

1. WATER & SEWER SUPPLY

1.1. REDUCTION IN WATER CONSUMPTION CHARGES

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Council applies a consistent approach when considering reductions in water charges due to internal leaks or unexplained increases.

POLICY:

From time to time a property owner will request Council reduce the total water charge levied for a period because the amount of water consumed, as indicated by the meter reading, is significantly greater than has been used at the property previously and the property owner indicates they are unaware of the reason for this increase, or the reason for this increase is due to an internal leak within the property downstream of the water meter. This policy details the procedure to be followed when such a request is made.

1 FOR INCREASES WHICH THE PROPERTY OWNER IS UNABLE TO EXPLAIN

1.1 Meter Test

A property owner requesting a reduction in water charges due to an unexplained increase in water consumption must first pay for a meter test to ensure the water meter is reading accurately – See Council policy Water – Stopped or Inaccurate Water Meters.

1.2 Conditions where Council will consider reducing charges

If the water meter is found to be reading accurately and;

- The water meter reading has been checked and no obvious error in reading is apparent
- there is at least 3 years of water consumption records for the same property regardless of property ownership
- the property has used on average less than 4 Kilolitres of water per day for the previous 3 years regardless of property ownership
- Council staff agree, based on daily water consumption at the same property over the previous 3 years, regardless of property ownership, during similar periods as the period in question, that the daily consumption figures indicated by the water meter reading, the subject of the complaint are significantly higher (for example greater than 100% higher) than previous readings taken during similar periods at the same property
- The property owner has undertaken investigation in an effort to ascertain whether there is an internal leak in water plumbing downstream of the water meter servicing the property – and no leak is found
- The property owner agrees to allow Council staff to undertake on site investigations, where necessary, to ascertain whether there is an internal leak - and no leak is found.

1.3 Replace the water meter

Council will replace the water meter on the subject property, even if testing indicates that it is not faulty, at no cost to the property owner.

2 FOR INCREASES WHICH THE PROPERTY OWNER CLAIMS IS DUE TO AN INTERNAL LEAK

2.1 Council to investigate

A property owner requesting a reduction in water charges due to an internal leak must allow Council staff to undertake on site investigations to ascertain the nature of the leak and, if required, proof that the leak has been repaired.

2.2 Conditions where Council will consider reducing charges

If Council is satisfied an internal leak has occurred and;

- there is at least 3 years of water consumption records for the same property regardless of property ownership
- the property has used on average less than 4 Kilolitres of water per day for the previous 3 years regardless of property ownership
- Council staff agree, based on daily water consumption at the same property over the previous 3 years, regardless of property ownership, during similar periods as the period in question, that the daily consumption figures indicated by the water meter reading, the subject of the complaint are significantly higher (for example greater than 100% higher) than previous readings taken during similar periods at the same property
- The property owner has identified and repaired the leak thought to have caused the increased consumption.

3 HOW WILL THE CHARGES/CONSUMPTION BE REDUCED

Regardless of the reason given for the increase in consumption, and assuming the criteria listed in 1.1 and 1.2 or 2.1 and 2.2 above are met, Council may reduce the water consumption charge and water consumption figures, for the disputed period, as follows;

3.1 Charges

The charge levied will be withdrawn and replaced with

The average daily consumption for similar periods in the preceding three years (regardless of ownership of the property), multiplied by the number of days during the period in question, multiplied by the appropriate charge.

3.2 Year to date consumption figures

If the charge is withdrawn as per 3.1 above then the total consumption figures on the subject property for the subject financial year will be adjusted, as if the lesser quantity of water had been consumed in the disputed period. If necessary subsequent charges for the remainder of the financial year in which the disputed consumption occurred will also be amended.

4 LIMIT ON SIMILAR CLAIMS

To prevent property owners from repeatedly claiming discounts in water consumption under this policy Council will not consider such requests from property owners if a similar request, whether due to an internal leak or an unexplained increase, has been made for the same property within the previous 5 years.

5 LIMIT ON WHEN CLAIMS CAN BE MADE

Property owners must make a claim for reduction in water consumption charges within 3 months (90 days) of the date of Council's invoice which details charges based on increased consumption.

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♦ *History:*