

Entertainer demands environmental concert

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Entertainer Jack Johnson's environmental messages are striking a chord with council officials.

Hawaii-based Johnson has requested a host of sustainable measures at his November 28 concert at New Plymouth's TSB Bowl of Brooklands

These range from water stations for concertgoers to priority parking for people who share rides. Backstage, the council has been asked to supply recycling bins, water dispensers, compact fluorescent light bulbs and 100 per cent recyclable paper products.

Now, the district council is taking inspiration from the famous singer-songwriter's environmental ethic as it steps up rubbish plans leading into the concert and next year's Rugby World Cup games.

Council spokeswoman Theresa Cayley said people attending the weekend fireworks spectacular at the TSB Bowl of Brooklands were a tidy bunch.

A group of "waste champions" stood by bins and encouraged people to sort their rubbish while the MCs for the night encouraged the crowd to do the right thing. Consequently, waste generated for the night was "small" with 985kg of rubbish and 440kg of mixed recyclables collected.

But rugby-goers attending matches this season at Yarrow Stadium were less diligent.

About 80 per cent of rubbish collected from Taranaki's home games was recycled.

Flags and bin inserts helped get the message across while stadium caterers Eures used a range of measures such as limiting packaging.

Still, 69 per cent of the rubbish was left on the ground and had to be picked up by cleaners, reinforcing the need for continued education, said Mrs Cayley, rugby world cup project co-ordinator.

"That's a national trend at rugby games but we want to encourage people to do the right thing.

"The more people know about what they can recycle the more likely they are to make a right decision the next time."

She said a new waste minimisation plan kicked off after the Fleetwood Mac concert last year with a zero waste target for Womad spurring council staff on.

The environmental provisions attached to the Jack Johnson concert encompassed all facets of the concert. "We have a lot of these systems in place already because of the work that we've had to do leading up to the rugby world cup," Mrs Cayley said.

"During RWC 2011 we are hosting three matches and five teams so we want to showcase our clean, green credentials and be proud of Taranaki. Taranaki's landscape is unique and the region's vision ... is to protect it."

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