

FIRE HYDRANT USE POLICY

Taupo District Council (TDC) has approximately 1780 fire hydrants around the district. These hydrants are for fire fighting purposes and to assist in the management of Health and Safety Wellbeing in our communities.

Fire hydrants are for authorized fire fighters, but it is noted that some people are accessing them, illegally to meet their own water needs. This illegal use can have serious health and safety implications as if damaged; the hydrant may not be available for fire fighters. It could also lead to chemicals or other contaminants infiltrating into the water system, which can be potential risk to the health of the other consumers.

Illegal fire hydrant uses include and range from people filling their swimming pools, to contracting firms taking water to mix concrete, dust control or weed spraying activities. TDC is cracking down on people who are putting the community wellbeing at risk by illegally using water from fire hydrants.

On occasions, TDC may grant a permit to use hydrants if there are no other viable alternative. Permits will only be issued to appropriate persons or contractors. The rules around their use are stringent in order to meet drinking water compliance. Equipment used must include a water meter with appropriate backflow protection to prevent contamination of our water supply (Please refer TDC building code of practice 2009). This is to ensure:

- Protection of public health
- Reduce risks to the water supply system from contaminants
- Minimize non revenue water (NRW) and/or assess water losses
- No damage to hydrants
- Improved customer service delivery
- Optimize network management to obtain water mass balance

If you wish to apply for a permit you will need to complete an application form which requires you to demonstrate that taking water from a hydrant is the only way to source water for your purpose ([Fire hydrant application form](#)). Every authorized permit holder will also be required to pay fees as per the tariff schedule ([Charges and tariffs schedule](#)).

Permits are obligatory for all users of fire hydrants including all maintenance contractors, who are carrying out routine maintenance including flow and pressure testing or flushing dead ends. The issue of hydrant permits is not automatic. If your permit application is declined by TDC, then the applicant will need to find an alternative source of water to meet his/ her requirements.

Illegal fire hydrant users can be liable to penalties, loss of vehicles and equipment, a Court prosecution, or both according to TDC water bylaws Taupo District Council appeals to all residents to help our town and support enforcement of this policy by reporting offenders when any suspicious activity is noticed in your area. If it's not a fire fighter using a fire hydrant then we would like to hear about it. Please call TDC helpdesk 3760899.