



What's on

December 18-January 9

QUOTA Ōpōtiki Book Fest – 9.30am-9pm. Art Hall King Street. Come on down to the Ōpōtiki Art Hall to enjoy the Quota Ōpōtiki book fest. (Will be closed on Christmas Day) Free event. For information, contact Florence: 021 0264 3255.

Friday, December 19

ŌPŌTIKI Float Parade – 94B Church Street. Bring family and friends to Ōpōtiki town centre to enjoy the festive celebrations and see the wonderfully decorated Christmas floats. For information, contact Ōpōtiki isite: 07 315 3031.

Saturday, December 27

MARAENUI Fishing Competition – 8am-3pm. Maraenui Beach, 3688 SH35 Maraenui. Come along for an epic day of fishing at Maraenui Beach. Boundaries will be marked by red flags. Only \$20 per rod/handline; get fishing from 8am. This fishing competition is an annual fundraising event for Te Kura Mana Māori o Maraenui. All tickets available online through trybooking.com. Including raffles and hāngi. BBQ available for purchase on the day. For information, contact Te Kura Mana Māori o Maraenui: 07 325 2688 or 021 121 8409 / maraenui@kura.org.nz \$20 per rod/handline.

Sunday, December 28

ŌPŌTIKI Rodeo – 8.30am onwards. Ōpōtiki Rodeo Grounds, north end St John Street. From dust-raising barrel racing to bucking broncs, the Ōpōtiki Rodeo has it all. There will be a range of food vendors on site. Pack the sunscreen. Entry at the gates: Adult \$20. Child under 16 \$10. Family \$50 (two adults and two children). For information, contact secretary Blair Collier: 027 203 4060, blairec69@hotmail.com / opotikirodeo@gmail.com

Friday, January 2

HALF a Beast at Least (Golf Tournament) – 10am onwards. Ōpōtiki Golf Club, 14 Fromow Road. Tee off at the Half a Beast at Least Golf Tournament, where golfers of all skill levels are welcome to join in the fun. Registration is available through the Ōpōtiki Golf Club by calling 07 315 7415 or emailing office@opotikigolf.co.nz, \$35 per person. On course BBQ, novelties, raffles. Enjoy a great day of golf with great people and great prizes. Proudly sponsored by Craig and Dan Morrison, Dervock Farm.

Monday, January 5

SUMMER Movie Night – 8.30pm. Princess Street Reserve, corner of Church and Victoria streets. Gather the whole family for an evening under the stars at our Summer Movie Night. Bring your snacks, camp chairs, picnic blankets, and pillows to Princess Street Reserve and settle in for Ōpōtiki's best outdoor cinematic experience. Whether you're a film buff or just looking for a fun night out, this event is perfect for everyone. For information, contact Ōpōtiki isite: 07 315 3031, infocentre@odc.govt.nz / Facebook and Instagram pages @opotikin

Regular cycling events

ŌPŌTIKI Cycling Group Summer Series – 6pm, Tuesday nights. Start at Woodlands School carpark. 13km circuit around Woodland's area. Once upon a time this event was for road bikes – times have changed and this event now welcomes and caters for mountain and electric bikers. Free event. Text Diane on 027 3036090 for more information.

DUNES Trail Ride – 6pm on Thursday nights. Start from Motu Trails on St John Street. Suitable for mountains and E-bikes. Enjoy riding with other riders – not a race. Barbecue afterwards during the summer months. Free. Call Pete on 027 274 1723 for more information.

GIRLS on Wheels – Sunday, 8.30am. Social ride starting from Ōpōtiki Fire Station car park area. A ride to suit all ages, sizes and fitness levels. Mainly electric bikes. Cafe experience after ride. Free. Text Diane, 027 3036090, for more information.

BOYS on Wheels – Sunday, 8.30am. Social ride starting at the bottom of Hospital Hill. Cafe experience after ride. Free. Call Tony on 027 668 4488 for more information.

Regular events

NIA Dance – Monday 10am-11am. Senior Citizens Hall, 1 King Street. Nia Dance suits any age, ability, experience or level of fitness. It is low impact, gently frees the body of any held tension and supports our bodies to move again with ease. Contact Lisa Lane for details: 027 225 8408 or LisaMiharo8@icloud.com

SLOW Crafts Monday – 3pm-4pm. Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi, 101 Church Street. Join us as we explore various crafts. We provide all the materials, just turn up and get crafting. All welcome. Free. For more information, contact Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi on 07 315 617.

