

Water usage charges

October 2009



Fact Sheet



It is illegal for an officer of Housing NSW to ask for money or favours or other benefits of any kind in exchange for helping you with your housing needs.

It is also illegal for you or anyone else to offer money or favours or other benefits of any kind to an officer of Housing NSW in exchange for helping you. If you have any information regarding this, please call 1300 HOUSING and select Option 2. Housing NSW may refuse the provision of further housing services to anyone who has engaged or sought to engage in corrupt or illegal conduct.

If you are a tenant of Housing NSW or the Aboriginal Housing Office you are required to pay for water in addition to your weekly rent.

How you pay for water depends on whether the home you live in has a separate water meter or not.

- If you live in a home that has a separate water meter you pay for water based on your actual usage.
- If you live in a home without a separate water meter you pay a percentage of your rent as a water usage charge.

You do not pay for connection or sewerage costs or for other costs not related to actual water usage.

My home has a separate water meter

If you live in a home that has a separate water meter you pay for water based on your actual usage.

Each time Housing NSW receives a bill from your water authority, we will adjust your water charge based on your latest actual water usage.

If you used less water or more water than you were charged for during the latest billing period, we will adjust your weekly water charge to allow for that.

For example, if you have been charged \$5 per week for water usage (not including any adjustment amount) during the latest water authority billing period but the new water bill shows that your actual water usage was only \$3 per week, your new water charge would be: \$3 per week latest usage minus \$2 per week allowance for using less water = \$1 per week.

If in the above example your actual usage was \$7 per week, your new water charge would be: \$7 per week latest usage plus \$2 per week adjustment for using more water = \$9 per week.

If you are a new tenant, you start off paying a water usage charge that is set

as a percentage of your actual rent until your household's water usage can be established. Currently, that charge is set at 4.3% of your actual rent. A maximum charge of \$6.50 per week currently applies.

After that, you will commence to pay for the actual water you use. Your first actual water charge will include an adjustment to take into account whether you used more or less water than you were charged for from the start of your tenancy.

If you have a disability that causes you to use a lot more water than others, you can apply to Housing NSW for assistance. You will need to produce medical evidence to support your application.

In some cases, your home may have a separate water meter but the local water authority is not able to provide Housing NSW with sufficient information to calculate your water usage. In such cases, Housing NSW will charge you a percentage of your rent as your water charge.

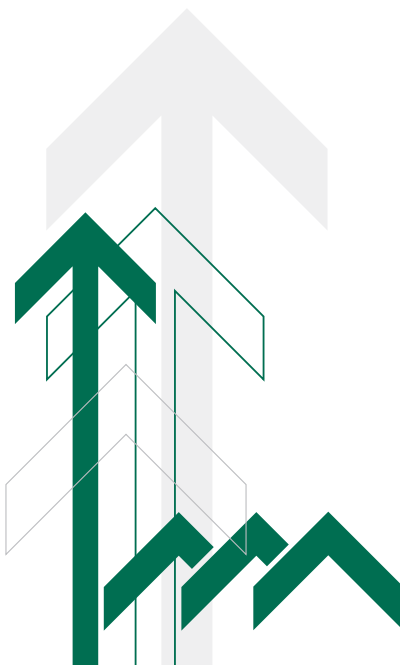
My home does not have a separate water meter

If you live in a home that does not have a separate water meter you pay a water usage charge that is currently set at 4.3% of your actual rent. A maximum charge of \$6.50 per week currently applies.

The percentage rate for this water usage charge and the maximum charge are reviewed each year. When reviewing the percentage water usage charge, Housing NSW does not include the cost of watering common areas, high usage by some tenants due to health or disability, and leaking taps or water pipes.

The percentage rate is set so that Housing NSW does not collect more from tenants of homes without a separate water meter than it pays to water authorities.

Because your water usage charge is linked to your actual rent, your water charge will change when your rent changes.



Interpreter Services

If you have difficulty understanding English, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450.

The Translating and Interpreting Service will telephone Housing NSW for you at no cost.

Arabic

خدمة الترجمة الخطية والشفوية المجانية
اتصل على الرقم 131 450

Chinese

免費的翻譯傳譯服務
致電 131 450

Russian

Служба бесплатного письменного и устного перевода
Позвоните по номеру 131 450

Spanish

Servicio Gratuito de Traducción e Interpretación
Llame al 131 450

Vietnamese

Dịch vụ Phiên dịch và Thông dịch Miễn phí
Điện thoại 131 450

How to pay for water

You must make your water payments into your separate water usage account. Your water account can be paid through the following options:

1. internet – via Housing NSW website (www.housing.nsw.gov.au)
2. BPAY® – including phone and internet transactions
3. in person at the Post Office
4. Rent Deduction Scheme (RDS)

Other payment options may be available. Please talk to us for further details or read the *Payment Options* fact sheet available on the Housing NSW website or at a local office.

Remember to advise Australia Post staff that you are paying for water, so it is paid into your separate water usage account and not into your rent account.

Water enquiries and reporting leaks

For further questions, or to report a water leak or maintenance problem, please telephone Housing NSW on 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year round.

Appeals

You may appeal to Housing NSW or later to the Housing Appeals Committee if you disagree with the amount of your percentage water charge or with a decision on your application for a water allowance. Note that under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, Housing NSW has a legal right to charge you for water.

Further information

For further information please visit your local office or our website on www.housing.nsw.gov.au, or telephone Housing NSW on 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year round.

The information provided by Housing NSW in this fact sheet is as accurate as possible at publication date. The information applies to most tenants, but there may be some exceptions, based on each tenant's circumstances.

