



OVERWHELMING COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO VANDALISM AT OTANE OXIDATION POND

To be released 13 October 2017

MED201734

On Tuesday 3 October 2017, between 5pm and 6pm there was extensive damage to equipment at the Otane Wastewater Oxidation Pond. The vandalism was found at 7:30am on Wednesday morning when the data coming back from the pond was checked and two data points had suddenly stopped working.

A site inspection undertaken by Central Hawke's Bay District Council staff found the composite sampler in the pond, the aerator cable undone and the bottom diffuser of the aerator not working as the electrical connection was severed. The data logger was ripped out and was later found in the pond. The cap from the top of the data logger was used to block the outflow pipe from the discharge channel.

Those involved with the vandalism were exposed to partially treated and untreated wastewater. Due to the serious potential health risk, Council quickly communicated to the local community using Facebook. Following this Council also communicated with Central FM, in person with neighbouring properties and through various contacts asking members of the public to come forward with information, and encouraged those involved to go to their doctor immediately.

The Council would like to thank the Central Hawke's Bay community for their overwhelming response which assisted the Police in identifying the individuals involved and advising them of the health risks.

Council's Facebook page received a huge following with the post reaching over 6,000 people and had 49 shares. Council encourages people to like the Central Hawke's Bay District Council facebook page to stay up to date with what's happening in the district and at Council.

Chief Executive, Monique Davidson says "It is great to see how the community took ownership of this issue and through the use of technology and communications the potential health risks were able to be dealt with. Out of something negative came yet another illustration of a proud, connected and thriving community"



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