

the FIRST EDITION

DECEMBER 2010





Mayor Frana Cardno

SUCSESSES AND TRAGEDIES

It's nearly Christmas time and what a year 2010 has been, both good and bad.

We have had our local successes, particularly with our sportspeople, but we have also had our tragedies, both here in Southland and in our other South Island provinces – Canterbury and the West Coast.

Christmas is a time for celebrating family and friends but I know all of us in Southland will spare a prayer and a thought for the family of the Pike River miners.

On the Council front, it has been another busy year, particularly with the three-yearly elections in October.

Nearly all councillors were re-elected without any opposition, but Wallace ward voted for change and we welcome Stuart Baird to the council table. I do want to take this opportunity to thank the previous councillor, Brian Drummond, for all his hard work over the many years he has been on Council.

The joint Edendale-Wyndham sewerage and water schemes are near completion and the new Lumsden-Balfour water supply and treatment plant was opened by Deputy Prime Minister Bill English in October

We have continued to work very closely with Environment Southland on the review of two of the region's most significant planning tools – the Regional Policy Statement and the Southland District Plan. We are now at the Methods stage and at this stage, it is planned to release the draft District Plan for public consultation in November 2011.

The new amalgamated Emergency Management Southland was tested early, with flooding early in the year and then the snowstorms of October, and has come through with flying colours.



Mayor Cardno with Junior Olympics gold medallist Aaron Barclay

All councils took part in a national civil defence exercise in late October, which again showed the benefit of working together.

Southland District Council continues to work on the Around the Mountain cycle trail, which became one of the Prime Minister's seven quick-start trails, receiving \$4 million in Government funding. We are now working through consent processes and are hopeful of starting the physical work early in the New Year.

I was thrilled that the Southland ALIVE programme continued to receive Government funding as the programme has been running for 10 years and has had an 80% success rate in getting young people into further training and work.

On behalf of myself and Council I would like to wish all residents of the Southland District a happy and peaceful Christmas, to be enjoyed with family and friends in the southern sunshine. Safe holidays to everyone and a Happy New Year.

Mayor Frana Cardno

Merry Christmas

INAUGURAL MEETINGS A PLEASURE

One of the big tasks to be undertaken at the beginning of any three-year election period is the swearing in of our 12 Community Boards.

Our 12 Boards each have six members plus a Councillor, making a total number of 83 local community politicians.

The task of swearing in all of these local politicians is one of the responsibilities I really enjoy as it's a great opportunity to get feedback from the grassroots of our community.

The inaugural meetings are always a pleasure because there is often a mixture of old and new members on the Board and their questions, comments and queries cover a very wide gambit of topics all discussed with pride and enthusiasm. While we may not agree on all subjects, the discussion shows that local democracy is alive and well in the Southland District Council.

Community Boards are set up under the Local Government Act 2002. If you picked up a copy of this Act you would find every one of Council's 12 Community Boards listed in the Act and therefore are created by a statute of Parliament. The powers, however, of these Boards are delegations from Council.

Southland's Community Boards have the most wide reaching delegations of any of the new Community Boards in New Zealand. Council has a firm philosophy that local decisions should be made as close to the community as possible and therefore your Community Board can have a significant influence on the nature and character of your town and locality.

Strong local democracy also depends on ratepayer and resident participation. The Local Government Act strongly emphasises the need to be open and accessible to all ratepayers. One of the ways that this is done is by ensuring agendas for Community Board meetings are out five days ahead of the meeting. Any member of the public may pick up a copy of the agenda so that they can see quite clearly what is going to be discussed at their local Board's table.

This enables the public to contact the members so that members are fully aware of individual positions prior to making a final decision on any matter on the agenda. I would strongly encourage you all to at least once through this term pick up an agenda and come along to your local Community Board meeting to see what happens and how strong local democracy is in Southland.

Over the years Southland's Community Boards have been excellent stewards of their community's investments and assets and make certain that they are passed on to our children and our children's children in a condition at least as good as what the Community Board picked them up from our parents and grandparents.

This task is not easy as a lot of the communities' investment is hidden below the ground providing essential



David Adamson

services. It can also take a lot of money to make sure continuous services such as water and sewerage can be delivered reliably.

But it's not all about dreary work and thankless tasks, there is also a lot of opportunity to make an impact in your town; examples include Main Street upgrades, provision of playgrounds, parks and reserves and of course the outstanding beautification done in many corners of our District.

In closing, I would like to welcome all the Board members, both new and returning, back into the family that includes Councillors, Community Boards, Community Development Area Subcommittees and staff.

Working together we can create a Southland which is even better than the piece of paradise we live in already.

The sum of all the parts makes Southland a great place to live, work, raise a family and enjoy the marvellous character our District has on offer, day in day out, 365 days of the year.

Season's Greetings

Closure and re-opening of Council offices over the Christmas period will be advertised in local media.

During the holiday period staff will be available to respond to urgent service requests, as noted below.

You can also make requests for non-urgent services online at www.southlanddc.govt.nz

- Cemetery Burials
- Sewerage Faults
- Wandering Stock
- Water Supply Faults
- Infectious Diseases
- Rural Fires
- Noise Control
- Dog and Animal Control
- Roading and Birdging Faults

A 24 hour phone service will be available on 0800 732 732



Achievements highlighted in SDC ANNUAL REPORT

The 2009-2010 Southland District Council annual report reflects a productive year and a \$4.9 million surplus.

Chief executive Dave Adamson said the council had successfully undertaken an array of tasks.

"I'm very proud of what has been achieved for the residents of our district, as well as the progress made towards some exciting projects for our future," he said.

The report marks completion of the first year in the council's ambitious Ten Year Plan, which included 146 projects for the 2009/2010 year, along with 108 performance targets.

"Overall, nearly a third of all projects were completed by the end of the year with a large proportion still in progress and due for completion within the next financial year," Mr Adamson said.

"Over three quarters of performance targets were either met in full or by a majority – that's a great achievement in the inaugural year of our Ten Year Plan."

The council achieved a net surplus of \$4.9 million. However, revenue was \$5.4 million less than budgeted – the deferred sale of the old Te Anau airport and \$3 million reduced New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) funding among the contributing factors.

"Unfortunately, as a result of funding pressures, our district roading programme was constrained despite increasing demands on our network," Mr Adamson said.

"But, measured by the level of complaints, we are happy to report that satisfaction in our roading network seems to have not deteriorated over this period."

In line with the budget, just over \$56 million was used on operating expenditure. Council spent \$25.2 million on capital projects, including \$11.6 million on roading and transport services and \$11 million on stormwater, water and wastewater projects in local townships.

With a focus on improving water and sewerage schemes throughout the district, Edendale and Wyndham's joint sewerage and water schemes were nearing completion and substantial progress was made on the new treatment plant for the Lumsden-Balfour water supply scheme.

Council also made the decision, as part of the Annual Plan 2010/2011, to introduce a two-bin rubbish collection system for recycling ease, which followed several years of investigation.

A joint region-wide Civil Defence Emergency Management Service was also established with its Southland Coordinating Executive Group chaired by the SDC.

"The new structure was tested in April when wide-scale flooding occurred and proved successful in minimising the impact with effective warnings, response and a pro-active approach," Mr Adamson said.

Considerable progress was also made on rewriting the District Plan, in partnership with Environment Southland and its corresponding regional plan.



"They are two very significant documents which will have probably the largest impact on the future of our communities than any of the documents we write."

Council-driven legislation for a visitor levy for Stewart Island, which would assist with infrastructure, services and amenities, passed its first reading in parliament.

"A levy is seen as a fair and efficient way of ensuring the cost of visitors is not unfairly borne by island residents and ratepayers alone," Mr Adamson said.

Other projects the SDC was working alongside central government on included the Around the Mountain Cycle Trail. Stage one from Walter Peak to Mossburn, which received a \$4 million funding injection from the Ministry of Tourism, received strong support from the community and land-owners.

The full Southland District Council 2009-2010 Annual Report can be found online at www.southlanddc.govt.nz at any council offices or by phoning 0800 732 732 and requesting a copy.



VALUE OF WORKING DOGS

A trip to the Nokomai Station recently saw a positive result after 26 working dogs were registered and many were microchipped.

Southland District Council dog control officer Paul Bell went up to the station after being approached by the new manager wanting to get dogs on the station registered.

"I went up and explained the free microchipping service that Council offers and as a result, all of the shepherds had their dogs registered. We now have 26 dogs registered as a result and on the day I microchipped 14 dogs and I will be back again soon to do the remaining 12," Mr Bell said.

While working dogs aren't required to be microchipped, there are numerous benefits to the service.

"The number of black and tan huntaways or black and white heading dogs out there makes it hard to identify who belongs to who or what."

"These guys recognise the value of their dogs and a result they wanted to have them microchipped so it was a free service we done for them."

"In that scenario I think that it is great that they should come to us and want to work with us, rather than against us. We didn't go out waving the heavy stick, we just went out there and went through what the requirements of the Dog Control Act were and accepted their registration.

"If there are other stations out there that would like something similar, we are only too happy to work with them," Mr Bell said.

BE AWARE OF DOG BYLAW

People heading away with their dogs for holiday breaks to any destination within the Southland District Council region need to be aware of where they can and cannot take their dog.

The Southland District Council Bylaws prohibit dogs in certain areas within the District, such as the Main Streets in both Te Anau and Winton.

All dogs MUST be on a leash when being walked in the urban resource areas of the District, which means all townships Exceptions to this general rule are areas where dogs are prohibited, or where dogs can be exercised within these townships.

