

THREE WATERS

QUESTIONS AND FACTS

What is Three Waters?

“Three Waters” is a proposal by central government to take control of water assets that are currently owned and managed by your local council: Drinking water, wastewater and stormwater.

Who will control those assets if Three Waters goes ahead?

Four mega water agencies will be created, which will together control New Zealand’s water assets and infrastructure.

How does it effect me?

It affects you because the new water agencies will be the ones billing you, not your local council. They will also decide how well pipes are maintained, how quickly repairs are done, and where new infrastructure will be built.

Who will control the water agencies?

Each agency will be controlled by a 12-member board. Six will be appointed by local iwi. The other six will be appointed by the local councils that provided the assets. For example, the 20 local authorities in the South Island entity will have six seats in total. Three-quarters of the Board must agree before a decision can be passed so iwi will have the final say.

Will the board members be accountable to you?

No. Unlike your local councillors, they are not elected and not answerable to you.

Will councils be paid fair value for the water assets they are handing over?

No. Councils will receive a payment to cover any debt they may have relating to the water assets, but that is cents in the dollar. Billions of dollars of assets paid for by generations of ratepayers will be handed over to the new agencies without fair compensation.

Are the government’s figures credible?

The government has said water charges will go down if Three Waters goes ahead, but experts who have reviewed the figures say they are “founded on unsound evidence and faulty analysis” (Castalia) and “should not be relied on

to project actual expenditure, revenue and pricing outcomes.” (Farrier). The government’s figures are not credible and should not be believed.

Are councils in favour of Three Waters?

Council’s have until the end of September 2021 to let the government know if they support the proposal. It looks like half of the councils are saying “NO” to Three Waters, and the other half are either in favour or sitting on the fence.

Do Councils have to consult with their community about this?

The Local Government Act requires councils to consult ratepayers over major decisions regarding water, but the government may pass special legislation to sidestep that requirement.

Westland’s Mayor, Bruce Smith, says “a public referendum in every district would allow our residents and ratepayers who have along with their families over generations paid for these three water assets to make the decision to opt in or out.”

THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Contact your local councillors. Their email addresses and further information may be found at: www.nzcpr.com/3waters. Demand your council consult their community before they consider whether to hand over your water assets. Remind them they were elected to represent your community, not politicians in Wellington.

2. Encourage others to do the same. Copy this page and deliver into letter boxes in your neighbourhood or email to others.



QR scan for information

Thank you for your support.