

DOWN TO EARTH



ISSUE NO 007

Welcome to the final issue of our newsletter for 2008. We hope that over the year you have found articles in the newsletters that have been informative and interesting and we would also like to thank those who have given us feedback. It is always appreciated.

All three bases of Erosion Control, Whangarei, Hamilton and Auckland, are busy with the last of the hydroseeding, strawmulching, tractor grassing and commercial plantings for the year. Lawn Creations is also busy with the usual hydroseeding and landscaping that happens in spring.

The Whangarei base of Lawn Creations is pleased to introduce Rod Mitchell to the team. Rod is a qualified landscaper with many years of experience up his green sleeves. We are already seeing some of the talented work he is producing and know his residential and commercial customers are as impressed as we are.

The Hamilton base of Erosion Control has grown in size and now has a division manager by the name of Mark Oxborough who, with the help of his dedicated team, are doing an awesome job. With Mark in place Erosion Control is now undertaking strawmulching as well as hydroseeding in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty areas.

2009 is looking like an interesting year for New Zealand and indeed the global economy. The past 6 months have not been an easy time for many contractors or developers but we hope the coming year is more positive. The drop in fuel prices and interest rates and the government guaranteeing the banks are a step in the right direction.

Thank you for your support over the last year and we wish you a prosperous and happy 2009

.....Roy Timperley and Lynda Baldwin.

BANK STABILISATION, TAUPO.



In May 2008 David Price from Greg Lamb Ltd called upon Erosion Control to assist with the issues they were facing on the downslopes for a new road in Taupo. Prior to our involvement the banks had been covered with an ecocell product to assist with the stabilisation of the soil and had also been planted at regular intervals. Due to a storm event in May much of the soil was eroded from the structure, leaving large voids of up to 300mm in depth.

At this stage David called upon Erosion Control Co Ltd to see if we could provide a quick and cost effective solution that would not disturb the existing planting or result in any machinery moving over the area. Matthew Oxborough of Erosion Control Ltd tailored a solution that we were confident would resolve these issues with the urgency required to avoid further damage with the onslaught of winter. The time of year was an additional factor as we were entering the coldest period of the year where many grass species would not germinate. By tailoring a formula

of Liquid Soil™ we were able to fill the voids by pumping the mix from one of our custom built hydroseeding units. Once the original levels were re-established, we then oversprayed with more Liquid Soil™, fertiliser and an annual seed mix. This was achieved without disturbing the existing planting. Our liquid soil contains several specific binding agents to hold it in place and protect the sub soils from further weather events. It also contains a high in nutrient medium that enhances the overall soil quality promoting rapid growth of the native plants. The use of an annual grass allowed for additional binding through the root structure for further stabilization. This will ultimately die back allowing the native planting to dominate the slopes.

Three months after completion of the project we have established a uniform vegetation cover that has withstood the storm events of July and August 2008.

COMMERCIAL PLANTING. HOW CAN WE HELP?

The optimum time of year for planting is coming to an end with the onset of summer. If necessary, it can continue throughout summer, but there has to be a very diligent watering system in place (we can install this for you if required). Planting can safely start again about March and continue throughout the wetter months.

With the current push for low impact designs and environmentally friendly practises that retain our special New Zealand character, beautiful, easy care gardens are becoming part of most development consents. These gardens range from stone gardens with palm trees, to small areas of native bush. The type of planting undertaken and the quality of the workmanship of the landscaper can dramatically impact on the environment, whether it is city, seaside, subdivision or roadway.

Commercial landscaping is an interesting area to work in due to the site specific requirements of each individual project. Lawn Creations, the landscaping division of Erosion Control, has been involved with large projects like the Kerikeri

Bypass and the Upper Harbour Crossing in Greenhithe, as well as smaller commercial sites set in industrial areas like Albany. Each site has had its own challenges to ensure the specific brief of the project is achieved within the time frame required.

This is a significant growth area for us. If we have not quoted a landscaping job for you yet, it's about time we did. Contact us on 0800 639 529.



