Invercargill
CITY COUNCIL

Wednesday, August 6 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
CIVIC REPORTERS

Water flowing through new pipeline to Bluff

Bluff's replacement $6.5 million water pipeline, carrying water from Invercargill to the Bluff township, is now up and running – with water flowing through the pipeline to Bluff since Monday.

Council's Water Manager Alister Murray said the new pipeline was needed to replace the original 1950s asbestos cement pipeline that had experienced increasing failures in recent years.

Delta Contracting won the tender for the $6.5 million project and began work on the pipeline in February 2013.

Water has been flowing through the 30 kilometre pipeline to Bluff since Monday afternoon, which Mr Murray said gave him "a sense of relief", especially given that the old pipeline experienced two failures in one day during July, prompting calls for residents and businesses to conserve water for two days.

Unlike the old asbestos cement pipeline, which was laid in five metre lengths and joined with rubber connections, the new pipeline is one continuous "snake" of polyethylene. The lengths of polyethylene have been welded together to make one continuous pipe, which is expected to perform better in the event of an earthquake, as it is better able to accommodate movement, whereas the asbestos cement pipeline would pull apart at the rubber joints. Use of this new style pipeline had increased in New Zealand since the Canterbury earthquakes, he said.

Mr Murray said that while water was now flowing to Bluff, there was still work to be done before the project was completed. Contractors were now working through swopping the 50 connections (to dairy farms and factories) from the old pipeline to the new one, he said.

ENDS.

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