

Register your food business

The Council is reminding businesses that sell food to register their business now or risk being fined.

Everything business owners need to register as a food-related business is available on the Council website. The Ministry for Primary Industries has a useful "My Food Rules" tool on its website at mpi.govt.nz.

Alternatively, business owners can call to make an appointment to meet with one of the Council's Environmental Health team.

Environmental Health Officer Dirk Fabrie says the Council is here to assist new business owners, or those who are unsure what to do, to register their business.

"We walk business owners through the process – we love helping people," Mr Fabrie says.

Registration is a requirement under the 2014 Food Act and applies to all businesses that make, sell, grow, transport, or trade in food. It also applies to businesses, like school canteens or clubs that serve food. Registration may also be required for local market sellers or individuals selling food over Facebook if they're not fundraising for a cause or charity.

The fine is more than the cost of registering or re-registering. So check out the information on Council's website, email environmentalhealth@whakatane.govt.nz or call Council on 07 3060500.



Parks Week next week

Whakatāne District residents and visitors are in for a treat with the multitude of events planned during the upcoming Parks Week 2020.

Promoted by the New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA) and Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA), Parks Week is the culmination of hundreds of organisations throughout both countries hosting events to celebrate the vital role parks play in creating liveable cities and thriving communities.

This year, Parks Week takes place in the week beginning Saturday, 7 March and focuses on how spending time in our parks and open spaces has a significant influence on our wellbeing.

Council thanks all those who have volunteered to support this programme of events, including Envirohub, Eastbay REAP, Eastern Eagles Basketball Club and Dance of Life Yoga.

Parks Week highlights include The Great Eastern Bay Playgrounds & Parks Tours, Teddy Bears Picnics and the Tauwhare Pā guided walk. For the full schedule of local events, see whakatane.com or for nationwide events check out nzrecreation.org.nz.

Enjoying parks and reserves all year round



Whakatāne District Council contractors and staff have been busy making the most of the settled weather to plan for and upgrade many of the District's best places to exercise, relax and play. Mike Naude, General Manager Community Services, says he is pleased to see a number of these projects completed and is grateful for the external funding received.

Some of the improvements include:

- Upgrades to the Maraetōtara Reserve, Mahy Reserve, Ocean Playground and The Glebe playgrounds in Whakatāne and Ōhope
- Riverslea Park in Edgecumbe was also upgraded, with more to come soon - while Tūi Playground got its own makeover, including a new 'Cube and Climb' structure
- Some of the District's public toilets and camping spots have received well-earned TLC thanks to the Council securing \$169,000 from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Tourism Infrastructure Fund
- Stage two of the Ngā Tapuwae o Toi Walkway upgrade project was completed. This year's programme included upgrading approximately 700m of track section from Kapu Te Rangī to Ōtarawairere Bay
- Two picnic tables were installed at the Matatā Beach carpark following the extension and upgrade of the carpark fencing in August 2019.



MARAETŌTARA PLAYGROUND



TŪI PLAYGROUND

WHAKAARI/WHITE ISLAND RECOVERY PROJECT



Message from the Recovery Manager



He aha te mea nui o te ao.
He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata

What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.

Last week, in conjunction with the Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce and Whakatāne District Council, and with the support of Te Runanga o Ngāti Awa, the Recovery Office hosted an event to update members of the business and tourism sectors.

Whakatāne District Council Chief Executive Stephanie O'Sullivan aptly summed up the work of our 16 Recovery partner agencies and organisations, acknowledging 'the plethora of activity that's going on in the background of this Recovery'. She assured the audience that the 'ears and hearts of all the agencies at a local and central government level are attuned to the Whakatāne community'.

Whakatāne District Council's Julie Gardyne and Manager of Tourism and Events Nicola Burgess outlined the work that's been underway since soon after the 9 December eruption to first put in place the Emergency Business Support Package ahead of Christmas. They continue a strong relationship with



Over 75 members of the business community and tourism sector attended the Recovery update.

the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment as they work towards additional funding to support an enhanced tourism marketing campaign highlighting the range of visitor experiences on offer throughout the district.

Ms Gardyne told the audience that Council is working on a longer-term economic recovery plan. 'We fully recognise the integration of the visitor economy and its impact across the district economy'.

Craig Morris
Bay of Plenty Civil Defence Emergency Management Group
Whakaari Recovery Manager

Kei te hiahia korero koe mo taua mea? Need to talk?



