel free to talk to her about your children's or your own swimming needs.

Enrolments can now be made for this year's programme. Contact either Central Swim School on (03) 440 0680, Molyneux Aquatic Centre (03) 448 8653 or Cromwell Swim Centre (03) 445 0919.

Lessons Learned

Cycling Tourism Workshop

"Good tourism product is about the whole package, it's about your business from every perspective and not just one part of it. In order to succeed with product in today's tourism market it has to be good. Start with the basics, get them right and the rest will follow." – Kim Winterbottom, co-owner of Lake Roxburgh Lodge

More than 50 people attended a Cycling Tourism Workshop held recently in Millers Flat that focused on opportunities the new Roxburgh Gorge and Clutha Gold trails could offer.

Local operators gave their insightful gems into why and how they got into business, Tourism Central Otago provided an overview of the cycling market and the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust covered lessons they had learnt after more than 10 years in existence.

"From what we have learnt from the Otago Central Rail Trail, the trails through the

Roxburgh Gorge and Teviot Valley have the ability to transform and invigorate the rural communities they pass through," said CODC Business Development manager Jonathan Gadd.

National cycling research shows that cycling is officially a national pastime. Its global audience, popularity, low impact fitness, flexibility and accessibility make it suitable for all ages and it's inherently a social activity.

"Central Otago's strengths are its unique iconic moments like its heritage, food and wine, and camping – all of which offer opportunities for the cycling market by creating immersive iconic kiwi experiences that are boutique. The Clutha Gold and Roxburgh Gorge Trails will add to these iconic moments and offer the visitor and local alike a breathtakingly different view of Lake Roxburgh and the Clutha Mata-Au River," said Michelle Kinney from Tourism Central Otago.



Ali Mason from Tourism Central Otago speaking at the workshop.