

# RURAL CITY LIVING



██████████ LGOIMA request

6 May 2024

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your information request on Thursday 23 May regarding the death of Lachlan Jones at the Council's oxidation ponds in 2019.

You requested all of staff email/s sent about the child's death and want to do about WorkSafe.

The Council conducted a search of its email archives, from 29 January 2019 to 4 June 2024, for the addresses All Staff, All Staff and Contractors, and All Admin Building Staff.

The key words were 'oxidation ponds' or 'Lachlan Jones', or 'drowning' or 'Worksafe' or 'Lachie Jones' or 'Lachlan' or 'Lachie'.

This search resulted in only two emails, which are attached.

If you are unsatisfied with the response, you are entitled to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsmen. You can find more information on its website <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz>

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sonia Gerken'.

Sonia Gerken

GM Communications / Customer Support

**From:** [Stephen Parry](#)  
**To:** [All Staff \(with e-mail\)](#)  
**Subject:** DROWNING AT GORE OXIDATION PONDS  
**Date:** Wednesday, 30 January 2019 9:37:53 AM

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Hi Everyone,

It is with a very heavy heart that I advise last night a three year old boy drowned in the Gore Oxidation Pond. The boy apparently disappeared from his residence with the Police and Search and Rescue being alerted.

This is an absolute tragedy and my deepest sympathies go out to the family for what can only be described as an incalculable loss. The relevant authorities have been notified and the Council will be working closely with them.

In the meantime I have instigated an urgent review of security fencing at the ponds.

I know this message follows sad news about one of our staff member's family being the subject of a search and rescue operation on the south coast. If any staff member feels they need some emotional support, given this awful news, please get in touch with your Manager or me.

Take care,

**Stephen Parry** | Chief Executive

**T:** 03 2090330 | **DDI:** 03 2090342 | **E:** [sparry@goredc.govt.nz](mailto:sparry@goredc.govt.nz) | **W:** [goredc.govt.nz](http://goredc.govt.nz)

Gore District Council, 29 Bowler Avenue, PO Box 8, Gore, 9740.

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email signation



**From:** [Susan Jones](#)  
**To:** [All Staff \(with e-mail\)](#)  
**Subject:** Oxidation ponds fatality  
**Date:** Tuesday, 10 March 2020 1:45:34 PM

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Hi all, most of you will recall the tragic fatality at our oxidation ponds in January 2019 that resulted in the death of a three year old boy. This email is sent to you for your information.

WorkSafe notified the Council recently that it intended to lay charges under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and these have now been filed with the court.

Below is a link to a story that will likely appear in the Southland Times tomorrow - it is already online.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/120145930/gore-district-council-charged-after-child-drowns-in-wastewater-ponds><https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.stuff.co.nz%2Fnational%2F120145930%2Fgore-district-council-charged-after-child-drowns-in-wastewater-ponds&data=02%7C01%7C%7C65bb2885da324354661308d7c487c586%7Ca8547185c9ba4557bc1c8481be4ecec6%7C0%7C0%7C637193959725799905&sdata=iLlfx1eF1Odf24K8SEqZdHY3o%2B6bJyPX4p88VCw1WOA%3D&reserved=0>

As this matter is currently before the court, the Council is unable to make any comment.

Regards, Susan

Susan Jones | Human Resources and Administration Manager  
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