

4. AUTHORISED WATER SUPPLY INSTALLER SCHEME

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The purpose of this report is to gain approval for the implementation of an 'Authorised Water Supply Installer' scheme for all work carried out on the Council's water supply reticulation.

BACKGROUND

The Council, at its August 2001 meeting, approved the introduction of an Authorised Drainlayer Registration Scheme. That report signalled the need for a similar scheme for Authorised Water Supply Installers.

As part of the preparation of the Council's Water Supply 'Public Health Risk Management Plan', it has been identified that there is a potential significant health risk to the water supply network if persons working on the reticulation do not follow important set procedures and work in a hygienic manner to prevent contamination of the supply.

The Christchurch water supply is very highly regarded for its natural purity and taste but because it is not chlorinated it has less defence against water carried bugs and disease being transmitted if they inadvertently enter the pipework. Because of this considerably more attention to hygiene and anti contamination issues is required when work is carried out on the water supply system to reduce the risk of contamination. This area is considered to be one of the higher public health risks in the system so it is important that effort is exercised to reduce this risk to a minimum.

It is therefore proposed that Council establish an 'Authorised Water Supply Installer' register to ensure that those people controlling the work in this 'at risk' area, are adequately trained to minimise this identified risk. It is proposed that to become an Authorised Installer suitably experienced individual workers, who wish to control work on the Council Water Supply network, must attend and pass a training course organised by the Council and sign an agreement to be bound by terms and conditions set out in the document for the scheme.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that for the following work only an Authorised Installer will be allowed to control the work on the site.

- Council Water Supply mains capital works contracts.
- Council Water Supply submains contracts.
- Fire Services connections.
- New subdivision connection and reticulation works.
- Connection of new Pump stations and reservoirs to the water reticulation.

The following work has been specifically excluded from the scheme:

- Reactive maintenance work on the existing system (carried out by City Care Ltd).
- Temporary connections to the water supply system via fire hydrants.
- New Metered water connections (carried out by City Care Ltd).

There has been a deliberate requirement for the scheme not to be tied to the contractor but to target an individual person who controls the site and it is a requirement that this person is site based and only away from the site to facilitate co-ordinating of the work. The contractor is still required to make the application, produce the traffic management plan, have health and safety systems in place, have appropriate insurance cover in place for the work, complete road opening applications, and ensure the satisfactory reinstatement of the work at the completion of the work. The 'Authorised Installer' is required to ensure that Council's set procedures are followed for any shut down, hygiene and anti contamination procedures, including chlorination if required, are followed throughout the work, materials and workmanship are as required by Council's standards, work is carried out without undue delays and sign off quality control and hygiene certificates at the completion of the work.

The training planned for the introduction of the scheme is proposed to be a one day course at no cost to the applicants, which will involve half a day covering requirements such as water borne disease, health and hygiene and dealing with customer complaints and issues. This day will incorporate part of the Unit Standard training required as part of the National Certificate in Water Reticulation (Service Person) and covers knowledge of pathogens, diseases, and their control in the water industry and can be used as a start towards the National Certificate for those that want to continue towards this.

This National Certificate is becoming more accepted with Councils around New Zealand and some are now requiring water supply contractors to have their staff pass this training. It is proposed that in five years time all Council 'Authorised Installers' will be required to have passed this certificate. As an incentive and to encourage workers to enrol for this training, which involves a total of 16 days course work, it is proposed that the Council pay for half the course costs on satisfactory completion of the certificate by initially approved authorised installers. That is \$800 (\$1,600 total) per person and it is not envisaged that there would initially be more than 20 people involved. City Care Ltd has decided to independently put all of their water supply staff through this course at their cost.

The standards set by the Council for this scheme are no different to those already required, except that there will be a requirement for the person responsible for procedures, hygiene, and quality of the work, to be an Authorised Installer and be site based. At present the person in control could be looking after several jobs and only visit the site periodically. The Council also require this person to have reasonable experience of the work involved.

There is a proposed fee of \$100 for the processing of each application, which is non refundable. The proposed requirement that in five years all Authorised Installers will hold a National Certificate in Water reticulation will cost a further \$800 after being subsidised by Council, and this will involve a commitment to 16 days of course work.

The documents allow for a three person appeal committee (two Council officers plus a member of the Contractors Federation) for any application, which is declined and also give powers to cancel registration upon reasonable notice and for appropriate grounds. These conditions are similar to those imposed on the recently introduced Authorised Drainlayer scheme.

It is proposed that applications can be made at any time and that there would be a maximum of six weeks processing time for applications by Council.

The proposed scheme which follows reasonably closely the approach used with the 'Authorised Drainlayer' scheme, is being vetted by the Council's Legal Services team. Following informal discussions, a copy of the proposed scheme has been sent to the Contractors Federation for comment as has a letter to the Council's main water supply contractors advising them of the proposal. No adverse comment has been received to date.

SUMMARY

The City Water and Waste Unit wishes to put in place a scheme for registering 'Authorised Installers' for the Christchurch water supply reticulation. This will ensure that the work deemed to put the water supply 'at risk', as identified by the development of the Public Health Risk management plan, is controlled by a suitably experienced and trained site based person. This will reduce this risk of contamination to the water supply.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council introduce an Authorised Water Installer scheme as outlined in this report.
 2. That the Council, subject to the approval of the City Water and Waste Manager, reimburse 50% of the tuition fees for installers who register during the implementation phase of the Approved Installer Scheme, and who obtain the National Certificate in Water Reticulation (service person).