

## **Update from Auckland Council regarding Omaha stormwater concerns**

### **Recent rain events**

- On 16 – 20 December 150 mm of rain broke a long period of dry weather.
- In the third week of January rainfall in the order of 190 mm coincided with king tides.
- During a 24-hour period on 28/29 January 244 mm of rain was recorded at the Tamahunga rain gauge. Rainfall intensities exceeded rates predicted for 1 in 100 year events during the most intensive part of this storm

Collectively over this 45 day period approximately 38% of the mean annual rainfall for the Omaha area fell and this locality experienced some of the highest rainfall depths and intensities in the Auckland region. This has contributed to there being an unusually high ground water table along the east coast this summer, in particular in Omaha, which in turn has led to some ponding issues.

### **The stormwater system at Omaha**

- Much of the Omaha area is designed to deal with stormwater by directing run-off to ponding areas and ground soakage.
- Considering the scale of the rain events over this short period of time the systems have generally performed well and in line with predictions included in published stormwater hazard maps and management plans.

### **Reported stormwater issues**

- Auckland Council received 11 requests for service from Omaha residents associated with the January 28/29 rain. Three were the result of basement flooding in areas that are well below the adjoining road while the balance were associated with ponding on reserves and roads.
- Since then there have been various stagnant water issues, including more than the usual mosquitoes, reported.

### **Council action to date**

- Council engineers and its contractor responded to all the January service requests and Auckland Council staff have since had discussions with residents and been made aware of a range of stormwater concerns associated with these recent rain events, as well as on-going concerns regarding stormwater management in Omaha.
- A trial pumping of the reserve close to the Southern Isle was undertaken on 12 February. The pond refilling the next day confirmed the ponded water is due to a high groundwater table in the area and unfortunately there is no immediate practical solution to this, with the water needing to dissipate naturally.
- Arrangements are now being made to repair localised scouring at the edge of the boat ramp and in the foreshore reserve south of the boat ramp. In addition, the use of bark mulch in reserves is going to be reviewed in locations where it is likely to contribute to blockage of any stormwater soakage system.
- The main southern pond requires some maintenance and in particular the downstream channel. Council will evaluate options to provide this essential maintenance and discuss with local residents prior to undertaking any work
- Surveying and monitoring of groundwater levels is also being arranged in order to provide information for future planning and stormwater management.
- In addition Council is also planning to undertake investigation of permeability of ponding areas and to check if remedial work is required for some of the roadside swales that are reportedly not functioning adequately.
- The outcome of investigations and monitoring may indicate options for improvements to the stormwater management systems in Omaha. Discussion with residents and other stakeholders would form part of this work.