



Quick facts about Waitomo District Water Supplies

- WDC's water treatment plants in Te Kuiti, Piopio, Mokau, and Benneydale provide safe, treated water that is dosed with chlorine to the standards required for drinking water.
- The New Zealand Drinking Water Standards imposes a legal requirement on Waitomo District Council (WDC) that it disinfect the treated water reticulation systems that it operates by injecting chlorine into all treated water as it is pumped from the Water Treatment Plants. This health requirement ensures that no bacteria is present when the water comes out of the tap. The injection of a carefully measured amount of chlorine is the final step in WDC's water treatment process.
- All of WDC's water treatment plants are connected to a SCADA system – a telemetry monitoring system that allows WDC to remotely monitor and control the treatment processes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Alarms within the system notify us if chemical dosing levels are low or too high.
- WDC undertake water sampling at least once a week. In addition to this, the onsite treatment plant operators carry out testing to confirm on-line analysers are working correctly.
- Ultra-violet (UV) disinfection systems are in place at the Benneydale and Mokau Water Treatment Plants. Also, the treatment process used at the Piopio Water Treatment Plant is of the Ultra Filtration (Membrane) type that removes virus and bacteria as part of the treatment of the raw water.
- The Te Kuiti Water Treatment Plant has been upgraded and provides Ultra-violet (UV) disinfection, to meet the standards set by the Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Act 2005 (amended in 2008), ensuring the provision of high-quality water that will benefit the people who live in and visit our communities, for generations to come.

Water Supplies not managed by WDC:

- Taharoa's infrastructure is owned and operated by BHP Steel Mining Ltd.
- Waitomo Village water and wastewater infrastructure is owned by Tourism Holdings Ltd.

Frequently asked questions

Is the Council provided supply fluoridated?

Waitomo District water supplies are not currently fluoridated.

Why does the water have a chlorine taste or smell?

Chlorine is added to the Waitomo District drinking water supplies to ensure the safety of the water, however, most people don't notice it. If chlorine can be smelt in the water coming out from your household tap, you can use a water filter to remove the taste and odour. Or you can keep a jug of tap water in the fridge with the lid off and this should eliminate the chlorine taste.

Why is my tap water cloudy in colour?

Cloudy water, also known as white water, is caused by air bubbles in the water and it is completely harmless. It can be caused by trapped air due to work on the water mains. To check if the water is cloudy due to air, just fill a glass with cold water and allow it to stand for five minutes. The air bubbles should disappear and clear from the glass. If the water doesn't clear you should contact Council or have a plumber check this.

Why does my water have an unusual taste or smell?

Waitomo District Council draws its water from a number of different water sources, for example the Mangaokewa River in Te Kuiti, and a natural spring in Piopio. The sources can have a natural, slight odour that is caused by the growth of plants and algae in the river. The purification process removes most of the odour and is rarely detected in cold water. It may be noticeable in warmer water, especially to visitors accustomed to the taste and odour of their own drinking water.

If you are sensitive to this taste/odour, try keeping a jug of fresh, cold, tap water in the refrigerator for drinking and cooking. Carbon filters can also be used to remove taste/odour.

Why is my tap water rusty coloured?

Routine hydrant flushing and [water main flushing](#) or repairs can disturb sediment in the water mains resulting in orange or brown coloured tap water – this is suspended iron and manganese deposits that naturally occurs in water and occasionally builds up in [aged pipes](#). The particles form because oxygen in the plumbing system is oxidizing and precipitating the iron and manganese. Iron and manganese are common element found in the earth's crust. As water percolates through soil and rock it can dissolve these minerals and carry them into groundwater.

This coloured water is **not a health risk** and can usually be fixed by turning on outside taps to flush any sediment out of the system. Once it becomes clear, check inside cold taps before trying hot taps.

I have ongoing issues with my drinking water. What could be the cause?

Old galvanised steel pipes in older houses can be in poor condition. This can result in poor water pressure, mineral build-up, and water leaks. We recommend property owners have their plumbing checked and if necessary replaced by a professional plumber.