

# National Engineering Design Standards

## General questions

### What are the benefits of this national standard for the New Zealand water sector?

The new standards provide regulatory engineers, design engineers, developers, contractors with one set of engineering design standards common across the country, this creates opportunities and benefits to the industry:

- More efficient sector from design, approval, procurement, construction to maintenance and renewal
- Begin to embed Te Mana o te Wai principles in our sector
- Provide a common technical reference for the development of industry training and skills accreditation programs for private sector suppliers.

### What type of water infrastructure will be covered?

This will be guided by the steering group but will include water, wastewater and stormwater reticulation assets, these include pipes, manholes, swales and rain gardens.

### Who decides what types of assets (pipes etc) are selected?

A National Steering Group with invited members from each of the entities, Civil Contractors NZ (CCNZ), Association of Consulting Engineers (ACE NZ), and an iwi consultant will lead the development of the standards.

### If economies of scale are such an advantage why doesn't one group buy assets for all New Zealand?

For version 1 of the standards, we are focussing on Council's approved products and materials. A WSE approved products and materials will be developed over time.

### Why not wait until the new water entities are operating?

The sector has been wanting to develop national engineering design standards for many years, reform has provided an opportunity to enable this to occur.

### Why are they taking so long to develop?

Engineering standards, especially ones involving many technical aspects, can take several years to develop, we are doing pulling together version 1 within 12 months. Water reform gives us a unique opportunity to develop national standards and it is important we take time to get it right.

### When will the standards be ready?

The standards are expected to be completed in July 2024.

### What is the timeline for implementation?

The standards are a sub-set of the development code, which each entity is required to have in place within its first 12 months. We are currently understanding what this means for the adoption of the standards and any transitional period that is required before they "go-live".

### Who will enforce it and how?

National Engineering Design Standards will establish minimum requirements, with dispensation needed from Council if changes from the prescribed codes are being sought.

# National Engineering Design Standards

## **How will it work during the transition to Water Service Entities?**

There may be a transition period from the entity establishment date till the NEDS go live. If this is the case the entities are likely to continue to use the councils' standards when providing engineering design approval for consents.

Existing council standards will need to be held by the entity for a period of up to five -years from the date that the NEDS go live, as all consents that have been granted engineering approval prior to this (by councils or the entity) will be referencing these current standards not the NEDS.

Councils can opt to adopt the NEDs prior to their transition to the new Water Service Entity, but if they choose not to adopt the NEDs, then the status quo remains, and no process changes are required until the Entity is established.

The NEDS go live in July 2024, as the Water Services Entities are established, they will be using them to provide engineering design approval for all new consents.

## **How do NEDS relate to the Development Code?**

The Water Services Entities Amendment Bill requires Water Services Entities to have a development code, a subset of the development code requires entities to ensure they specify applicable engineering design standards to water infrastructure.

We are currently working through this process and will be able to provide more guidance on the Development Code and adoption of the NEDS later this year.

## **Will the standards be mandatory?**

The standards will not be mandatory but will establish minimum requirements. Anything outside the standards will need dispensation to use alternatives and be approved by the local Council.

## **Will these Standards apply if the government changes after the election?**

The sector has been calling out for national standards for years. We hope that the sector will continue with the development and implementation of these standards if there is a change to government policy.