"Heading into the Christmas period we have a lot of people beaching, bathing and holidaying and you don't really want dogs wandering around fouling everywhere," Mr Bell said. "Some people also don't like dogs.

"For Example - People bathing or swimming along beaches in Riverton in particular and along the lakefront in Te Anau are required to have their dogs on a leash at all times.

"We want to make sure people are aware of these areas and all of this information can be found on our website www.southlanddc.govt.nz, in our Dog Control booklet or by phoning or calling into one our offices throughout the Southland District."

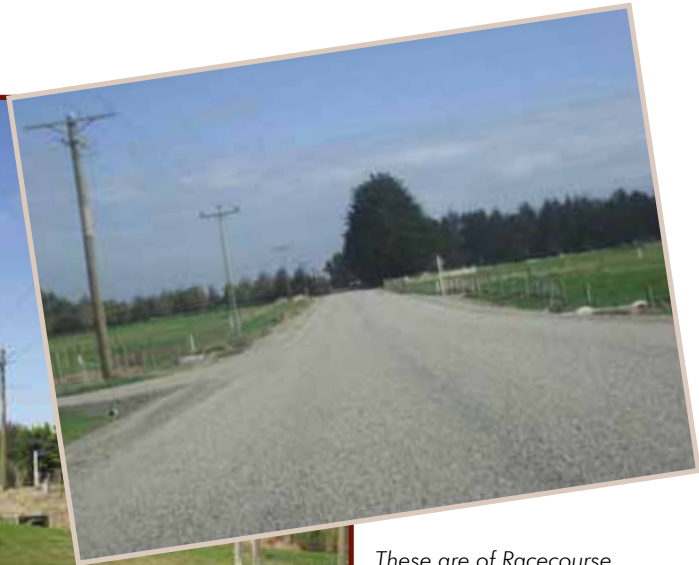
If you are unsure about where you can or cannot take you dogs after hours, please phone Council's Toll Free Service on 0800 732 732 and one of our friendly Rangers will be happy to answer any queries.

SDC FREE DOG MICROCHIPPING DATES

AREA	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
EDENDALE FIRE STATION	3 4.30 - 5pm		7 4.30 - 5pm
INVERCARGILL OFFICE	1 11am - 12 noon	1 4.30 - 5pm	5 11am - 12 noon
LUMSDEN RAILWAY STATION		10 5 - 5.30pm	
NIGHTCAPS -- FIRE STATION			14 4 - 4.30pm
OHAU -- FIRE STATION	17 4 - 4.30pm		
OTAUTAU OFFICE		5 11 - 11.30am	
RIVERSDALE - ANDREWS TRANSPORT	8 5 - 5.30pm		12 5 - 5.30pm
RIVERTON OFFICE	5 11 - 11.30am		2 11 - 11.30am
TE ANAU OFFICE (AT REAR)	8 5 - 5.30pm		12 5 - 5.30pm
TOKANUI FIRE STATION	1 3 - 3.30pm		5 3 - 3.30pm
TUATAPERE - OLD RAILWAY STATION		17 4 - 4.30pm	
WINTON OFFICE	3 11 - 12 noon	3 11 - 12 noon	7 11 - 12 noon

Economic

Lifelines



These are of Racecourse Rd, Winton. A rehab from last year that (hopefully) show the before, then sealed, then a year later all marked and settled.



ROADING REHABILITATION UNDERWAY

Roading rehabilitation is currently underway in some parts of the district.

Every season the Southland District Council undertakes several rehabilitation contracts and currently there are three sites in progress - two sites on the Otautau-Thornbury Road and one on the Thornbury-Waimatuku Road, Council roading engineer Rochelle Leach said.

“There are lots of benefits from the rehabilitation process including widening, a new layer of road metal, improved drainage and minor safety improvements,” Miss Leach said.

Rehabilitation was necessary once roads had reached the end of their life spans and were starting to show signs of failure. Continual maintenance ends up becoming too expensive and rehabilitation is sought instead.

“When the road gets rebuilt and improved, you can expect to see a road that can cope with the growing needs of the community.”

The first of the Otautau-Thornbury sites is expected to be finished by early December.



The Southland District Council Holiday Programme, organised by Venture Southland, caters for children throughout the province in January 2011.

The programme includes fun activities such as games and physical activities, arts and crafts.

The programme runs from 10am to 3pm at a cost of \$6 per child per day.

Parents are welcome to attend the programme and the age range catered for is 5-12 years. Under 5's are welcome but

need to have a caregiver with them.

Registration forms are available from all SDC offices or online at www.creative.southlandnz.com.

Places are limited, so bookings are advised.

TOWN	VENUE	DATE	BUS - Available from...
TOKANUI	Tokanui School	Monday 10 Jan	
RIVERTON	Aparima College	Monday 10 Jan	Tuatapere
RIVERTON	Aparima College	Tuesday 11 Jan	
RIVERSDALE	Riversdale School	Tuesday 11 Jan	Waikaia
WYNDHAM	Menzies College	Wednesday 12 Jan	<p>Registrations are essential so make sure you get your name in so you don't miss out!</p> <p>Registration forms are available at all Southland District Council offices.</p>
WYNDHAM	Menzies College	Thursday 13 Jan	
GARSTON	Garston School	Friday 14 Jan	
TE ANAU	Fiordland College	Monday 17 Jan	
TE ANAU	Fiordland College	Tuesday 18 Jan	
TE ANAU	Fiordland College	Wednesday 19 Jan	
LUMSDEN	Northern Southland College	Thursday 20 Jan	
STEWART ISLAND	Community Centre	Friday 21 Jan	
WINTON	Central Southland College	Monday 24 Jan	
WINTON	Central Southland College	Tuesday 25 Jan	
WINTON	Central Southland College	Wednesday 26 Jan	
OTAUTAU	Otautau School	Thursday 27 Jan	
OTAUTAU	Otautau School	Friday 28 Jan	Ohai Nightcaps

VANDALISM POSING A GREAT RISK TO SAFETY

Vandalism in parts of the Southland District has the potential to risk lives, says Southland District Council roading manager Michael Voss.

"Bridge weight restriction signs have been vandalised and defaced, particularly in the Wallace area," Mr Voss said.

These signs are very important so that drivers know exactly what weight a bridge can and cannot hold without compromising safety and the bridge's structural integrity.

Failure to know this information could have dire outcomes, he said.

"Any such act could have serious consequences including injury or even death and any person found responsible would be prosecuted accordingly," Mr Voss said.

THANK YOU

Roading would like to extend a BIG thank you to our contractors who assisted in another successful PowerNet Tour of Southland by keeping the roads clean, clear & safe for competitors.

This includes Fulton Hogan, SouthRoads, Central Western Roding, The Roding Company, SealCoat, Delta Services, and the many associated contractors.

What we do now can make

a WORLD

of Difference

TWO-BIN SERVICE TO START 1 MAY

Southland District Council has begun work on setting up its two-bin recycling and rubbish collection system which will start on 1 May 2011.

Council's water and waste asset manager Ian Evans said Council had agreed to move to the two-bin system in its Annual Plan 2010-2011 after several years of consultation and discussion.

Staff sent letters to ratepayers in October informing them of the changeover date. The service is compulsory for those living within town boundaries, and voluntary for ratepayers who don't have dwellings on their urban property and for rural ratepayers. The letters asked those who can choose to have the service whether they wanted to sign up for it and if they wanted additional bins over the minimum of one recycling bin and one rubbish bin.

Letters were sent to rural ratepayers who already use the existing service and those who live near a scheduled pick-up route.

However, Mr Evans said any ratepayer can have the bins if they are able to take them to one of those designated pick-up routes.

"I want to emphasise that the two-bin service is not additional to what ratepayers have now. It replaces the old one-bin service. Equally the estimated cost of \$236 plus GST a year is not additional to what ratepayers pay now – that cost replaces the old charge," Mr Evans said.

"Council is charged with reducing waste to landfill and the new service will do this as all the items put in the recycling bin will go to Southland Enterprises for sorting and recycling."

Council believes it is important to let ratepayers know about the change, but also needs to find out bin numbers for the contractor.

More information on the service, including delivery days and what can be recycled will be sent out in the New Year and the new recycling bin will also have a sticker about what can be recycled on it.

"We are getting calls and enquiries and many of the questions are the same."

A list of Frequently Asked Questions is on the Council website
www.southlanddc.govt.nz

...but if you do have questions, please feel free to call
0800 732 732
and talk to our customer service officers."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about the new rubbish and recycling collection

Southland District Council is changing the way it collects our recycling and rubbish.

From 1 May 2011 recycling will be collected in wheelie bins, with rubbish collected in a second bin.

Existing transfer stations and recycling centres will also remain open.

Why is the Council introducing a new collection service?

The existing collection contract expires in 2010 and cannot be renewed.

The Southland District Council is committed to helping protect the environment, and minimising the amount of waste disposed to landfill is one way we can make a real difference.

This will be achieved through the collection of recyclables using new recycling bins and by utilising the existing facilities provided at Transfer Stations and drop off facilities at the Recycling Centres.

How is the Council changing the recycling and rubbish collection service?

All ratepayers who must, or elect to receive the service will receive a 240 litre yellow lidded bin for collection of recyclables i.e plastic, paper, cardboard, glass, tins and cans and a second 240 litre red lidded bin for residual rubbish.

How often will the bins be emptied?

Recycling bins and rubbish bins will be collected fortnightly on alternate weeks.

For example in week 1 recycle bins will be emptied and in week 2 rubbish bins will be emptied. Remember to place your recyclables and rubbish out for collection by 7am on your allocated collection day.

Who is entitled to the new recycling and rubbish collection service?