After a traumatic event, for people directly involved, who have family and friends impacted, who work in services that are part of the response to the event, and for the wider community, it is normal to feel distressed, and to experience symptoms of stress.

It could be that you felt you were managing, but as time passes and things return to 'business as usual', some people may find delayed symptoms of stress start to surface.

If so, please make use of the many organisations that are here to help:

- Free call or Txt 24/7 counsellor service: 1737
- Ngāti Awa Social and Health Services: 07 306 0096
- Victim Support: 0800 542 846
- Community Mental Health: 0800 774 545
- Pou Whakaaro: 07 308 9430
- Salvation Army Chaplaincy Services: 07 308 6923
- Healthline: 0800 611 116

Research Proposal called for

New Zealand Food Safety is calling for proposals from suitably qualified researchers to conduct a monitoring programme to inform a better understanding of the food safety implications of consuming seafood gathered near Whakaari/White Island. Monitoring of volcanic systems globally shows they can be a source for toxic elements naturally entering the environment.

The full details of the request for proposal is available on the Government Electronic Tenders website GETS www.gets.govt.nz Proposals must be received by 2pm, Friday 20 March.

The advisory is still in place for people to limit their consumption of fish caught within one kilometre of the island to once a week.

Other kaimoana within the buffer around Whakaari should not be eaten however, due to higher levels of environmental contaminants entering the sea following the eruption and ongoing volcanic activity. This includes:

- crayfish, mussels, oysters, tuatua, pipi, toheroa, cockles, scallops, cat's eyes, kina (sea urchin), and all other shellfish.

Cooking shellfish or crayfish will not remove contaminants.

Other than shellfish and crayfish in the buffer zone, it's not expected that there are any increased food safety risks from kaimoana in the wider Bay of Plenty as result of volcanic activity. Shellfish off the mainland coastline is safe to eat, except where there are local shellfish biotoxin alerts.

New Zealand Food Safety will continue to assess the situation and will update the food safety advice as needed.

Whakaari Eruption Recovery Plan

The Whakaari Eruption Recovery Plan will be released later this month and will be available on the Emergency Management Bay of Plenty and Whakatane District Council websites.

The plan's purpose is to provide clear direction for the post-eruption recovery process. It highlights the work that has been undertaken and will continue within each environment sector.

It aims to provide community understanding and confidence in the recovery process and to ensure we move forward in the best way possible.



Business support information

Applications to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) funded Business Support Grants Programme closed on 2 March.

A grants panel, comprising representatives from the Whakatāne District Council, Ministry of Social Development, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa will continue to meet through the month to assess applications.

The Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce took an active role in contacting potentially impacted businesses to make them aware of the recovery support available.

Work and Income

Contact Work and Income if you:

- would like assistance
- aren't sure if you can get assistance
- are struggling to support yourself, or your family
- would like more information.

Visit the Work and Income website <http://www.workandincome.govt.nz> or phone 0800 559 009. Work and Income may be able to help you over the phone, without you coming into an office. If you do need to come in, Work and Income will make an appointment and tell you what to bring.

GNS GNS Science and the National Geohazards Monitoring Centre continue to closely monitor Whakaari/White Island and provide expert advice to the Recovery project.

GNS updates are available to everyone via the GeoNet app or www.gns.cri.nz

Climate change initiatives good for business

Whakatāne District Council is getting positive results from an Energy Management Programme being undertaken across six of its facilities.

A particular highlight is the Whakatāne Aquatic Centre reducing carbon emissions by 114,000 tonnes in the last 12 months - the equivalent of approximately four households' emissions and saving ratepayers \$35,000.

"A relatively simple change to how we use the gas boilers has produced outstanding results, and I'm really proud of our staff who are proactively seeking ways to reduce carbon emissions in the District," says Strategy and Policy Committee Chair Nándor Táncoz.

The Energy Management Programme is part of the Council's response to climate change, which also saw the adoption last year of seven Climate Change Principles following community engagement. The seven principles are designed to guide the Council's future decision-making processes, and provide a framework to work through the opportunities and challenges climate change presents for the Whakatāne District.

This year, the Council will develop a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan with a clear programme of action and targets to meet, incorporating feedback from the community and ensuring there is a

strategic approach to addressing any issues across the organisation.

Another initiative through the programme is the purchase of three fully-electric fleet vehicles, including the mayoral vehicle.

"Council's petrol and diesel consumption was contributing to more than 12 percent of its carbon footprint, so the decision to look at the vehicle fleet was simple. These and other tangible results show what can be done when actions just get started," says Councillor Táncoz.