**Redcliffs/Te Rae Kura Eco Village - WATER 27.03.20**

In April, the Redcliffs/Te Rae Kura Eco Village Group initiative is focussing on **WATER**

SOME WATER FACTS

**Fresh** water is a vital but scarce resource for all plants and animals – it’s only 3% of the planet’s water, and only 0.6% of that is useable(most is locked up in ice).

People use (on average) 150 – 300 L per person per day (but as high as 600L/day!). Sustainable use would be more like 70L per person per day.

Where is it used? 25% toilets, 25% bathrooms, 20% laundries, 20% gardens, 10% kitchens. Thus, only 35% of an urban water supply needs to be pure (drinkable) ie for kitchens & bathrooms.

Christchurch’s water supplies come from (underground) aquifers fed from the mountains and the plains. But Christchurch also has annual rainfall, on average about 600mm (with a peak event likely to be 100mm). Most rainfall is called stormwater, and is piped and drained to rivers and the sea.

CONCERNS

Consumption of water by people is very high and much of that water is wasted. Water is increasingly contaminated by rural and urban activities and is costly to purify for drinking and bathing.

In a natural situation, water is mainly **captured** and used by plants and animals; **stored**, **purified** and conserved in mulch, soil, subsoil, aquifers and surface water bodies; and then **recycled** and purified through evaporation into clouds.

WHAT YOU COULD DO

The water landing on your property (as rain, snow etc) is **your resource** - don’t waste it, but use it sustainably by capturing it, storing it, conserving it and using it. This will give you security of supply and reduce the amount of water you need from the public supply, which in turn will reduce the costs of public supply.

You could catch and store some of your rainwater for garden watering (KIWI ECO PLEDGE #8). Calculate the maximum storage needed as… Litres = roof area(sqm) x annual rain (mm).

You could wash your vehicle on a lawn rather than a drive (KIWI ECO PLEDGE # 8). This is already required by Ecan to reduce contaminants in stormwater, so critical for aquatic plants, invertebrates and fish in streams e.g. if you are in the Drayton Reserve catchment.

Kids could make water baths/drink stations for birds. Put a wood screw tightly(avoid leaking) through the top a big plastic lid (from underneath),or a plastic plant pot saucer (from above), into the flat top of a post at least 1m above the ground (safe from cats) and add water. Birds may take a few days to feel safe enough to use it. Lizards also need water, so put a shallow dish on the ground , alongside where they hide(safe from cats and kingfishers) and add water.