

# Wholly Water

ECan Laboratory's Newsletter

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## Corrosion of Pipes:

Shallow Canterbury ground-water from wells (<30m deep) tends to be slightly acidic. This can lead to corrosion of household plumbing.

Water sitting in plumbing and fittings overnight can dissolve lead, copper, zinc, chromium and nickel and lead to increased concentrations of these dissolved metals in your drinking water, which may be a health concern. Corrosion may become evident as a metallic taste, blue/red stains in porcelain ware, blonde hair turning green and a short life for water heating elements.

### **To reduce consumption of metals:**

- Do not consume water that has sat in your home's plumbing for more than six hours. Flush the tap water before use by running the water until you feel the temperature change before cooking, drinking, or brushing your teeth.
- Use cold water for drinking or cooking.
- Never cook or mix infant formula using hot water from the tap.

**Other solutions** are to use bottled water for drinking and cooking or install the correct water filter to control corrosion.

**We forget that the water cycle and the life cycle are one.**

*Jacques Yves Cousteau*

Another busy summer season of recreational beach sampling has drawn to a close. This summer, 49 coastal and 48 freshwater sites were tested on a weekly basis for their swimming water quality - the results of which appear on our website ([www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz)) under "Swimming Water Quality". Therefore before going to your favourite swimming spot, you can check out the quality of the water before you depart.

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## LABORATORY SURVEY

Last year we asked for volunteers to take part in our Laboratory survey. As part of our IANZ accreditation we are required to do this annually. This year, we will be randomly posting a survey out to you to obtain your feedback. We are trying to make it a simple task. We understand you may get surveys to complete from time to time, but should we send one to you, it would be appreciated if you could spare a few minutes to complete the form and return it to us. Thank you.

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## WHY THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SAMPLING BOTTLES?

Some tests require special bottles and/or preservatives. For example:

- Unpreserved 500mL plastic bottle for pH conductivity and anions (eg nitrate)
- Sterile 100 and 200 mL plastic (may contain a chlorine neutraliser) for *E.coli*/Faecal Coliforms
- Acid preserved for metals (keeps dissolved metals in solution)
- Acid washed for nutrients.

By using the correct bottles this maintains quality of results and increases efficiency of sample processing.

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## STAFF PROFILE



My name is Gaynor Harvey. I moved to Christchurch almost a year ago from Scotland and have worked in the Laboratory at ECan since last May. I previously worked for Scottish Water in Dundee for 10 years analysing water, wastewater and trade effluent samples. My husband and I have now made Christchurch our home.

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## SECURITY ACCESS TO ECAN

New security measures have been implemented for restricting public access to different levels of our Kilmore Street building complex. Visitors to the Laboratory now have full access to the first floor of the building only, either via the lifts or stairs. There were some teething problems at the beginning of the week 19 March, however lift access is now possible. Thank you for your patience if you experienced initial problems in getting to the Lab.