All existing residentially rated properties in urban townships that pay the 'rubbish

and recycling' charge as part of their annual rates will receive the new service, along with any other ratepayer within the Southland District who elects to have the service and who can get their bins to a designated collection route on designated collection days.

How will I know when to put my recycling bin or rubbish bin out for collection?

An information pack will be delivered with the new bins. The Information pack contains everything you need to know about the new service.

How much is the new service going to cost me?

At present the estimated cost is \$236 however the more people who elect to take the service then the lower the cost to individual ratepayers.

This is the reason for offering the service to all ratepayers within Southland District. This sum is not added on to what you already pay, rather it replaces it

This pays for:

- New recycling and rubbish bins
- Recycling collection
- Recycling processing
- Rubbish collection and disposal
- Administration costs

Could I have more bins than the standard service?

Yes - the minimum service provided to ratepayers will be 1 rubbish bin and 1 recycle bin. For an extra cost ratepayers can choose to receive additional rubbish and/or recycle bins.

For example a person could elect to have the minimum service of 1 rubbish and 1 recycle bin but additionally take another recycle bin (additional costs will apply where additional bins are requested).

How would I know what goes in which bin?

Each bin would be clearly labelled detailing what can and cannot go into the bin. And an information package would be provided on bin delivery.

Could I put polystyrene in the recycle bin?

Yes.

What happens to the recycling?

Recycling would be delivered to the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) operated by Southland disAbility Enterprises Inc (formerly Southland Enterprises Inc).

At the MRF the material is further sorted, baled and delivered to various national and international manufacturers who process the material into new products.

Revenue from the sale of recycled material helps to reduce the cost of the new service.

If the rubbish only gets collected fortnightly, won't it get smelly?

There is a small risk that smells occur especially in warmer weather. However other authorities in New Zealand that have moved to fortnightly collections have not highlighted this as a significant issue, provided that the bin is in good condition and the lid remains closed.

In addition a number of other things can be done to reduce the risk, such as storing in a cool shaded place such as a garage or shed, place food scraps, nappies etc in bags and tie firmly prior to putting in the bin, use of deodourising spray when lid is opened.

Consider composting your organic wastes instead of putting them in the bin.

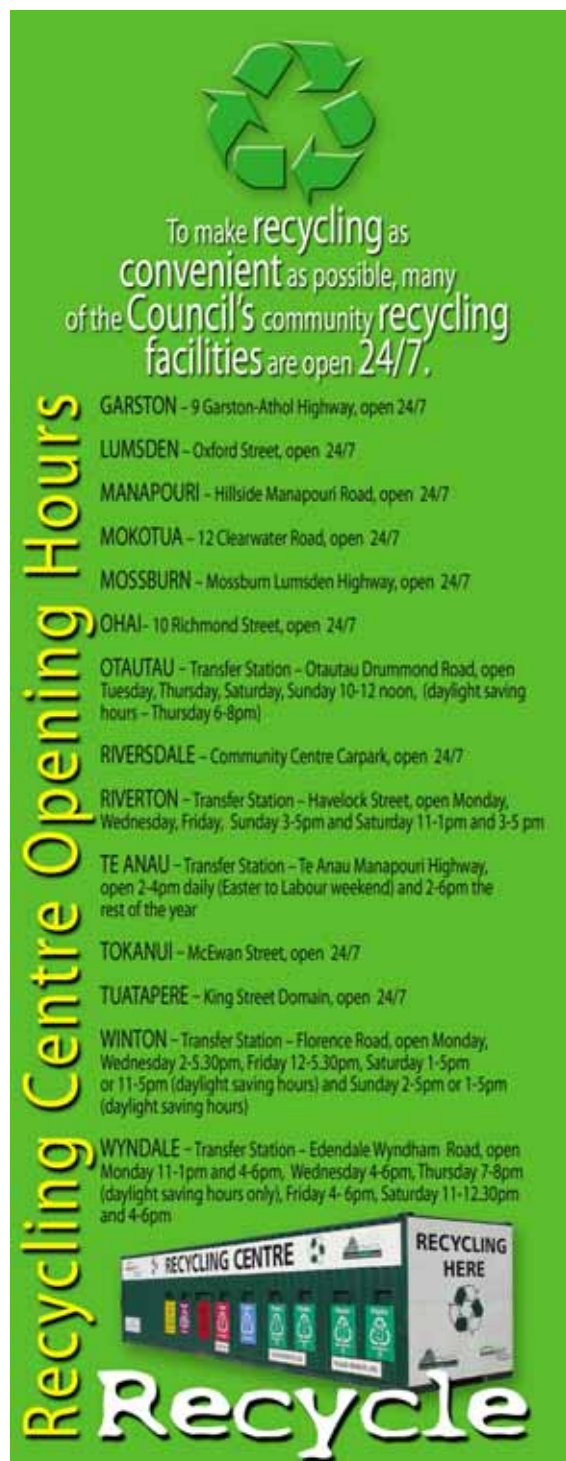
I only visit my holiday home periodically and won't get the value for the service.

The extent to which individual ratepayers use services provided by Council is an important consideration when looking to introduce new services such as recycling/rubbish, as is the overall benefit for providing consistent access to services across the district. Unfortunately practical and effective options do not exist to base the charge to individual customers on the extent to which they use the service.

Council is aware that holiday home owners sometimes rely on neighbours to put their bins out or bring them back in again. There is no reason why such arrangements could or would have to change.

If I choose not to take the new service can I still keep the old service?


No – the current contract will have expired and the new contract provides a minimum service of 1 rubbish bin and 1 recycling bin. If you choose not to take the new service you will have to make alternative arrangements for your waste disposal.



The poster features a green recycling symbol at the top. Below it, the text reads: "To make recycling as convenient as possible, many of the Council's community recycling facilities are open 24/7." The main title "Recycling Centre Opening Hours" is written vertically in large yellow letters on the left side. The list of facilities and their opening hours is as follows:

- GARSTON – 9 Garston-Athol Highway, open 24/7
- LUMSDEN – Oxford Street, open 24/7
- MANAPOURI – Hillside Manapouri Road, open 24/7
- MOKOTUA – 12 Clearwater Road, open 24/7
- MOSSBURN – Mossburn Lumsden Highway, open 24/7
- OHAI – 10 Richmond Street, open 24/7
- OTAUTAU – Transfer Station – Otautau Drummond Road, open Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 10-12 noon, (daylight saving hours – Thursday 6-8pm)
- RIVERSDALE – Community Centre Carpark, open 24/7
- RIVERTON – Transfer Station – Havelock Street, open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 3-5pm and Saturday 11-1pm and 3-5 pm
- TE ANAU – Transfer Station – Te Anau Manapouri Highway, open 2-4pm daily (Easter to Labour weekend) and 2-6pm the rest of the year
- TOKANUI – McEwan Street, open 24/7
- TUATAPERÉ – King Street Domain, open 24/7
- WINTON – Transfer Station – Florence Road, open Monday, Wednesday 2-5.30pm, Friday 12-5.30pm, Saturday 1-5pm or 11-5pm (daylight saving hours) and Sunday 2-5pm or 1-5pm (daylight saving hours)
- WYNDALE – Transfer Station – Edendale Wyndham Road, open Monday 11-1pm and 4-6pm, Wednesday 4-6pm, Thursday 7-8pm (daylight saving hours only), Friday 4-6pm, Saturday 11-12.30pm and 4-6pm

At the bottom of the poster is an image of a recycling bin with the text "RECYCLING CENTRE" and "RECYCLING HERE" on it, and the word "Recycle" in large white letters.



The paper used in every issue of *First Edition* is made up of 50% recycled fibre, which consists of...

- 35% pre-consumer and 15% post-consumer recycled fibre.
- 50% of the paper used is Elemental Chlorine Free (ECF) and derived from renewable resources.
- In addition the bleaching process for each page is chlorine and toxin free.
- And of course once you are finished with this issue why not recycle it.

PRIORITIES AND DIRECTION



Cr Diane Ridley

Council is in the process of reviewing its District Plan and has been working in conjunction with Environment Southland, which is working on its Regional Policy Statement, to ascertain priorities and direction.

This way we have been able to save a good deal of costs for our ratepayers to date, and develop some common ground on key environmental issues.

Southland District Council is also, in early December, embarking on a Strategic Planning exercise where we shall discuss all Councillors' visions/challenges/positives for their Ward and the District as a whole.

The District Plan is the document that directs, more than anything else, the way we want the environment of our district to develop and the guidelines for those that wish to undertake development.

Council has recently, after following the required process, passed some Plan Changes for the Te Anau

area, as a result of growth, and these will be incorporated into the new District Plan but are now operative.

We shall, in 2011, be developing the Rules and Methods for the District Plan and, when these are ready, be asking for your input through public consultation. While it is not easy to guess what is going to happen out there, it is so important that this exercise is robust and that people have their say. Many feel intimidated by the requirement to send in a submission and/or speak to it but the Committee that hears these submissions is very aware of this and endeavours to be as informal as the process allows.

Rest assured, you will be notified of the ongoing development of this important document.

FORTHCOMING CHALLENGES

A new term of Council has commenced with an experienced team around the table well able to address the many challenges that are forthcoming.



Cr Jim Copland

The Local Government election cycle this year was in many ways overshadowed, particularly in the South Island, by Mother Nature flexing her awesome powers.

The massive earthquake in Canterbury and the blizzard like conditions that hit Southland in September were salutary reminders of how vulnerable mankind is to the uncontrollable forces of nature

These events certainly dominated the wider public's interest and their real concern for the wellbeing of those communities directly affected.

