



“An abundance of clean water is essential to our well-being.”



FRESHWATER

Did you know?

- Water is essential to New Zealand’s social, cultural, and economic well-being and is the focal point for recreational activities and our outdoor-focused way of life.
- New Zealand has more total freshwater per person than most countries. However, it is not always in the right place at the right time.
- New Zealand’s freshwater is clean by international standards. But water quality is generally poorest in rivers, streams, and lakes in urban areas, followed by farmed areas.
- Levels of nutrients (eg, nitrogen and phosphorus) have increased in our rivers over the past two decades, reflecting the impact of pollution from urban stormwater, animal effluent, and fertiliser run-off.
- Bacteria levels appear to have improved at swimming spots in our rivers and lakes over the past few years.
- Demand for freshwater is increasing, particularly in drier parts of the country, mainly as a result of an increase in the area of irrigated land. Irrigation uses nearly 80 per cent of all water allocated in New Zealand.

What can you do?

- Minimise water use by putting plants in your garden that are suitable for local conditions and use mulch around them to retain moisture.
- Capture rainwater in a tank for use in the garden and for washing cars. A rainwater tank can reduce your demand for town supply by up to 20 per cent.
- Choose water efficient shower heads, taps and appliances to save water in your home. Use dishwashers and washing machines on full loads to save overall water use.
- Fix any water leaks around the home – a leaky tap that drips every second can waste up to 10,000 litres of water a year.
- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth and put a plug in the sink to save water while you shave or wash. Cut down on the time you spend in the shower. A shower timer can help with this.
- Boat owner? Before entering a new lake or river, remove all weeds, flush out jet units, and wash your boat down to avoid introducing new aquatic pests into the waterway. Visit www.biosecurity.govt.nz for more information on stopping the spread of pest species.



STOP THE SPREAD

Protect our waters from aquatic biohazards.
Remove all waterweed from boats and recreational equipment when leaving waterways.

