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**REPORT 2**  
(1215/52/IM)

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## **WATER CHARTER AMENDMENT**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

This report seeks agreement to amend the 'Wellington Water Charter' (Charter) to align it with the regional practice in terms of garden sprinkler usage.

### **2. Executive Summary**

The Council agreed to the Charter on 29 August 2007 and it came into effect in September 2007. The Charter emphasises an educational approach to consumer responsibility for water conservation, rather than a regulatory approach.

High water demand in recent summers has increased the need for water conservation messaging to the city's residents and businesses. Restrictions on the bulk water supply are likely to be needed in the near future to meet the needs of increased demand and / or reduced supply, particularly during summer months. Greater Wellington intends running an educative campaign later this year about water conservation and the rules around sprinkler use. The water charter currently sets Wellington's sprinkler hours to be slightly different from the other nearby Councils.

This paper seeks agreement to align the current hours of operation in the Charter for the watering of gardens with garden hoses and sprinklers with other Councils so the regional messages are consistent.

### **3. Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Recommend to Council that it agree that the Wellington Water Charter (Charter) be amended so that the use of sprinklers and garden hoses is only allowed on alternate days and only between either 6.00am – 8.00am or 7.00pm – 9.00pm (not both). Properties with an even-numbered street address can only use sprinklers on even-numbered days of the month and those with an odd-numbered street address only on odd days of the month.*

3. *Note that, if agreed, the proposed changes will take effect from the commencement of Daylight saving at 2.00am on 27 September 2009.*
4. *Note that these amendments will align the Council with the approaches taken by Upper Hutt City Council, Hutt City Council and Porirua City Council.*

#### **4. Background**

The Wellington Water Charter (Charter) was agreed by the Strategy and Policy Committee on 9 August 2007. It came into effect in September 2007, and has served well as more is learnt about the demand management requirements that face Wellington now and into the future.

There is now a more collaborative approach by the four Councils served by Greater Wellington Regional Council's bulk water supply agreement in the methods that are employed to communicate water conservation messages to their respective communities. An extension to this approach would be to have all four Councils directing their communities with the same messages and information.

#### **5. Discussion**

This paper proposes aligning the current hours of operation in the Charter for the watering of gardens with garden hoses and sprinklers with those expressed by Greater Wellington Regional Council and being developed for Porirua City Council, Hutt City Council and Upper Hutt City Council.

Aligning the Charter with the agreed regional position will enable Wellington City Council to benefit from the consistent approach to water conservation. Currently the Charter states:

- 6.8 *Use of sprinklers and garden hoses is only allowed between 6.00am - 8.00am and 6.00pm - 8.00pm on alternate days. If you have an even-numbered address, you can use sprinklers on even days of the month and vice versa.*

It is recommended that this section is amended to read:

- 6.8 *Use of sprinklers and garden hoses is only allowed **on alternate days and only** between **either** 6.00am - 8.00am **or** 7.00pm - 9.00pm **(not both)**. Properties with an even-numbered street address can only use sprinklers on even-numbered days of the month and those with an odd-numbered street address only on odd days of the month.*

This amendment brings the hours of operation in line with the other Councils party to the bulk water supply agreement. It has no financial or service level implications for the Long Term Council Community Plan and does not change the spirit of the Charter.

The immediate impact of this amendment is expected to be slight due to limited garden sprinkler operation in the earlier (and wetter) weeks of daylight saving, but with clear communication to ensure users can make a smooth transition to the new times, the future user behaviour during periods of higher and peak demand is expected to significantly improve.

Greater Wellington is planning an extensive advertising campaign to start at the commencement of daylight saving in September. It is expected that the approach to this campaign will be regional in nature with the support of the other Councils. The Council Fact File and relevant webpage would also be updated.

Before the end of the 2009/2010 year it is proposed that a complete review of the Charter's effectiveness is conducted to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of both the Council and consumers, and as water management strategies are implemented.

## **6. Conclusion**

Amending the Charter to reflect the operating hours of other City Councils will add a level of consistency that reinforces the message that water conservation is a regional issue and that all residents and businesses have a contribution to make.

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## Supporting Information

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

*The proposed changes are consistent with Council's strategic direction and outcomes. Specifically the community outcome "Wellington's long-term environmental health will be protected by well planned and well maintained infrastructure"*

*The draft LTCCP for 2009-19 also lists work being undertaken as:*

- promoting and, where necessary, implementing water conservation measures*
- undertaking forward planning to ensure anticipated future demand can be met, particularly taking into account predicted climate change impacts.*

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

*LTCCP/Annual Plan impacts are negligible as the change to the document does not change the content beyond setting out the Council's intent to conserve water with more clarity. The amendment to the sprinkler hours does not change the amount of time available to water one's garden but does move it to a cooler time where less watering should be necessary. There is potential for water savings with the defining of wastage. However it is too early to estimate any volumes that might be affected.*

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

*There are no specific issues to consider.*

### **4) Decision-Making**

*This is not a significant decision. The report sets out a number of options and reflects the experience, views and preferences of Council Officers with an interest in this matter that were consulted.*

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

*General consultation is not required for the proposed changes as the Charter can be amended by Council resolution publicly notified. Comments made by those parties that submitted during the consultation undertaken by Council when the Consolidated Bylaw 1991 Parts 2, 7 and 20 were reviewed reflected support for water conservation and it is felt*

*that the proposed amendments strengthen the Council's ability to support those views.*

**b) Consultation with Maori**

*The proposed amendments do not specifically require Mana Whenua input although a copy of the proposed amendments has been forwarded to Mana Whenua for comment given iwi interests in the management of Wellington's natural resources. (Refer above and comment 4 - decision making).*

**6) Legal Implications**

*Council's lawyers have been consulted during the development of this report. Although the existence of the Charter does not allow prosecution under its own power the inclusion of guidance defining wastage could strengthen the Council's ability to act under Sections 194, 224 and 242(2) of the Local Government Act 2002 which makes wastage an offence and allows prosecution.*

**7) Consistency with existing policy**

*The proposed amendments are consistent with existing Council policies.*