As a result of the former, SDC is seriously reviewing its policies regards the building standards for potentially earthquake prone structures. The Christchurch experience has highlighted both the vulnerability of such buildings and the durability of buildings where remedial structural work had been done.

Snow storms in Southland in the spring are not welcome but also are not unexpected.

The weight of snow, the severity of the wind chill

factor and length of time the mid September 2010 storm lasted made it one most lethal many farmers had experienced in their lifetime.

Compared to say a major flood, the effect on Council's infrastructure was minimal but the effects on the farming community were devastating. Many of the highly productive Southland sheep flocks, that are now the norm, were in the peak of their "harvest".

The physical and mental strain of this cruel blow while not immediately apparent was very real.

In retrospect two significant events occurred. Firstly the truly supportive, caring and prompt response of the Southland Rural business community was clearly so appropriate and reassuring to those who had lost so many of their livestock. Secondly the market values for all sheep products have moved in the right direction and while it will not offset the opportunity lost it will help restore confidence in the industry.

While we judge an economy by its growth rate and job creation, societies are judged by how people care for one another in times of adversity. In these circumstances the Southland community came up trumps.

CARDNO RETURNED FOR SEVENTH MAYORAL TERM

Fraua Cardno was returned for her seventh term as Southland District Mayor with a resounding majority.

Mrs Cardno received 6,783 votes, with her challenger Rod Young receiving 1,643. Council will have a new councillor, however, with Stuart Baird receiving 522 votes in the Wallace ward. Incumbent Brian Drummond received 308 votes.

Six community board election results were also announced, with several new faces on the various boards.

The new Lumsden Community Board is Rob Scott (chair), Owen Patterson, Ted Menlove, Karen Blakemore (deputy chair), Colin Walter and Peter Richards.

The new Riverton-Aparima Community Board is Blair Stewart (chair), Jan Breayley, Bruce Shields, Tim Anderson (deputy chair), Andrew Wilson and Neil Linscott.

The new Stewart Island Community Board is Karen Bowman, Jon Spraggon (chair), Jarrod Baird, Aaron Conner, Brent Beaven and Barry Rhodes (deputy chair).

The new Te Anau Community Board is Alistair Jukes (chair), Rachel Cockburn, Ted Loose, Ann Carran (deputy chair), Rennie McRae and Tony O'Loughlin.

The new Tuatapere Community Board is Stephen Crack, Gray Robertson (chair), Dave Norman, Les Johnston (deputy chair), Craig Unahi and Justin Lewis.

The new Winton Community Board is Doreen McNaught, John McHugh (chair), Lynley Mangos (deputy chair), Bruce Hughes, John Earl and Brian Somerville.

Three other community boards did not need election as there were only six nominations.

The Balfour Community Board is Ruby Baird (chair), Darryl Black, Reg Dawson, Paul Eaton, John Turner (deputy chair) and Robert Wilson.

The Riversdale Community Board is Ken Adams, Colin Elder (deputy chair), Paul Langford, Alex McLennan (chair), Barry O'Connor and Daryl Will.

The Wallace Community Board is Andre Bekhuis, Edward Blackburn, Joanne Butterfield (deputy chair), Ken Davidson, Peter Herrick and Maureen Johnston (chair).

And three community boards - Wyndham, Edendale and Wallacetown – will have to have a byelection after receiving only five nominations.

The new Wyndham Community Board is Susan Dynes, Ian Eunson, Digger Eunson (deputy chair), Lindsay Rodgers and Pamela Yorke (chair).

The new Edendale Community Board is Graeme Beck (deputy chair), Lindsay Donald, Denis Fodie, Lynsey Gutsell (chair) and Neil Munro.

The new Wallacetown Community Board is Dwight Grieve, Shaun Holland, Frank Shearing (deputy chair), Craig Spriggs (chair) and George Watkinson.





SDC REVIEWING BUILDING POLICY

The Southland District Council is proposing to amend its earthquake-prone building policy to mitigate future risk following the devastation of the Christchurch earthquake.

Council has approved a proposed Earthquake-prone and Dangerous/Insanitary Building Policy options for public consultation and is calling for public submissions, which close on 28 January, 2011. The proposed policy can be viewed at www.southlanddc.govt.nz.

Building Control Manager Kevin O'Connor said the policy must be reviewed within five years of its original adoption and in place by March 2011.

"The damage to unreinforced masonry buildings in both the 2007 Gisborne earthquake and more recently in Christchurch was certainly a timely reminder for us all," he said.

"The council's existing earthquake-prone building policy takes a passive approach to structural upgrade in line with minimum requirements of the Building Act.

"Given there are approximately 200 buildings which have the potential to fall within the definition of an earthquake-prone building in the Southland District Council's area, we need to be promoting a more active approach."

Whilst the proposed amended policy may result in an economic impact to the owners of at-risk buildings in either strengthening or mitigating the hazard, statistics showed comparisons relating to seismicity could be drawn.

"Some areas in Southland, including Te Anau, Milford, Riverton and Winton, have comparable and even greater seismic risk than Canterbury or Gisborne," Mr O'Connor said.

"It reinforces the need to take a more active stance in regard to earthquake strengthening and the level of strengthening."

The introduction of timeframes for earthquake strengthening of identified buildings was the major change to the amended policy.

Buildings identified as potentially earthquake prone in the lower risk/least importance category will have 30 years to take

action to strengthen or remove the hazard by demolition, while those deemed the highest risk/most important will have 15 years. There is provision for extension of up to three years if substantial progress has been made by the owner.

The amended policy also recommends building consent applications for significant alterations to buildings identified as potentially earthquake prone must be accompanied by a structural assessment. Where a building's strength is determined as 33 percent or less of current requirements, strengthening to at least 67 percent of the code will be required as part of the alteration work.

Mr O'Connor said estimates showed that increasing the strengthening requirement from 33 to 67 percent increases costs by approximately 10-15 percent whilst significantly increasing the buildings earthquake stability.

"However, there is potential for indirect economic benefits to the wider community in that there would be significantly less disruption and potential damage to at-risk buildings in the event of an earthquake," he said.

"You just have to look at the damage suffered in the central business areas of Christchurch to realise how devastating it can be. A relatively small additional cost can raise the standard of public safety significantly in such buildings.

"We also need to consider the risk to life from these buildings."

Since the magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck in September, the Christchurch City Council has also reviewed its earthquake-prone building policy to increase the minimum strengthening requirement from 34 percent to 67 percent.

Council staff planned to undertake a review of the Southland District's building stocks from July 2011 to determine potentially earthquake-prone buildings before the proposed alteration and timeframe provisions are introduced in July 2012.



Checking for EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE to Chimneys

Christchurch's September earthquake has highlighted the need to check chimneys regularly for signs of damage or structural weakening especially in seismically active regions, Southland District Council building control manager Kevin O'Connor said.

After the 7.1 magnitude quake, falling masonry off chimneys created damage to both vehicles and structures and caused injury to people.

"A chimney collapse can cause costly structural damage to a building and more importantly potential injury or death to anybody that might be near at the time," Mr O'Connor said.

It is especially important to check chimneys after an earthquake. "These collapses can happen suddenly and without warning causing significant structural damage as the chimney makes its way through the roof and ceiling into the building below," he said.

Things to check for include:

- Cracking of the foundations that support the chimney.
- Visible tilting or leaning of the chimney.
- Vertical cracking or separation of an external chimney from the building.
- Cracking at or above the roof line of the chimney.

- Gaps should be measured and frequently monitored to determine whether they are increasing.
- Mortar between the masonry of the chimney that crumbles when poked with a screwdriver.
- Damage to the chimney caused by falling trees etc.
- Hearth cracks, side cracks indicating fire surround movement away from the inside wall, openings around the fireplace and chimney damage present the risk that sparks or smoke could enter the living space or building cavities presenting a fire hazard.

On noticing or suspecting structural damage to a chimney the following precautions should be taken:

- Any areas of the building that could be affected in the event of the chimney falling are to be unoccupied immediately
- Areas external to the building that could be affected in the event of the chimney falling are fenced off with posted warning signs

- Contact a licensed brick/blocklayer to assess the chimney structurally as well as its integrity in preventing hot gases escaping.

Licensed brick/blocklayers can be referenced by searching the Department of Building and Housing website on www.dbh.govt.nz or by phoning 0800 242 243

- Contact the Brick/Blocklayers Association Southland at www.southlandbricklayers.co.nz or by phoning 021 402 880
- The brick/blocklaying contractor may recommend a chartered professional engineer (CP-Eng) is engaged to assist in assessing structural integrity of the chimney
- The Earthquake Commission has an online claim form for reporting earthquake damage at www.eqc.govt.nz or phone 0800 326 243
- A building consent will be required for any new replacement chimney designed to current building code requirements. Contact the building control department at the Southland District Council to determine whether a building consent is necessary in the case of any significant repairs.

WORKING 2GETHER AVAILABLE

Southland District Council's building control, resource management and environmental health departments are combining to put out a newsletter about current issues in those areas called *Working2gether*.

The second edition of Working2gether will be out before Christmas and builders, sub-contractors, planners, surveyors and anyone interested are encouraged to sign up on line to receive the newsletter via email.

Those interested can go to Council's website www.southlanddc.govt.nz and sign up for the newsletter.



Our Southlanders... FRED DALLEY

Fred Dalley is a man epitomising the true blue character of what it is to be a Southlander – humble, hardworking and down to earth.

Possessing direct lineage to one of our pioneering forefathers Captain Howell, Fred is carving a legacy for himself too. Builder and resident of Otautau for the past 40 years, Fred has been responsible for laying many of the foundations that make a community.

