

This document provides a high-level summary of Hutt City Council's estimated annual water loss and total demand (water lost through leaks and customer use). It also includes information on the key factors that have impacted water loss and demand, and what we can expect moving forward.

How do we measure water loss and demand?

To measure **water loss**, we use the Minimum Night Flow methodology that aligns with the Water NZ Water Loss Guidelines for areas with low water meters.

We also track average daily **demand** (use and water loss) on a weekly basis, to gain an overall picture of water demand per capita and how it compares to previous years. Demand is measured by meters which show the total volume of water supplied by Water Treatment Plants.

Unfortunately, we cannot accurately track current, or 'live' water loss or water use without universal metering.

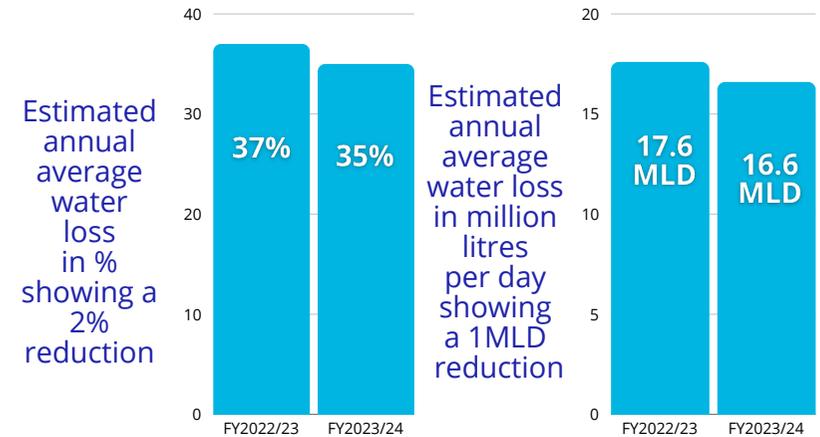
These two measures work together to help Wellington Water and our council owners better understand:

- *past financial years' water use and loss*
- *identify any high-level trends*
- *gauge if councils' investment and Wellington Water's efforts are having the desired impact, and*
- *guide future investment decisions.*

Lower Hutt water loss figures

The estimated annual average water loss on the Lower Hutt public network for FY23/24 is **35%***, down 2% from FY22/23 (37%).

In real terms, this equals a saving of about **1 million litres per day**.



In the first half of FY2023/24, we experienced the **highest level of leaks** seen across the network in many years. To tackle this, council increased their investment in finding and fixing leaks. This enabled more leak repairs, and a corresponding reduction in the annual average water loss estimate.

The **methodology** used is the same as the previous year so we have confidence that there has been a genuine reduction in water loss, although there remains significant uncertainty with the true extent of water loss due to the lack of universal metering.

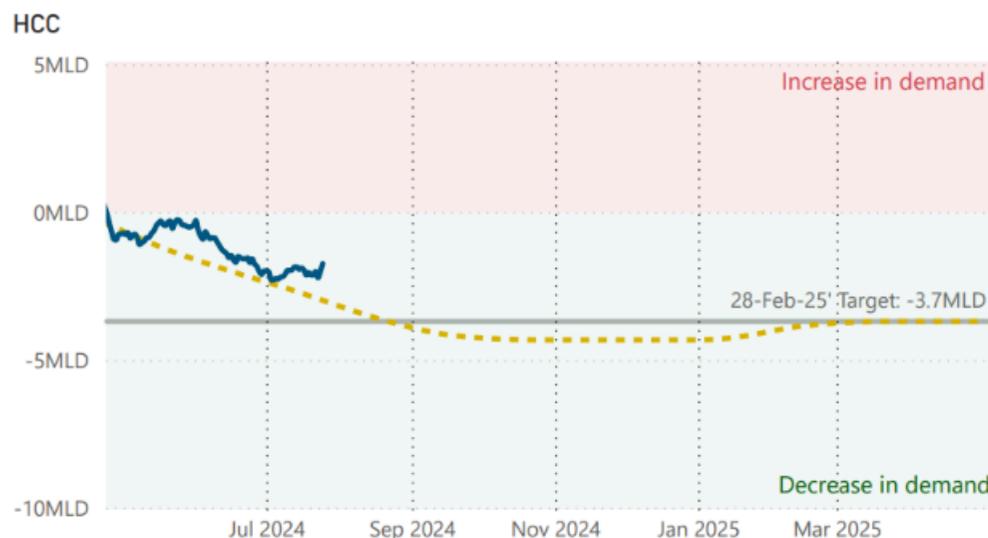
Increased funding wasn't made available until the second half of the year, and as a result increased leak repair work did not start until quarter 3 or later. This means the average annual water loss estimate may not have reduced as much as some may have anticipated.

As these water loss figures are a retrospective average of the entire past financial year (1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024) and leak repairs and water loss reduction work continues, we expect water loss to continue to reduce into this financial year. This estimate is a **good initial indicator** of the impact that council's increased investment into finding and fixing leaks has had.

*95% confidence intervals of between 20% and 51%.

Lower Hutt water demand figures

- Overall, demand is increasing, but at a significantly slower rate than previous years.
- Demand (use and loss) stayed relatively steady until February 2024, and has fallen by close to 1% from March to June 2024, in an encouraging trend in line with increased investment in leak repairs.
- The average year-on-year increase in per capita demand has slowed down from 7% (between FY2021/22 to FY2022/23), to 2.9%.
- Council's focus on reducing water loss and managing the acute summer risk has contributed to the improved results, as well as the effort from residents and businesses to manage and reduce water use through the peak summer period.



While leak repairs continue at a steady pace, demand reduction has slowed. We are looking into why this is the case, but anticipate its return to being in line with the goal.

The above graph shows how Lower Hutt is tracking towards its demand reduction goal of 3.7 million litres per day. The blue line shows a 4 week rolling average of demand, and the gold dotted line shows the goal pathway. This is reported on monthly to Taumata Arowai.

Moving forward

- While progress is being made on leaks as we work towards driving down the backlog to a sustainable level, it's important to note that leak repairs are a 'band-aid' rather than a long-term solution. Fixing leaks doesn't prevent new leaks from occurring or the backlog from rising if ongoing investment in leak repairs is not maintained.
- The increasing age and deteriorating condition of the network means that we expect the cost of ongoing leak repairs to continue to increase, and significantly increased investment in proactive pipe renewals is needed to prevent leaks occurring in the first instance. Currently, pipe renewals are funded well below the recommended level across the region.
- The current short-term investment boost is working well to drive down the backlog, however forecasting shows the current level of investment won't maintain water loss reduction activities in the longer-term. The bulk of the investment in leaks ends in the first year of the current Long-Term Plan.