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Hawke's Bay  
**TODAY**

## Hot water cylinders causing chaos in Hawke's Bay + VIDEO

By Alice Lock



Plumbers have been rushed off their feet dealing with damaged hot water cylinders which many residents believe is caused by chlorine in the water.

Hastings District Council chlorinated the water that feeds Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere after the campylobacter outbreak in August.

Brownie Kire, a Flaxmere retiree, is upset that his copper hot water cylinder went last week.

"The plumber told me the chlorine had ruined the function of my tank. Being a superannuant the cost of paying for a plumber, an electrician and a new hot water tank is painful."

Mr Kire has been denied insurance so has to front up the money himself.

"The plumber who looked at my tank said I wouldn't get much change from \$2000. It is something we need, so I am having to get the money together, which is really hard. I don't know why council aren't offering to provide any financial assistance."

A Hawke's Bay Plumber had fixed 40 cylinders in the past three weeks and nicknamed his workshop Mt Cylinder.

"We believe the problem lies in the older cylinders, as prior to chlorine the cylinders had a seal form from the gunk creating a plaster around the walls on the inside.

"Chlorine cleans the water and clears the bugs so the seals have been removed in the process causing water to seep out."

The plumber said this process was inevitable and it was not the fault of the council or the amount of chlorine.

"A lot of towns around the country have chlorinated water."

"It is something that would have happened but the older cylinders have just decided to all go at once."

Pipes throughout town have also gone and the plumber is putting it down to the same problem.

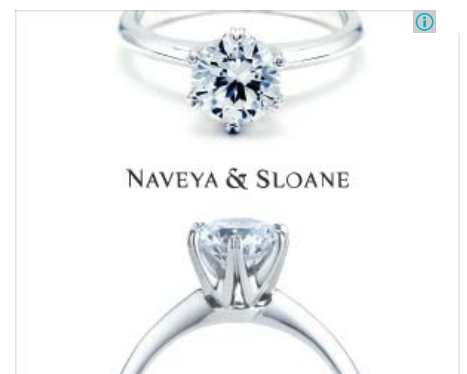
"You only have to walk around town to see the 100 leaks about the place."

A council spokeswoman said most urban centres have chlorinated water supply and copper was the common plumbing product.

"Chlorination and copper are compatible, therefore, we do not believe there is an issue of chlorination causing issues within hot water cylinders."

Master Plumbing Association board member and Peak plumber Grayson Allen said the association had put forward a letter to the Hastings District Council and Central Hawke's Bay Council asking about the chlorine levels.

"We are sceptical to say that chlorine is having an affect now but in the future if there are high levels of chlorine for a long period it will be detrimental to the copper cylinders."



The letter asked the two councils to give the association an indication of the levels of chlorine that are being put in to the water supply, how these fit with the national dosage and how long it will be for.

"Until we know how long it is for, we have a lack of information. We know they are tied by health and it is better to have healthy people than working pipes."

The council spokeswoman said the chlorination levels in the Hastings reticulation are well within the guidelines for Drinking Water Standards, which all drinking water suppliers are required to meet.

- [Hawkes Bay Today](#)

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### 4 comments

Missing from this story is how old Mr. Kire's water cylinder was before it failed. Did the reporter not think to ask this simple question?

Paul - Napier - 01:29 PM Thursday, 8 Dec 2016

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This does explain the many street and roadside water leaks being noticed by people as well as Councils request to curb water usage. Council needs to get onto this asap heading into our hot dry summers we have here. How did our water infrastructure get so bad? compared to the level of rates we pay. Some of the highest in the country per head of population.

Evenkeel - 01:29 PM Thursday, 8 Dec 2016

"...chlorine is having an EFFECT..."

Sandy - 09:19 AM Friday, 9 Dec 2016

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Most of Flaxmere was built in the 1960's, so it's likely to be a 50+ year old copper cylinder, only held together by "gunk" (probably calcium)! And that's supposed to be councils fault? Get real! The same goes for connections, they were already knackered it's just the chlorine got rid of the last bit of crap holding them together. Be thankful you don't pay Auckland rates, you'd pay the same for a month as we do in a year.

HenkyR - 09:19 AM Friday, 9 Dec 2016