



HDC NEWS



Notice to Dairy Farm Owners and Managers



You should have received your Smart Water Use resource kit in the post last week. If we somehow missed you, contact Dean Burwell at the Council office (07 862 8609) or e-mail dean@hauraki-dc.govt.nz and we will get a copy out to you right away. You can also leave your contact details with Dean if you wish to know the times and dates of our Smart Water Use information sessions.

If you have reviewed your Smart Water Use kit and you have questions about the contents, you are welcome to call Neil Gray on 07 867 5362, Ian Kitchingman (07 867 3303) or Ian Troughton (07 867 5114).

Smart Water Use is a cooperative effort of Hauraki District Council and Thames Coromandel District Council - working together to help conserve water.



Global Warming or What?!

The meeting held recently in Otorohanga of Local Government New Zealand Zone 2 representatives was attended by Hauraki's Mayor, John Tregidga and Deputy Mayor, Mary Carmine.

A keynote speaker at the meeting was Dr Willem de Lange from the Earth Science Department of Waikato University and a prominent expert on weather. Dr de Lange gave a most interesting address on the climate of New Zealand which he said was affected by three main weather patterns the best known of which is the Southern Oscillation or El Nino/La Nina pattern. As New Zealand is surrounded by sea, the temperature of the country is most affected by the temperature of the surrounding water. At the moment we are in an El Nino cycle which means that water from Antarctic has stretched up around our shores so there is a cooling effect - hence the early and cold winter and the icebergs passing Southland. So at present New Zealand is getting colder and so is the Antarctic. As part of this pattern he also predicts droughts for Northland and Auckland this summer.

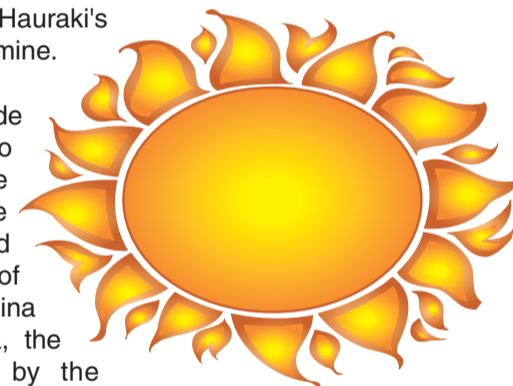
World wide, however, he is at variance from much of the world's scientific opinion because he says the predictions of climate change are based on faulty information put into a computer model which understandably comes out with a faulty result. Firstly, historic data is taken from a very few weather stations and current data is taken from weather stations that are not placed at strategic positions around the world but almost all in cities and almost all at airports surrounded by tarmac.

These give skewed readings. Secondly, assumptions made in the computer model are flawed, such as the assumption that the activity of the sun will remain constant. Graphs were shown indicating that much of the variability in weather in the past has been related to sunspot activity which goes in cycles.

In short, Dr de Lange believes that human activity contributes only a minute amount to the changes in climate that the earth experiences and points out that the total greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have been decreasing for quite some years, particularly methane. And in fact the troposphere (where we are) is cooling whereas the stratosphere (the bit above where we are) is warming. This, he says, is due to the ozone hole, which is related to human activity.

While he agrees that any moves to reduce carbon emissions and to conserve energy have to be beneficial in terms of global ecology, he does not believe they will have any perceptible effect on the climate.

So it was interesting to get the other side of the story. Council is likely to continue to take a conservative approach - try to reduce emissions where possible and plan for possible future sea level rise but not to spend too much money on the problem until there is more proof available.



Elected Members' Diary

Meetings for the 13th November to the 19th November 2006

Monday 13th November:

District Plan Committee

Tuesday 14th November:

Ward Committees

Thursday 16th November: Full Council Meeting



Rates Rebate

The Government Rate Rebate Scheme has had a good take up level in the Hauraki District particularly before the first instalment of rates became due.

A couple of points should be noted in relation to the scheme:

- While the cut off income level for the maximum rebate is \$20,000 per annum, if you earn above this you may still get a rebate. It is worth checking. Our friendly staff at Council offices and Service Centres will help you, provided you take in your proof of income and total rates including Regional Council rates.
- Even if you have already paid one instalment you can still get the rebate. You can apply at any time during the year. Now's good. Staff are not so busy receiving rates payments.

Bylaw Reviews

The Local Government Act says we have to review all bylaws that were made prior to July 2003 before July 2008. This is probably a good thing as there are a number of fairly archaic bylaws on our books. There is also the problem that at amalgamation the Hauraki District took on the bylaws of Paeroa, Waihi, the Ohinemuri County and the Hauraki Plains County, giving different rules for different parts of the District.

Council has employed a well qualified person to look at our bylaws and to review them. It is recommended that many of them be revoked. Some of these are obsolete such as the law prohibiting the use of bullocks as draft animals on public roads and the one that regulates the width of wheels and the weight specifications of vehicles with metal tires drawn on public roads by animals. Others have been overtaken by other legislation such as those relating to nuisance activities - noxious weeds, littering, lighting of fires and the like.

It will take about eighteen months for the review to be completed but at the end we hope to have a set of bylaws that are relevant and not too draconian in their content.

It is noted that even Central Governments can have little known, obsolete laws in place and one wonders how many there are still on the New Zealand statute list. It was reported some years ago that in Britain there was still a law which said that it was illegal for people to be "out and about after decent folk are in bed." That one could be very useful - always supposing you could define who was "decent" and when they were likely to be in bed!

Annual Report

Council's Annual Report is the document that compares what we planned to do with what really happened. Council's Annual Report for 2005/06 has been approved and audited with a clear audit report. If you want to read the Annual Report you can get one at Council Offices or review it on the website: www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz It is a much smaller document than our LTCCP so do not be scared to have a read.

Quick Notes

You can read the Waikato Times at all of our public libraires



Regional Economic Development Strategy

A draft economic development strategy has been prepared for the Hauraki and Thames Coromandel region.

This document will provide the blueprint for driving regional economic development once it has been adopted.

The draft strategy aligns with Central Governments newly released Economic Transformation Agenda, Council Long Term Community Plans and the developing Labour Market Forum.

You are invited to request a copy of the summary document (27 pgs) by either phone, email or post and to provide comment on areas of interest to you.

All comments must be received by 15 Dec 2006
All requests and comments should be addressed to
Hauraki Coromandel Development Group
P O Box 17
Paeroa

Email chale@hauraki-dc.govt.nz Phone: 07 862 5025

All comment must be in writing with the writers name and address clearly stated.