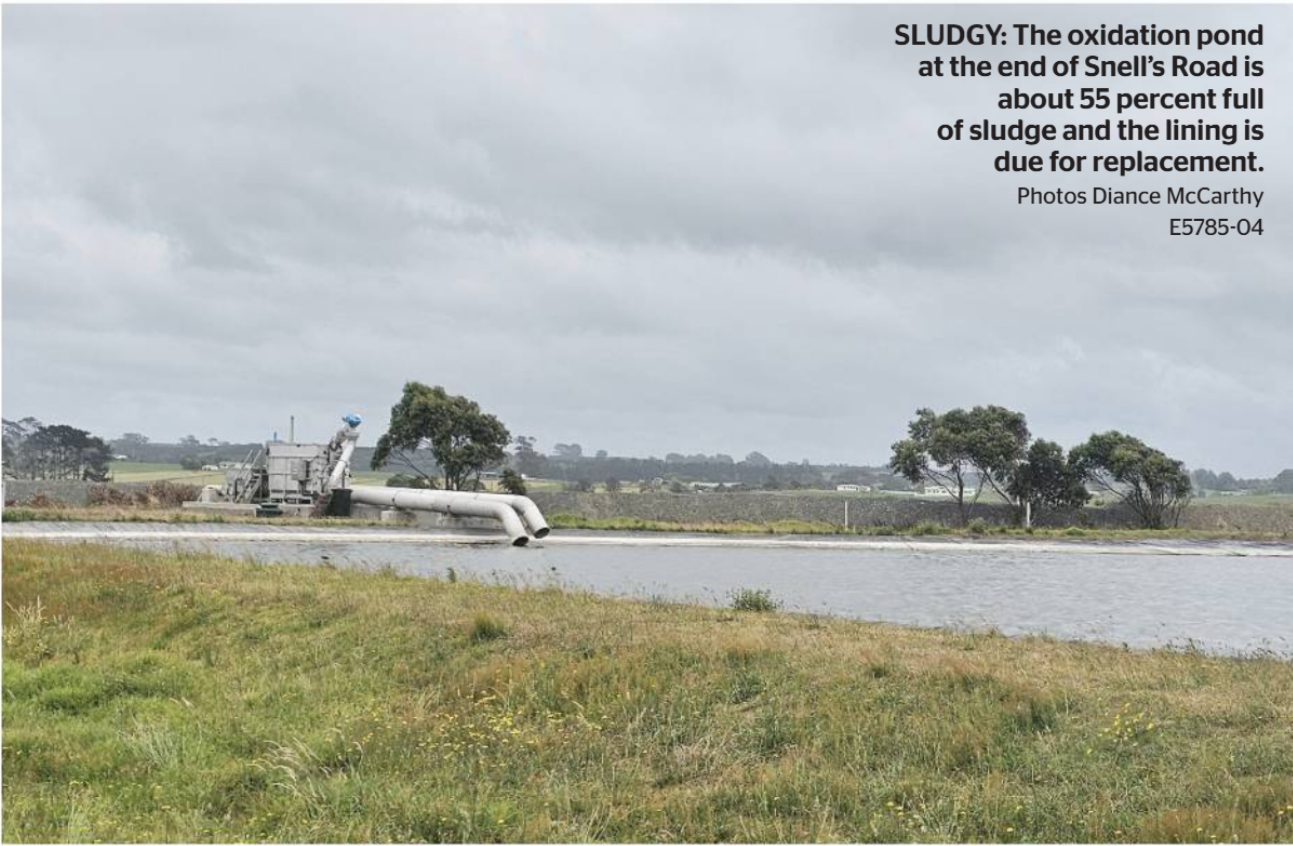
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SLUDGY: The oxidation pond at the end of Snell's Road is about 55 percent full of sludge and the lining is due for replacement.

Photos Diance McCarthy
E5785-04

Plans for sewerage improvements revised

Diane McCarthy

ŌPŌTIKI District Council has endorsed changes to its wastewater work programme emphasising a “no regrets” approach to spending.

In 2024, the council identified investment of \$36 million over 10 years needed to upgrade the Ōpōtiki township's wastewater system. It allocated \$8.3 million to be spent in the first three years.

The council's resource consent to discharge wastewater is expired and its application to the regional council is on hold, allowing the council to continue to function throughout current reforms.

At a meeting on Tuesday, council received a report saying new national wastewater standards are coming into effect this month, and further work had informed a revised work programme to optimise spending on immediate needs while aligning with long-term goals.

While no additional budget is required for the changes this financial year, some may be needed for the next financial year and beyond.

The report identifies several issues with the wastewater system.

In spite of previous rehabilitation efforts, the ageing reticulation network has persistent issues with stormwater inflow and groundwater infiltration, creating a burden on the wastewater system.

Wastewater Pump Station 01, near the skatepark, has mechanical pipework in poor condition, with failed check valves and risks of further failures, which could lead to high repair costs and network overflows.

The rising main across the Otara River is at risk of failure, which could result in untreated effluent discharge into the river.

Additionally, erosion of the Pākihihikura Harbour eastern bank threatens the pipe's integrity.

The oxidation pond is near treatment capacity and over half full of sludge, which affects treat-



PRE-TREATMENT: Ōpōtiki District Council's wastewater treatment and pump at Whitikau Reserve will soon be receiving some upgrades.

E5785-01

ment efficiency.

The pond liner has exceeded its design life and needs replacement.

Frequent overflows into the overflow pond during wet weather have led to an abatement notice from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, with risks of enforcement action.

The disposal field is clogged with algae and solids, reducing drainage performance. The trenches require renovation, and the disposal system needs upgrades to meet new national wastewater standards.

The report also highlights natural hazards the wastewater system is exposed to, such as flooding, liquefaction, tsunami, and coastal erosion.

The revised programme has five stages, with early works including ready-to-start projects that will reduce non-compliance and reinstate the plant to its original operating intent.

These include mechanical upgrades, a new valve chamber, a new electrical building, new monitoring and control system and electrical upgrade to the main pump station. Short-term plans for the oxidation ponds included repositioning of the aerators and UV treatment.

The creation of a second pond would be part of phase two, to manage risk that desludging of the existing pond at a later stage

could result in damage to the lining.

Other later plans include a second rising main pipe under the Otara River, and improvements to the disposal field.

Councillor Barry Howe said the work was “imperative” if the wastewater issues were not to slow down much-needed housing development in the town.

“Our people desperately need housing. With the development of Hukutaia coming up in the next few years, we need to make sure [wastewater systems are in place].”

Ōpōtiki is one of the few towns in New Zealand with a land-based wastewater disposal system.

Mayor David Moore said the alternative, of disposing treated wastewater to the river or ocean was “not desirable to any of us here”.

He said council staff had worked closely with those creating the new wastewater standards to design a standard that was specific to the land-based system. By doing so they had saved a further potential cost of \$30 million to comply with those standards.

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