

Friday 1 September 2023

OIA IRO-473

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@raindancers.cloud

Kia ora [REDACTED]

Official information request regarding Leak Detections in Pauatahanui Village.

Thank you for your official information request dated Tuesday 1 August 2023.

We have considered your request in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and determined that we are able to grant your request in full.

Our responses are in the Appendix of this letter.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi,

[REDACTED]

Acting Group Manager, Customer Operations Group

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Appendix

Question One: On what basis was the 'First Notice to Fix' WO-340761 issued? The notice states that a leak was identified. After inspection we found no leak.

Answer...

In response to high levels of water loss we engaged a leak detection contractor to survey the Pauatahanui District Meter Area (DMA) as part of our leak detection program.

Our first letter, addressed to you on 21 July 2023, notified you that we had found a leak on your property following investigations – which are conducted by listening in on potable water (drinking water) assets.

Question Two: How many other Notices to Fix, were issued relating to Properties in Pauatahanui in the last 3 months?

Answer...

Four.

Question Three: Do the person(s) carrying out the 'inspections' have knowledge of the way water is provided to properties in the Pauatharuhi village area? That is to say, were they aware of the flow restrictor devices that are installed? Are they trained and experienced to recognize the sound of water flowing through the restrictor, and or a stop cock/float in a tank?

Answer...

We have confidence in our leak detection contractors and in-house team's experience in carrying out all aspects leak detection activities.

Wellington Water is aware of the restricted water supply in this area however it is possible that contractors may not have picked up on this in their survey. This said, there is little difference of sound between a flow restrictor and a stop cock/float in a tank (water flows through the valve and friction makes the noise).

Moving forward, we will work to inform our contractors when there are flow restrictors in the area they' Are surveying.

Question Four (a): What is the total amount of time that has been spent by Wellington Water Staff on doing inspections and issuing notices in the Pauatahanui Village?

Answer...

We cannot determine the time spent and therefore decline on the grounds of [Section 17\(e\)](#) of the Act. The time spent on undertaking leak detection surveys varies depending on the topography, location, ease of listening to a leak, and whether rechecking is needed to determine location.

Question Four (b): What is the total cost of the work done in part (4a)

Answer...

In the 2022/23 Financial Year we spent \$120,000 on leak detection surveys across the wider Porirua City area. Due to commercial sensitivity, we cannot provide you with our spend in the Pauathanui Village area specifically and therefore decline this part of your request in accordance with [Section 7\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#) of the Act.

Question Five: Does Wellington Water have any actual evidence of leaks in the Village, or were the notices issued, on just a suspicion of a water leak?

Answer...

We monitor water usage in all DMA's to determine if there is elevation in water loss. Based on this monitoring this triggers DMA's to be surveyed to identify public and private leaks and confirm if these are contributing to water loss.

Question Six: Will Wellington Water reimburse any property owners who have engaged a plumber to search for a leak that does not exist? If so, what is the process for that.

Answer...

This is managed on a case-by-case basis and determined based on its merits.