

Title: Washdyke Lagoon Tunnel milestone achieved

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FOR RELEASE: Immediate

Council contractors, Harker Underground Construction, working on the sewer main renewal between Washdyke Lagoon and Smithfield have now broken through from each end of the tunnel.

Ashley Harper, District Services Manager at Timaru District Council is pleased with the progress which has been achieved. "Due to the mix of basalt, clay and rock, it has been slow work at times when the contractor hits a particularly hard section, but the crews have been working 24hrs a day to keep to schedule. We're stoked".

One crew was digging from the southern end with a tunnel boring machine. This is like a small excavator in a horizontal "can" which is propelled through the ground with hydraulic rams, while the mechanical arm scoops soil onto a conveyor belt which runs back to the entrance shaft. The second crew were using traditional manual labour with explosives to break down the rock face from the northern end.

The two tunnel halves were well aligned when they met, which is necessary to enable the boring machine to be propelled forward on the rails to the end of the northern shaft, dismantled and removed. Two new sewer main pipes will then be run through the tunnel.

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For further information, contact:
Neville Cross
Communications Officer
Timaru District Council, DDI 03 687 7233

This Media Release has been prepared by
Communications
Timaru District Council

Email:
nevillec@timdc.govt.nz

2 King George Place
Timaru

P O Box 522
Timaru
New Zealand

Telephone 03 687 7200
Fax 03 687 7201
Website:
www.timaru.govt.nz

Tunnel boring machine breaks down the last of the barrier between the tunnel halves



Pick and explosives used to create this part of the tunnel. Water seepage from clay



Contractor staff laying the rails in preparation for the boring machine to be removed from the tunnel.

