



3 . WATER SUPPLY

Policy 3.8

EXCESSIVE WATER USAGE ALLOWANCE FOR BREAKAGES

Version 6

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OBJECTIVE:

This policy allows a rebate for excessive water usage which may be provided to property owners when a breakage occurs that is beyond their control or would cause excessive water usage accounts that are inconsistent with previous bill levels for the same owner on the same property.

POLICY:

1. The policy applies to property owners seeking a rebate for an undetected leak on their property. Council water meters register usage once water has passed through the meter to the private property from the Council infrastructure. Council does not distinguish usage between leaks or water utilised for on-property usage, Council only registers total usage at a property via the water meter. A property owner is responsible for all water usage which is recorded on the water meter/s located on or servicing their property. The following conditions apply to rebate requests: -
 - 1.1. All requests must be in writing with sufficient details of the circumstances of the undetected leak.
 - 1.2. A request for a rebate must be received within 30 days of receipt of the consumption account or from the date that the leak was discovered.
 - 1.3. All leaks must be repaired and proof of the breakage in infrastructure will need to be substantiated by way of a tradesman's account showing the date of repairs and/or supply of goods.
2. If an application is received in writing for Council to determine an account as showing excessive water usage due to damage to infrastructure on the property owner's side of the meter, the following criteria apply: -
 - 2.1. The leakage must have been significant and undetectable. Significant leakage is determined if the water usage for the quarterly billing period in question is greater than 100 kilolitres and is 1.5 times greater than the previous 4 quarters daily average usage.
 - 2.2. Undetectable leakage is defined as occurring within pipeline breaks or connections in the ground, under slabs or within walls and is clearly not visible to the owner.
 - 2.3. Council may consider relief for the account if it is evident that the ratepayer will incur financial hardship.
3. The following steps will apply in assessing applications for rebates related to undetected leaks: -
 - 3.1. An assessment will be made of the applicant's average consumption for the period that the leak occurred.

- 3.2. The average consumption is calculated by averaging the previous four billing periods or previous four equivalent seasonal billing periods depending upon the usage pattern that is evident. The most consistent record is used to calculate the average used.
- 3.3. Based on the difference between the average consumption and the water account for the period of the breakage, a 50% rebate will be applied to the account up to a maximum of \$1,500.
- 3.4. Owners must request in writing and provide detailed reasons if they wish to be considered for a rebate in addition to Section 3.3.
- 3.5. In cases where an applicant has a pensioner / concession discount, a full rebate of the difference between the average consumption and the water account for the period of the breakage may be considered.
4. Council officers with appropriate delegated authority may approve rebate applications in accordance with the criteria set out in Sections 2 and 3 of this policy.
5. Property owners may alternatively apply for assistance, where eligible, under Council's Hardship Policy 8.6.
6. Where possible, Council will utilise its smart metering system to provide information to property owners for possible leak notification. As Council utilises an online platform for property owners to assess their usage information from the smart meters, Council does not accept liability in cases where there is no notification of a potential leak.
7. Council will correspond with the property owner via written correspondence to notify of leaks wherever possible.
8. Council will maintain records of correspondence to notify of leaks and provide this to the property owner upon request. A rebate will not be provided on the grounds of correspondence not being received or a leak notification not being received.

Right of Review

9. Property owners who are not satisfied with a rebate decision are entitled to one appeal of the decision. Requests for a review must be made in writing within 20 working days of the date of the rebate decision. The review will be undertaken by a senior staff member who was not involved in the original rebate decision. The staff member will consider the written request and circumstances of the undetected leak. They will advise the complainant of the outcome of their appeal by letter.

Sewer usage and Trade Waste Charges (non-residential properties)

10. Where a non-residential property, subject to sewer usage and trade waste usage charges based on water consumption, experiences an undetected leak which has not discharged to the sewer system, sewer usage/trade waste charges will not apply in relation to the quantity of water estimated to be the subject of the leak with consideration to the appropriate sewer discharge factor or liquid trade waste factor applicable.
11. Sections 1 to 10 of the above policy apply to any application.

Policy 3.8 Excessive Water Usage Allowance for Breakages

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