“I’ve built a lot of places around the area,” says Fred, “I’m one of those jokers doing people’s work after hours. I know most people, especially the older ones.”

During Fred’s time in Otautau, he has noticed many changes in the area over the past few years.

“There are old houses, many of them have seen better days but people can’t afford to build new ones as many are still paying





their mortgages from way back. The sawmill has downsized too."

While work once stayed local, much of it is now from out of town which is hurting the pockets of the community, he says.

"People aren't as loyal anymore and work use to keep coming. For example the architect and insurance company would continue to put jobs our way, now there's none of that. It's all done somewhere else and people travel to the area instead."

While some elements of the town have changed, community strength is still apparent and the likes of Fred, now retired, are still found carrying out a full day's work. While once laying foundations of a building, he is now building things of a different kind - community spirit.

A member of the Otautau Lions Club for around 16 years, Fred and other club members religiously devote both time and money towards giving something back to the community.

With the aim of supporting youth and the elderly in the district, the Otautau Lions Club raises approximately \$25,000 each year. Last year the club was able to financially help out several youth with their achievements, from Spirit of Adventure and Borland Lodge leadership courses to assisting two promising touch rugby players. Ever mindful of their elderly, they

also replace the batteries in their smoke alarms yearly.

Christmas is a special time too with Longwood Resthome residents treated to a special day of carols and nibbles especially provided for by the club.

"We all put money in and then it's all put back into the community."

The effort and help given by the Otautau Lions Club is a continual and constant endeavour, impacting the lives of many on a regular basis.

Currently working on a memorial sign for the old Otautau cemetery, the sign will make it easier for people to find the location of their friends' or family member's graves.

The club felt it was important to restore respect and pride back to the site which represents so much of the area's past and while it hasn't been easy, progress is being made by the day and Fred has spent numerous hours collating much of the information.

"The Lions Club is good because you get out and do something. The more involvement you put into something, the more you get out of it. I'm always proud," Fred says.

The significance of such projects goes far beyond face value but reaches into the hearts and lives of many and makes a community. Acting as lifelines, many communities would be lost without the gratuitous acts of kindness made by people such as Fred and his fellow Lion Club members.

These are the people who we are immensely proud to call true blue Southlanders – humble, hardworking and down to earth.



Howells Point holds a special meaning to Fred because it pays tribute to his ancestor.



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Bill Howden

Mayor Frana Cardno presents a Southland District Council Community Service Award to Tuatapere resident Bill Howden, and his wife Shirley.

Mr Howden has been a lifelong resident of the Papatotara and Tuatapere area, farming in the area.

He is very technically minded and into photography, movie camera, videos, etc, taking portraits of locals, weddings and other events. He has also been very civic minded; having spent time on school committees, Lions Club, bowls, rugby, & golf committees, and is heavily involved in the Tuatapere Cemetery Trust.

WINNING VOLUNTEERS

Southland District groups featured majorly in the winners of the TrustPower Invercargill Southland Community Awards.

The award is about volunteer effort and about projects/organisational work, rather than for an individual.

Rakiura Heritage Trust won the heritage and environment category, with Tuatapere and District Promotion Inc second, and Winton Rotary getting a commendation.

Riverton Coastguard won the health and wellbeing section, with Tuatapere St John Ambulance getting second.

The Waimatuku Pipe Band won the arts and culture section, while the Edendale Vintage Machinery Club was second in the sport and leisure section. Kepler Challenge Mountain Run Trust received a commendation in the sport and leisure section.

Southland Boys' High School student Cameron Black, from Western Southland, won the youth award.

The key judging criteria are volunteer input, utilisation of resources, initiative and creativity, effectiveness of activities and impact on district.

Well done to all the winners.



Dipton Memorial Board UNVEILED

A memorial sign was opened at the Dipton Cemetery recently to honour the past and preserve it for the future.

Unveiled by the Hon. Bill English, MP for Clutha-Southland, and Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno, the sign now allows people to easily find the location of their friends' or family member's graves and the chance to also read about the cemetery's history.

"So often we see cemeteries neglected but when we look at this, we can feel proud that the stories are there of past generations and are there for our future generations," Mrs Cardno said.

The unveiling had particular significance for Mr English, having grown up in the Dipton area and having many of his family buried at the cemetery.

"It's great to see the District Council doing this sort of thing. This is a fantastic idea because in a small community like this, there's really only the council that has the resources to do it," Mr English said.

"When your parents get older they start wandering around cemeteries and I can recall wandering around with my parents. When you're a kid, it feels like hours because they go around and look at this one (grave) and that one. Now they can just go straight to the board and have a look and they'll know who's here and where they are meant to be. "That will be a good thing," Mr English said.



CONDOLENCES FROM SOUTHLAND

Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno holds the condolence book and card, which when filled out by Southland residents, will be sent to each of the families of the 29 men killed in the Pike River Mine disaster.

The condolence books are in every office in the District - Stewart Island, in Riverton, Otautau, Te Anau, Lumsden, Wyndham and Winton and at the main office in Invercargill on Forth Street.

The books will be in the offices until just before Christmas before being collated, and sent away, along with a personalised card, to each of the men's families.

Mrs Cardno has sent a personal message to Grey District Mayor Tony Kokshoorn offering whatever service Southland District Council can do.

"Both staff and Council are saddened by this tragedy and are thinking of those families, the mine staff and indeed the people of the West Coast at this time," chief executive David Adamson said.

"Our thoughts, our best wishes and our prayers go out to them all."



A SPECIAL DAY FOR MORES RESERVE

A special place was marked at Mores Reserve in Riverton recently when a sign paying tribute to the Aparima Pestbusters was unveiled.

Replacing weeds with seeds and restoring the native bush, the Aparima Pestbusters have been turning the once pest-ridden area into a flourishing safe haven for New Zealand's flora and fauna.

"This reserve is so special because it represents what Southland use to look like," Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno said.

"Just driving up here today, the thing that hit me was the wonderful smell of the bush. You can hear the birds too which is great," Mrs Cardno said.

"We have to say thank you to our original Pestbusters, Warrick McCallum, Jim Dixon and Allan Broomfield, of which sadly two have passed on, for their passion and their enthusiasm and the amount of work they have done to make this all happen."

Invercargill MP Eric Roy said that it was community involvement like that of the Aparima Pestbusters that made projects successful.

"It starts here with a dedication to something special and unique and then it becomes an example for the rest of the community who can take advantage in it," Mr Roy said. "I congratulate them for their vision," he said.

Original Aparima Pestbuster Jim Dixon went on to thank the people who had helped them along their way.

"I wouldn't have been able to have done it on my own and it's not only me, but so many others who have helped," Mr Dixon said.



BALFOUR SCHOOL'S HISTORIC TIMELINE

Marking 125 years of schooling history, Balfour Primary School recently unveiled a 14 metre long timeline signifying the school's interesting and colourful past.



With the school holding their jubilee celebrations at the beginning of next year, Balfour School children thought a timeline would be a good way of honouring the occasion.

Made up of facts and illustrations displaying the school's beginning in 1886 until the present day, the project was a collaborative effort between Balfour Primary School and the Southland District Council.

Balfour School Principal Stuart Riordan said the project represents "what learning is all about."

"It's a real life learning experience for them and will only enhance what they'll learn from the jubilee next year," Mr Riordan said.

Southland District Council graphic designers Donna Hawkins and Gloria Eno who worked on the project said they learnt a lot too.

"I was really inspired by the community and the pride they



have," Miss Eno said. "They have such enthusiasm."

Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno praised the efforts of everyone involved and said it showed the strength of the community.

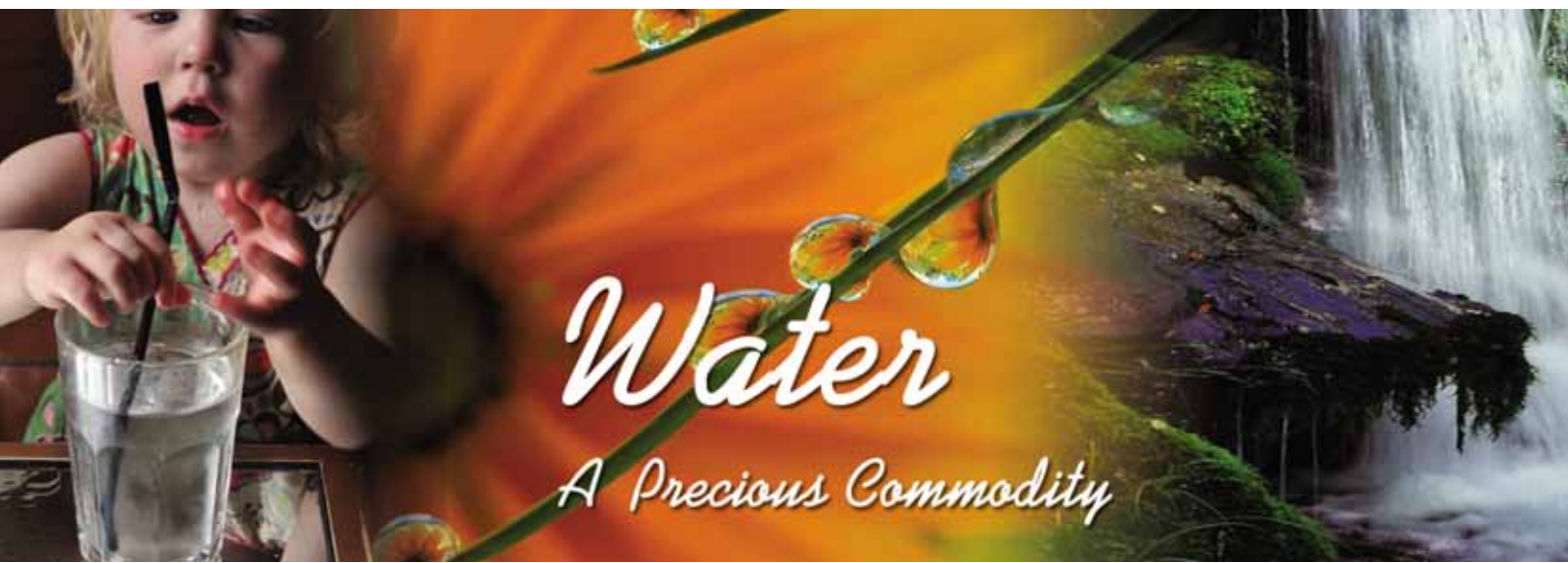
"This is fabulous work," said Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno.

