

45

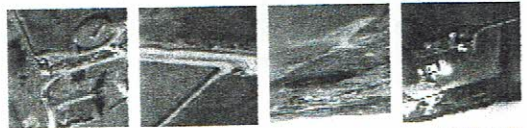


Home > Press Releases

Sewage ponds overflow at Lake Horowhenua

Russel Norman MP

21 Aug 2008



Sewage ponds have overflowed at the Lake Horowhenua treatment plant with only new unlined earth banks keeping them from spilling into the lake.

Says Green Co-Leader Russel Norman, "This is turning out to be one of New Zealand's worst sewage disasters in years, yet Horowhenua Mayor Brendan Duffy is still in denial. He needs to accept there is a major problem and take leadership on it or resign."

Aerial photographs (four attached) taken late yesterday show groundwater from earthworks at the plant is pouring into the lake and creating a plume of dirtier lake water. "Because the bunds and make-shift emergency ponds the council is making are unlined, there is absolutely no doubt sewage is seeping into the lake as well," Dr Norman says.

The two lined ponds at the plant have overflowed into two unlined depressions of the big sewage lake which has overflowed up into operating sections of the plant. The council has built a large makeshift earth bank to the north side of the plant to try to contain the overflow but this has been insufficient - meaning another paddock is being banded.

"Unfortunately this comes just two years after the council spent \$10.4 million on a huge council building. It comes a month after a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment report on a council landfill which pollutes groundwater near Hoki Stream," Dr Norman says.

"Horowhenua District Council has a history of resource consent breaches including a court appearance in recent weeks for emptying Shannon's sewage ponds into the Mangaore Stream. It needs to admit it has lost control at the lake and to seek urgent help from outside."

Subscribe to email updates

For more news on this topic subscribe to email updates

Sign up to NBR | Member Login

46

Russel Norman gets offside with local council

Allan Swann | Tuesday August 26, 2008

The Horowhenua District Council has hit back at Green Party allegations that the Levin wastewater treatment plant is leaking into Lake Horowhenua, claiming that Green co-leader Russel Norman is "simply political point scoring."

"It is extremely disappointing that the Greens have chosen to offer wide-ranging criticism, much of it based on speculation rather than fact, HDC chief executive David Ward said.

Mr Ward believes heavy rainfall has pushed the average rainfall levels in July and August past record levels.

"While currently the rainfall has ceased, unfortunately the effect will continue to affect groundwater levels for some time," he said.

Mr Norman had argued that mayor Brendan Duffy should resign over what he claims is "one of New Zealand's worst sewage disasters in years."

Mr Ward rejected the claims and said: "It is important that we acknowledge that the buffer storage ponds hold treated effluent. We are mindful that the impact of groundwater levels will continue to be with us for some time, Mr Ward said.

"The situation that the council is currently facing is outside its control – we are dealing with highest ever recorded groundwater levels – a result of an act of nature, not an act of Council."

Post to Print

Share or email

NBR Services

Email alerts

NBR mobile

RSS feeds

Online help

SUBSCRIBE:

Online subscription

Print edition