Commercial Landscaping in Albany

BAD DEBT RECOVERY

In the present economic climate many businesses are experiencing lengthening debt recovery cycles and a significant increase in bad debts. Studies have shown that businesses historically averaged 30 days to pay their accounts. This average has currently extended to 46 days to pay accounts. Although it is frustrating if clients are slow in paying, as long as they arrange finance terms and actually pay, most businesses are happy enough. The problems arise when clients, for whatever reason, just don't pay.

The first step when trying to collect overdue accounts is to ring and negotiate with the client if possible. If this doesn't work there are several other options to follow.

1/ You can apply to the small claims court for a hearing if the amount is under \$12,000.

2/ You can send a statutory demand, which effectively gives the client 10 days to dispute the account or arrange to pay it. If the amount is not disputed nor paid, then the way is open to take them to the High Court and have their business closed down, or put into liquidation.

3/ You can enlist the services of a debt collection agency such as Baycorp. These companies take approx 25% of the amount they collect.

No one likes to take any of these actions, but people who don't pay their bills are stealing. It is no different than walking into a TV shop and taking a TV without paying. So take the necessary action sooner rather than later.

HAMILTON IS GROWING

Erosion Control is pleased to introduce Mark Oxborough as the new area manager for the Hamilton base of Erosion Control and Lawn Creations. Mark has been brought up with Erosion Control as his father was a co-founder of the business more than 35 years ago. He has a wealth of knowledge and experience and is looking forward to bringing his expertise to the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Areas. Clinton Clark and James Keith have remained on the team, which means none of the local knowledge or skills have been lost in the transition.



Mark is endeavouring to meet with all of our existing clients, and if he hasn't caught up with you yet, please phone him on 027 473 4350.

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(0800 639 5296)

DOWN TO EARTH



BATTER CONSTRUCTION ADVANCES



BEFORE



AFTER

With an ever increasing requirement to maximize land use area, Hiway Stabilizers in conjunction with West City Construction and Coffey Geotechnics, have recently pioneered some groundbreaking solutions. Their trials have focused on the construction of soil batters. Typical Auckland soils require a geotechnically stable batter between a 1:3 to 1:5 (Vertical to Horizontal) to remain stable or alternatively expensive retaining systems that are often not practical over a height of 4 metres. Paul Bocock of Hiways explains that the inclusion of Lime, Cement or KOBM binders to modify the natural properties of the soil has provided them with the ability to create long term stability at significantly steepened angles. To date, Hiways have successfully completed an 18m high 1:1.5 slope which has been fully certified and provides an additional 27m² of flat land per lineal meter of batter constructed. Longer term trials are also being run on 2 separate 4 metre high batters of 3 Vertical:1 Horizontal and 4 Vertical:1 Horizontal; the latter appearing near vertical when viewing. The stabilised soils are constructed using Hiway's standard stabilising equipment and are placed and compacted beyond the finished batter profile. They are then cut and trimmed to the desired angle after placement to ensure full stabilisation and compaction of the exposed surface.

Upon successful construction came the requirement to both beautify these walls along the lines of Hiway's Environmental Philosophy, and add further stabilisation and erosion control to the surface material. After exploring a number of options, Paul Bocock and Brett Ireland from West City Construction called

upon Erosion Control Ltd's 30 years of industry experience to sound out options for a cost effective and appropriate solution. The first stage was to trial our Liquid Soil™ on the north facing 4 Vertical:1 Horizontal batter. Traditional Hydroseeding applications would have had limited success due to the near vertical gradient, smooth surfaces, exposure to all day sun and the unique challenges of the modified soil type. After running in house soil tests Erosion Control Ltd tailored a mix of Liquid Soil™ ingredients, binding agents, fertilizers and seed types best suited for this site specific environment. Three successive applications were then applied through our custom built hydroseeding technology to build up a 10-15mm nutrient rich layer that would sustain moisture retention, initial germination and long term success of the vegetation layer. Upon the results of our initial trials, Paul instructed us to replicate the procedure on the walls of lesser gradients totaling approximately 5,000m². As well as providing the desired outcome, success was achieved at a fraction of the cost of alternative solutions such as earth walls retained behind a geotextile or erosion fabric. Although New Zealand experienced slips and damage across the country during the extreme winter of 2008, both Hiway's wall and Erosion Control's Liquid Soil™ are already demonstrating their ability to stand the test of time. With over 30 years industry experience, and an ongoing research and development programme the team at Erosion Control Ltd prides itself on being industry leaders with innovative environmental solutions.