"It's important to tell these stories... and they are great stories to tell," said Mrs Cardno.

The timeline was officially opened by McKenzie and Tim, the youngest and oldest pupils who worked on the timeline.

A special mention goes to Balfour Primary School teacher Hannah Robertson and Southland District Councillor Brian Dillon who went the extra mile and made the project possible.





HOW TO CONSERVE WATER

Water is too precious to waste and it is important we ensure water is conserved as much as possible.

It's easy to take our fresh water for granted, but in the coming summer months we need to be more aware of our use of it.

Your efforts to save water are important and essential and water-saving doesn't require drastic measures, huge expense or big shifts in the way you do things.

Let's start at the beginning with small incremental steps.

INDOOR WATER-SAVING TIPS

In the kitchen

- Fix leaking taps
- Put water in the sink to wash fruits and veggies or for rinsing dishes
- Defrost frozen food in the refrigerator (or leave out on the counter) if it needs to be done quickly, use a microwave. Avoid running it under hot water
- Do full loads in the dishwasher – this saves water and power.

In the bathroom

- Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth or shaving
- Install a low-flow showerhead, this can save the average household 1,000 litres of water per week
- Use dual-flush on the toilet or simply place a brick or filled water bottle in the toilet cistern

In the laundry

- Do full loads in the washing machine
- Front-load washing machines use 50% less water than top loaders

OUTDOOR WATER-SAVING TIPS

In the garden

- Collect water in drums or tanks from roof run off
- Design your garden with water savings in mind, using native plants that are well suited to local climate
- Minimise evaporation by watering during the early morning or after dusk
- Around trees, on flower and vegetable garden beds, add a surface layer of mulch up to 100mm deep to reduce evaporation
- Check the forecast. If there's rain ahead, let it do the watering for you
- Check your garden hose and taps regularly for leaks and use a trigger nozzle on the hose to reduce water loss

For lawns

- Do not worry about the lawn drying out over the summer. Grass goes dormant during the periods of drought but rejuvenates naturally with cooler and wetter weather
- Do not water your lawn on windy days

Outdoors

- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway or sidewalk
- Wash the car and house windows

from a bucket or use a trigger nozzle on the hose

- Check and repair all leaks

STOCK WATER SUPPLIES- WATER EFFICIENCIES

Knowing water demands of your stock

- 3% of the total allocated fresh water is used for stock drinking in NZ (7,380,000,000 litres per year); this number does not include unconsented water usage
- Water consumption by stock can increase significantly in summer
- Sheep can drink 80% more water in extreme, hot conditions
- Environment Southland has set a recommended goal of maximum daily water consumption for cows, which is 50 l/head/day
- There are 9 rural water schemes just for stock water supply in Southland District and 3 schemes that are joint use

WATER EFFICIENCY TIPS

- Ensure holding tanks, drinking troughs on concrete yards and other water systems do not overflow;
- Ensure your tanks are at the right size;
- Ensure you have bought enough water units for your stock;
- Repair leaks;
- Do not leave hoses running unnecessarily

It's easy to take our fresh water for granted



NEW LUMSDEN/BALFOUR WATER PLANT OPENED

The Lumsden Balfour water plant was opened by Hon. Bill English, MP for Clutha-Southland and Deputy Prime Minister, recently and is now supplying local residents with clean and potable water.

The project, costing \$2.53 million including \$1.1 million from Ministry of Health funding, will service about 900 properties in the Lumsden and Balfour townships and surrounding areas, including providing stockwater for about 90 farms.

Issues with the old well and increased irrigation demands contributed to the Lumsden Balfour Rural Water Supply making the decision to move to the Lintley Road site and project manager Bevan McKenzie thanked the Robb family for their support and allowing the Council to use the land for the treatment plant.

Mayor Frana Cardno said the opening of the plant was significant to the Southland District. "We're told that water is the gold of this world. It's just so important that we have good potable water for our communities," she said.

Mr English was also pleased to see the plant opened and said that while it was not a very glamorous issue, he believed it to be one of the "most important economic issues that the country has to deal with."

"There's not near as much of it as we use to think and what goes with this scheme is the metering on it from the Regional Council."

Mr English said the Government intends on working out how New Zealand can maximise the value of its water over the next three to four years and has no doubt that part of that will mean "setting up similar schemes to the Balfour Lumsden water plant and people realising that there is a cost to it and figuring out if it's got a use that's going to make it worthwhile."

Being born at the Lumsden maternity home along with many of his family and children, Mr English is pleased with the improvement in water quality.

"Fortunately with this scheme in place, we now know that every young child born in that home and their mother is going to have water as high as standard as anywhere in the world and that is well worth the investment," he said.

ROAD SAFETY

LOOK TWICE FOR MOTORCYCLES

Even though the Burt Munro Challenge is over for another year, it is still important motorists remember to share the road.

"When motorbike crashes happen, the motorbike rider comes off second best and crashes can result in serious injury if not death," ACC injury prevention consultant Nic Miller said.

Motorcycles can be difficult to see as they are smaller than other vehicles and can blend into background traffic. Research shows that if drivers look into incoming traffic before entering or turning at an intersection, they may not see a motorcycle coming towards them. This can cause a serious crash.

In 2009 there was 40 motorcycle crashes reported in the Southland region. Two of these were fatal and 19 resulted in serious long-term injuries.

A New Zealand study found the single most common cause (41%) of all collisions was another vehicle pulling out in front of the motorbike rider. A further 32% of collision crashes occurred at intersections. Drivers can reduce the chance of entering or turning at an intersection without seeing an oncoming

motorcyclist. "When drivers see a motorcycle in oncoming traffic, consider the motorcycle when making decisions. It can be difficult to tell how fast a motorcycle is travelling and motorcycles are able to accelerate more quickly than cars.

"Take more time when looking at oncoming traffic. Looking a second time instead of just briefly looking means you are more likely to see an approaching motorcycle. Drivers who are more aware of motorcycles are less likely to have a collision with one. Drivers who expect to see them are less likely to collide with them," Ms Miller said.

ACC and Road Safety Southland will be promoting these messages to both motorists and motorcyclists during the Burt Munro Challenge and throughout the year.

Road safety co-ordinator Jane Ballantyne says motorcycles can be difficult to see. "Make sure as a motorist you look, look and look again. Let's make Burt Munro an event to remember and get people there and back in one piece."

For more information on motorcycle safety check out www.rideforever.co.nz



Emergency Management Southland is the new name in Civil Defence in Southland.

May 2010 saw this organisation start in earnest. Civil Defence up until this time was the responsibility of each council.

Now the new group is governed by the councils in one office based at Environment Southland.

There are four of us in the office. Neil Cruickshank is the Manager and there are two advisors, Sandra Miller and Craig Sinclair. A third advisor starting in the New Year is Gary Tong.

Throughout the Southland region there are people in each community that generously give their time to support Civil Defence. They are the local faces and contacts that we utilise to give us a local perspective on the communities you all live in.

Since the start of Emergency Management Southland there have been a number of things that have kept us on the go.

Primarily was the move of all resources into the new building at Environment Southland. This is a large building ringed by

offices with a large open area in the middle from which a civil defence emergency can be managed. The construction and fitting of this building was a big task and it was up and running for its first real event in September when the Canterbury Earthquake struck.

We assisted Canterbury by getting teams from Southland to go to Christchurch to assist in a variety of roles including emergency management staff, Building Inspectors, and Welfare teams.

The middle of September was the Southland snow storm where emergency services gathered at our office and dealt with the arising situation caused by the weather.

In October we took part in a national Civil Defence exercise that saw a Tsunami coming our way from South America. Staff from all four councils took part in the exercise and it was the first real test of the building and its capabilities. The exercise was a great success and a lot of planning was done around the possibility of a Tsunami and what we could do to alleviate the damage to life and limb.

Apart from dealing with these 'incidents' we have also been doing a lot of planning around how the new structure works and fits in with the various communities. This will be an ongoing process and will be fine tuned as we manage to get around the province.

If anybody is keen to volunteer in any aspect of Civil Defence you can contact us on 0800 768 845



SOUTHERN RURAL FIRE

Restricted Fire Season Declared

A restricted fire season for the whole of the Southern Rural Fire District was declared in November because of the increasing risk of fire.

Southern Rural Fire Authority principal rural fire officer Mike Grant said vegetation moisture levels had reduced to trigger points that meant significant fires were more likely to happen and would be harder to extinguish. Restrictions are normal this time every year, largely for public safety.

“Even though there has been some rain, this has been more coastal with the Te Anau basin and Garston areas missing out. In all other areas evaporation is removing moisture faster than it has been arriving.”

A restricted fire season means a permit has to be gained to light an open fire.

