

**From:** Jenny Lapham  
**To:** ["chris.marshall@fairfaxmedia.co.nz"](mailto:chris.marshall@fairfaxmedia.co.nz)  
**Subject:** FW: LGOIMA request - Fairfax media  
**Date:** Thursday, 23 April 2020 03:23:00 p.m.

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Dear Chris

I refer to your e-mail of 3 March regarding a request for information you sent in on 30 January 2020. I apologise for the delay in replying to you re-mail. Unfortunately our e-mails did not get sent to the team who responds to Official Information requests. We are currently reviewing our process to understand why this did not occur.

Please find below the responses, in italics, to the questions you have asked.

**1. Does your council allow the collection and retention of rainwater from a house roof for domestic use?**

*Yes. In rural areas without connection to the DCC water supply network, households must secure their own water supply and storage tanks. Rainwater collection and tank storage in areas with connection to DCC water supply is also possible; rainwater retention can have a positive impact on stormwater management and can lessen demand on the DCC water supply. If a household has both a DCC water supply and a rainwater supply these may be used for different purposes.*

*However:*

- All water tanks must comply with the NZ Building Codes E1 and G12. Generally Clause E1 requires overflows to not create a nuisance to neighbouring properties. Clause G12 requires the rainwater water supply to be a safe and adequate supply and for cross contamination with other water sources to be prevented.*
- Any rainwater supply must be kept fully separate to any DCC water supply provided to the household. This is to avoid any potential for the rainwater supply to contaminate DCC water supply networks via backflow (see answers to Q4 for further information).*
- To support public health outcomes, DCC water supply, where available, should be used for drinking as it is treated to a high standard for this purpose.*

**2. Does the council set limits on what this water can be used for?**

*No, not formally. But as noted above, we want to avoid cross-contamination in accordance with the NZ Building Code G12 plus we recommend people drink treated water.*

**3. How actively is the collection of rainwater encouraged - including via tools like bylaws?**

*The DCC does not have a formal policy or bylaw encouraging collection of rainwater, but this is a matter currently being considered by staff. Staff are generally supportive of proposals for rainwater collection and storage proposed to assist with the management of stormwater or to provide water for non-potable purposes.*

**What concerns does the council have about a homeowner collecting and using**

4.

**rainwater - other than health concerns (contamination from animal or birds or their faeces)?**

*Cross connection (potential contamination) with the DCC water supply - this could occur if collected rainwater and water from the DCC network are stored in the same tank or pipes are connected to the same system. Contamination of the DCC water supply could occur if backflow issues arose resulting in the collected rainwater entering the DCC water network. This could impact on the integrity of the water supplied to other customers. Such contamination is generally prevented by ensuring that different systems are used and cross contamination cannot occur or through the use of boundary backflow prevention devices which prevent any water from a site entering the DCC network.*

*Compliance with the Building Code (Clause E1 - overflows not creating a nuisance, and clause G12 - backflow) is necessary by anyone proposing to install devices for collection and storage of rainwater. Depending on the location and design of these systems (e.g. storage tanks installed above ground) other clauses of the Building Act and District Plan may also be relevant and need to be complied with.*

**5. How much money does the council intend to spend on upgrading water supplies (reticulation infrastructure, treatment stations etc) for domestic household use in the next five years?**

*DCC, along with other councils are currently working on the next 10 year plan (2021-2031) as part of this process. Funding for upgrades (renewals) in reticulation etc will be proposed for approval by council. Generally speaking, most of the money DCC will be spending will be on renewal of existing aged and/or poorly performing assets. So the number over the next five years would be \$35.85M specifically for water supply according to latest publicly available figures (in the 2019/20 Annual Plan).*

I trust this answers your request.

Regards

Jennifer Lapham

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**Civic**

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