A little dryer..... but not much.

A little warmer..... but not much.

Despite a gloomy economic forecast it looks like this spring and summer will see a return to "normality". Well close to normality. The big influences, La Nina (just fading out) and El Nino (a couple of seasons ago) are not likely to show their hand this season and thus without their influence New Zealand can in general expect; yes that word again, a "normal" warm dry summer with a slight tendency towards dryer and warmer than other years sharing neutrality with the tropical Pacific oscillation.

Long term climate prediction is a mix of art and science, it is the presentation of order out of chaos but the signs are clear that the BBQ's should receive early attention, irrigation systems unclogged and balmy evenings expected. In other words a classic kiwi summer.

However don't expect an absolutely clear run, these conditions breed intense periods of rain but of the short and sharp variety



rather than endless gloom and murk. Soil moisture will be slightly lower than normal, stream volumes slightly down and sea temperatures normal.

Mean sea-level pressures are likely to be higher than normal over the country, especially the South Island, with lighter winds than normal. This means that the normal westerly gales typical of October and November are likely to be less frequent. However NIWA have suggested, quietly and unassumingly, that within these conditions the chances of an ex-tropical cyclone making its presence felt is slightly higher. As usual the two areas of interest should such an event occur, will be Northland and Gisborne.

THINKING OF CHANGING PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS? READ THIS FIRST.

Part 2: Vodafone suggested that they could save us \$7,000 per year from our current phone bill. We were with Telecom. We believed this was a saving worth swapping service providers for and we are recording our experience to see if their claims are real or just sales talk. This is our second report which is 6 months after the initial change over.

The good news is we have saved approximately \$300 on our landline per month and also approximately \$300 on our mobiles per month. This adds up to overall saving of \$7,000 per year, which is inline with what Vodafone said they could save us.

On the other hand we have had costs of around \$1,000 for an IT specialist to sort out problems with our internet connection that have resulted from changing the landlines and it is unknown how much work we missed while we were trying to sort out this and other teething problems.

Interestingly we have spoken to other people who have changed their service provider and without exception they have had internet problems when the change over happened, despite assurances from the new provider that there will be none. This suggests that if you are going to change you should expect problems and just be thankful if there are none.



The change over process with the mobile phones was pretty straight forward. It has only been the landlines that have caused the problems. Having made the change we will certainly enjoy the ongoing savings that have resulted. These savings are substantial. If taken over a 5 year period they will save us \$35,000.

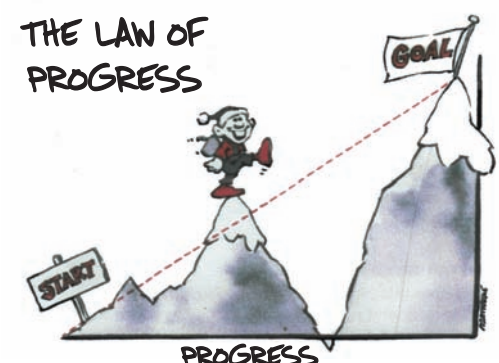
FSC IN RODNEY AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

The Forest Stewardship Council sets standards to ensure the wood and pulp used in the production process are grown, harvested and manufactured to high environmental standards. If all of the standards are met, the projects can be considered FSC certified and contain the FSC tree and checkmark logo.

A printed project containing the FSC logo is a better indicator of environmental stewardship than simply using recycled paper with the recycled logo, and makes a stronger, more positive statement about your company or organization.

FSC paper is showing up in some very familiar places. Deutsche Post, the German postal service prints pre-stamped envelopes and postcards on FSC-certified paper, as do the Deutsche Bahn rail for their 32 million odd self service tickets. In the Netherlands, Rabobank uses FSC paper in their administrative activities. This newsletter is also printed on FSC paper.

Your FSC printing can be obtained from Silverdale Printing Ltd. **0800 SILPRINT**



by Andrew Mathews, Being A Happy Teen, 2000