Permits do not need to be gained for camp fires, barbecues, incinerators, offal holes and hedge trimmings, but these do have specific conditions, including never lighting them when it is windy and not being within 30m of a building, trees, hedges or material that could catch fire.

Those who light fires in the open are responsible for making sure the fires are safe and do not spread, Mr Grant said. They are also liable for any damage caused by the fire.

“Even if you light a fire with a permit, or in an incinerator or a barbecue, it’s still your responsibility if it escapes and damages property or has to be put out by the fire service or rural fire crew,” he said.

“Also be aware and considerate of smoke drift across roads and into neighbouring properties.

“If the fire has to be extinguished by the fire service or rural fire crew, you will be charged to fire fighting costs.”

Fires should never be lit when conditions are windy, or strong winds are forecast.

The Southern Rural Fire Authority staff issue permits, but it can take up to five days to check the applications, particularly if a site inspection is required, so Mr Grant urges people to think ahead if they plan to burn off.

“With Christmas coming up, it is even more vital to plan ahead as no permits will be issued over the holiday period.”



NEW TANKER for Riversdale

Riversdale has a new rural fire water tanker.

Southern Rural Fire Authority Principal Rural Fire Officer Mike Grant said the rebuilt tanker was delivered to the Riversdale volunteers in October.

“This is the third rebuilt water tanker to be commissioned as part of the authority’s equipment replacement programme,” Mr Grant said.

“Authority equipment is placed strategically around the district to provide cover for fire risk and this is part of that strategy,” he said.

The southern authority undertook a review four years ago to look at what was needed in different locations and what it had.

The authority has 28 localities in the district, which runs from Beaumont across to Naseby and south, where it has firefighting equipment and/or tankers and trucks.

This is the first rebuilt tanker into the Northern Southland area, although Lumsden did receive another tanker last year.

Eventually all areas will receive a rebuilt tanker of the same design but it will take another 10 years to complete that process.

The tankers are based on a design used in South Canterbury and all construction of tank and lockers is being carried out in Invercargill.

The Riversdale brigade will use this tanker for vegetation and property fires, and it will be on call for other areas.

“EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS”



Johnny Mauchline, of EIS, with the ECANZ Award for an automotive upgrade at Blue Sky Meats, and Hayden Roulston celebrating his win in the PowerNet Cycle Tour of Southland - an event that creates its own community of helpers and promotes Southland to the world.

WHIPPING UP A COMMUNITY STORM

Our sheep farmers are the best in the world; Fonterra Edendale is the largest and most efficient milk powder factory in the world – we have a great culture of exceeding our limits – what happens when we hit those limits?

The cruel storm of September cut deep into our farming landscape. As a townie I felt useless. Best I could do to show my support for farmers battling the cold and losses was to go shirtless to the Auckland shield challenge, then later supporting the Federated Farmers community meetings.

Here I noticed an interesting conflict.

The Southland spirit thrives on the fact we are independent, resilient and strong. It also celebrates our sense of community, our ability to rise above ourselves and reach out to others. These two – our independence and our community spirit were in an awkward dance through the storm and its aftermath. At what point do you stop saying, “Others need the help more than me,” and reach out for it yourself?

It’s harder to ask for help than to give help. It’s harder to admit our limits than to celebrate exceeding them.

One farmer who couldn’t face another soul destroying day picking up dead lambs and ewes, said to his son: “I’ll give you \$50 to



Raising Spirits at Federated Farmers Post Storm Meeting in Otautau.

come help your old man in the paddocks today.” He didn’t want extra labour; he needed his son’s company.

What about those who didn’t find someone like that? They are probably still out there feeling the pinch. Look around your neighbours and mates. Think who might need to talk that hasn’t; invite yourself round for a mug of milo.

We all look for meaning in the face of a senseless tragedy like the big storm. And what I hear is that it has brought the community closer together. And that could be overdue. Farming is a lonely and obsessive occupation, it follows you

in the backdoor and you can’t get it out of your head. The best way is to talk it out, to socialise, to celebrate together, like the good old days when there were functions in the community hall and everyone mixed and talked and laughed and danced (well some danced!)

Are the pressures of modern farming coming at the expense of community?

Who’s on for a spring fling function – I’m keen to be MC or guest speaker. Ring me at Venture Southland, it’s part of the job I love doing – raising spirits, celebrating our great community.

GROUPS' CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

Recently released findings from the Community Organisation Needs Assessment (CONA) research project, confirm what most of us already know and are experiencing – our community groups are facing many challenges with the top three issues related to funding, volunteers and membership and community demographics.

Recently released findings from the Community Organisation Needs Assessment (CONA) research project, confirm what most of us already know and are experiencing – our community groups are facing many challenges with the top three issues related to funding, volunteers and membership and community demographics.

Venture Southland Community Development Planner Bobbi Brown said funding issues raised in the report did not refer to a lack of funding opportunities out there. "Southland is very fortunate with the community funding support that it has".

Rather, groups expressed issues with having a reliance on grants, lack of sustainable long term funding and difficulties and challenges around the time consuming reporting that is required with some grants.

The report also showed that many groups indicated that their volunteers are overstretched and under pressure for a number of reasons and it's the same people in a community who often do everything.

Changing community demographics is a major challenge facing organisations throughout Southland. The impact of migrant workers was mentioned, however, the real issue seems to be the wider influence of changing industries including the increasing number of dairy farms. These factors have led to an increasing number of seasonal workers and transient people within communities which have traditionally been very stable.

The research project, commissioned by Venture Southland and supported by the Community Trust of Southland, was undertaken by Dunedin-based Impact Consulting and covered all of Southland as well as West Otago and Queenstown.

The aim was to identify and determine the extent of various issues, pressures and/or opportunities impacting on community organisations at a regional and local level.

Stakeholder meetings and focus groups in the Southland and Gore Districts, Invercargill, Bluff and Queenstown communities, identified key issues which were then discussed with 268 community organisations by telephone.

"The response rate was fantastic and we are very thankful to all those people and groups who participated in the project. The challenge is to now develop a plan of attack to address these issues" Mrs Brown said.

The first step in this process has been a collaborative interagency approach for the delivery of community outcomes in Southland.

"Stakeholder organisations including Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council and Venture Southland have developed a shared vision which aims to work together and align resources to identify opportunities and develop innovative approaches in supporting communities in Southland."

Riverton plan identifies EXCITING PROJECTS for the area

The Riverton Community Concept Plan 2009-2015 is now complete.

In this plan the community has identified exciting visions and projects for the Riverton Ward area, including the townships of Riverton, Orepuke, Thornbury and Colac Bay.

Key projects include developing walkways and cycle ways, festivals and events, looking at 'Gondwana' themed opportunities for the area, and celebrating and protecting the local environment and heritage. Beautification and development of key areas in the Ward are also highlighted, along with a host of other ideas.

Concept plans are useful guides for the local community boards and Community Development

Area Subcommittees (CDAs), local community groups, and planning organisations.

Public funders are often looking for community support when approached for funding, and projects identified by the community in concept plans are often therefore held in high regard, and more likely to be supported and funded.

Venture Southland Community Development Planner, Anna Star, said implementation of these projects is the next stage.

"It is up to the community to initiate this, getting behind the development and creation of their wonderful area. The Riverton Ward is incredibly rich in resources, both the physical landscape and services

provided there, as well as the highly valuable diverse skills and knowledge held by their residents," she said.

While implementation is not the responsibility of any one organisation or agency, Riverton residents have formed a Community Concept Plan Committee to assist facilitation with some projects.

To contact the group, email Sally Bullen: sallyb99@yahoo.co.nz

Copies of the Riverton Community Concept Plan can be collected from the Southland District Office in Riverton, Venture Southland in Invercargill, or downloaded from the Venture Southland website.



Environmental Health



BEING COOL ABOUT FOOD SAFETY

As summer heats up, the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) is encouraging people to be cool about food safety.

This is in the wake of a new study that shows three out of four Kiwi fridges are not running at the recommended cool temperature range of 2-4°C to keep food safe.

NZFSA microbiology principal advisor Roger Cook says keeping your fridge suitably cool is important because not only does it maintain the expected quality of the food but it helps prevent harmful foodborne bacteria from growing as most of them cannot grow at low refrigeration levels.

The study – commissioned by NZFSA for this year's FoodSmart Week (November 22-28) – was carried out in 158 households. Participants recorded the temperature in the middle and near the door hinge of their fridge every morning and evening for a week.

At the start of the week only a quarter of fridges were in the recommended range of 2-4°C, while 72% were too warm (36% at 4-6°C and 36% were over 6°C). Participants were prompted to adjust the fridge control if the temperature was not in the recommended range. Of those surveyed who made an adjustment, 77% were successful in moving the temperature to the 2-4°C range.

Not surprisingly, older fridges were over-represented in the plus 6°C category. A third of the fridges in this category were more than 20 years old. Also, fridges with seals that were in poor condition were twice as likely to be over 6°C as fridges that had good seals.

Roger recommends checking the temperature by putting a thermometer into a glass of water kept in the fridge. This is because a built-in thermometer will measure the air temperature, which is likely to change whenever the door is opened and when new food is put into the fridge.

"For best results the container needs to be sitting on the middle shelf of the unit for more than two hours, which will enable you to get an accurate reading," he says.

"If the temperature in the middle is consistently above the recommended temperature range, you should adjust the thermostat to lower the temperature. Check other possible causes such as faulty door seals, ventilation or the location of your fridge. If that fails you may need to contact your local repair service."

He adds that it's also important to know that even though bacteria and fungi don't like the cold, some will still grow slowly and many will survive on fridge surfaces and contaminate food where they can then grow. "So it's a good idea to have a general stocktake and clean your fridge every few weeks."

Anything in your fridge with an expired 'use by' date should be thrown out as it could be unsafe to eat and leftovers should only be kept for a few days before being thrown away or reheated until piping hot before being eaten.

CHECK WATER QUALITY BEFORE DIVING IN

Southlanders are being encouraged to be water savvy this summer so they can decide where it's safest to swim or gather shellfish.

The Southland District Council is working with Environment Southland and Public Health South to assist the public avoid potential health risks from contaminated water at beaches and rivers where Southlanders traditionally spend their summers. From December to March, Environment Southland monitors bathing water quality at 13 sites around the coast and 11 sites on river and lakes.

When the results indicate a potential health risk, the District Council will issue a public warning. However everyone needs to learn to recognise warning signs so they can decide for themselves what kinds of water activities are safe in any particular area.

While the lower reaches of most of Southland's major rivers can be unsuitable for swimming at times, they may still be fine for boating or angling. And equally, beaches or estuaries that are ideal for boating may not be safe for collecting shellfish. Even rivers which people generally consider to be pristine should always be treated with some care.

Warning signals include intensive farming in the surrounding catchment area, industries immediately upstream, recent intensive rainfall and the colour of the water. If the water is murky - if you can't see your toes - there is a higher risk that the water is polluted. On the coast, it's preferable to avoid beaches near stream outflows, stormwater outfalls, areas where there is a large concentration of buildings with septic tanks or with possible runoff from intensive farming. It's also best to avoid gathering shellfish for at least five days after periods of heavy rainfall.

Environment Southland's website www.es.govt.nz reports the most recent results from monitored freshwater and coastal recreation sites, and indicates how suitable they are for swimming.

Mobile Library Timetable

January 2010 – June 2011



* denotes a public holiday									
Athol	Shop	1:00 - 3:00	Mon		7 Feb	7 Mar	4 Apr	9 May	29 May
Balfour	Tavern	9:30 - noon	Tues	25 Jan	22 Feb	22 Mar	19 Apr	24 May	
		6.00 - 8.00	Tues		8 Feb	8 Mar	5 Apr	10 May	7 June
Blackmount	School	11:00 - 12:00	Mon	24 Jan	21 Feb	21 Mar	18 Apr	23 May	
Colac Bay	Foreshore	12:30 - 2:00	Thurs		10 Feb	10 Mar	7 Apr	12 May	9 June
Dacre	School	11:30 - 12:30	Fri		11 Feb	11 Mar	8 Apr	13 May	10 June
Drummond	Tavern	3:30 - 5:00	Thurs		3 Feb	3 Mar	31 Mar	5 May	2 June
Edendale	Car Park	2:00 - 4:30	Fri	28 Jan	25 Feb	25 Mar	29 Apr	27 May	
		2:00 - 4:30	Fri		11 Feb	11 Mar	8 Apr	13 May	10 June
Feldwick	Hall	9:30 -10:30	Mon	24 Jan	21 Feb	27 Mar	18 Apr	23 May	
Five Rivers	Hall	3:30 - 5:00	Mon		7 Feb	7 Mar	4 Apr	9 May	29 May
Fortrose	Picnic Area	2:30 - 4:00	Thurs	20 Jan	17 Feb	17 Mar	14 Apr	19 May	
Garston	Main Street	10:30 -11:30	Mon		7 Feb	7 Mar	4 Apr	9 May	29 May
Glenham	School	11:30 - 1:00	Thurs	20 Jan	17 Feb	17 Mar	14 Apr	19 May	
Gorge Rd	Hall	9:00 -11:30	Tues	18 Jan	15 Feb	15 Mar	12 Apr	17 May	
Hauoko Valley	School	1:30 - 4:00	Mon	24 Jan	21 Feb	21 Mar	18 Apr	23 May	
Hedgehope	Hall	10:00 -11:30	Fri		4 Feb	4 Mar	1 Apr	6 May	3 June
Longbush	Kindergarten	9:00 - 10:00	Fri	28 Jan	25 Feb	25 Mar	29 Apr	27 May	
Mokoreta	School/Hall	9:30 - 10:30	Thurs	20 Jan	17 Feb	17 Mar	14 Apr	19 May	
Mossburn	RSA	2:00 - 4:30	Tues	25 Jan	8 Feb	8 Mar	5 Apr	10 May	7 June
		2:00 - 4:30	Tues		22 Feb	22 Mar	19 Apr	24 May	
Orepuki	Main St	2.30 - 4.00	Thurs		10 Feb	10 Mar	7 Apr	12 May	9 June
Otara	Hall	2:00 - 4:00	Wed	19 Jan	16 Feb	16 Mar	13 Apr	18 May	
Pukerau	School	9:30 - 11:30	Wed	26 Jan	23 Feb	23 Mar	20 Apr	25 May	
Rimu	School	9:00 - 11:00	Fri		11 Feb	11 Mar	8 Apr	13 May	10 June
Riversdale	Hall	11:00 - 1:30	Wed		9 Feb	9 Mar	6 Apr	11 May	8 June
		2:00 - 5:00	Thurs	27 Jan	24 Feb	24 Mar	21 Apr	26 May	
Roslyn Bush	Playcentre	1:00 - 2:00	Fri		4 Feb	4 Mar	1 Apr	6 May	3 June
Ryal Bush	Monument	2:30 - 4:00	Fri		4 Feb	4 Mar	1 Apr	6 May	3 June
Te Tipua	School	11:00 - 12:30	Fri	28 Jan	25 Feb	25 Mar	29 Apr	27 May	
Thornbury	Shop	9:30 - 11:00	Thurs		10 Feb	10 Mar	7 Apr	12 May	9 June
Tokanui	Main St	10:00 - noon	Wed		12 Feb	2 Mar	30 Mar	4 May	1 June
		1:30 - 4:00	Fri	21 Jan	18 Feb	18 Mar	15 Apr	20 May	
Waianiwa	Hall	1:30 - 3:00	Thurs		3 Feb	3 Mar	31 Mar	15 May	2 June
Waikaia	Hall	3:00 - 5:00	Wed		9 Feb	9 Mar	6 Apr	11 May	8 June
		11:00 - 12:30	Thurs	27 Jan	24 Feb	24 Mar	21 Apr	26 May	
Waikaka	Main St	2:00 - 4:00	Wed	26 Jan	23 Feb	23 Mar	20 Apr	25 May	
Waikawa	Hall	10:00 - noon	Fri	21 Jan	18 Feb	18 Mar	15 Apr	20 May	
Waimahaka	School	10:00 - noon	Wed	19 Jan	16 Feb	16 Mar	13 Apr	18 May	
Wallacetown	Com Centre	9:00 - noon	Thurs		3 Feb	3 Mar	31 Mar	5 May	2 June
Wendon	Hall	9:00 - 10:30	Wed		9 Feb	9 Mar	6 Apr	11 May	8 June
Wendonside	Hall	9:30 - 10:30	Thurs	27 Jan	24 Feb	24 Mar	21 Apr	26 May	
Willowbank	School	12:30 - 1:30	Wed	26 Jan	23 Feb	23 Mar	20 Apr	25 May	
Woodlands	Shop	2:00 - 4:00	Tues	18 Jan	15 Feb	15 Mar	12 Apr	17 May	
		2:00 - 4:00	Wed		2 Feb	2 Mar	30 Mar	4 May	1 June

Any queries, requests or renewals: please telephone the Winton Library 0800 732 542.
 Note: the following areas have fortnightly visits: Balfour, Riversdale, Waikaia, Mossburn, Edendale, Tokanui, Woodlands.
 Renewals can be made by email to: wintonlibrary@southlanddc.govt.nz



0800 732 732

Remember you can call Council FREE if you need to report a problem or speak to a Council officer.

The free 0800 numbers mean any customer can ring or fax Council for no charge, no matter where they live in Southland.

You can ring 0800 732 732 (0800 SDC SDC) and still be connected to your area office first.

The system is smart enough to identify where the person is calling from and put it through to the nearest area office.

It's only if that office line is busy, that the call goes to one of the other offices and in that case the telephonist can transfer the caller to any staff member or indeed office, with no cost to the caller.

This phone line is answered by a "real" person each time and the telephonists can tell the caller if the staff member they want to talk to is available, in a meeting or away on leave and when that person is next available.

It also means people should not be lost in the netherworld of phone systems and so abandoned calls are less.

All faxes sent to 0800 732 329 come to the Invercargill office and are emailed out to staff.

The library number - 0800 732 542 - is automated and allows customers to renew their books on the phone or contact any one of the District's library staff by push button options.

Rural Fire also has 0800 numbers and if staff are not available the calls come back into the Council 0800 number loop to be answered.

Previously Council paid for individual business lines into the offices and now the 0800 service incurs only one cost.

The 0800 number is also answered after hours by Everlert, which has set procedures for urgent

requests and has some information on Council activities as well.

The 0800 732 732 number is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. So anyone can ring up with a complaint or an issue and speak to someone about it.

Please ring 0800 732 732 with your complaints so we can work on fixing them and we encourage local committee members to get ratepayers to ring Council direct rather than ringing them all the time.

The sooner we know about a problem, the sooner action can be taken.



**CONTACT
DETAILS**



All Offices & Inquiries....0800 732 732

Fax 0800 732 329

District Libraries0800 732 542

Rural Fire Permits 0800 773 363

Email sdcsouthlanddc.govt.nz

Website www.southlanddc.govt.nz

15 Forth Street, PO Box 903, Invercargill 9840