

POLICY



Date adopted: 30/05/2017
File no: 839409-1
Minute number: 148/2017

Policy title: CONCEALED LEAK REMISSION

Directorate: ROAD & WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Branch: WATER SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Policy objective: To provide criteria by which applications can be considered, assessed and processed to allow partial financial relief from water consumption charges that have arisen as a result of a proven concealed leak.

Policy scope:

This policy applies to:

1. All owner occupied residential properties with a Logan City Council metered water service, where the owner has had a concealed leak repaired by a licensed plumber;
2. All designated fire services installed solely for purpose of fire-fighting, where a concealed leak in the designated fire service has occurred and has been repaired by a licensed plumber.

Definitions:

TERM	DEFINITION
Concealed leak	Water escaping from the main internal property water supply where an occupant could not reasonably be expected to know of its immediate existence.
Property water supply	The underground pipe from the rear of Council's water meter to the initial connection point of the main dwelling or building. The underground pipe running to the main dwelling or building on the property does not include any water service lines or plumbing that feeds off this underground pipe to other taps on the property or other minor buildings on the property. For trickle feed or mixed demand plumbing configurations, this only includes the first point of connection to the water tank or the initial connection point to the main dwelling or building from the designated on-demand line.
Water	Potable water supplied by Logan City Council.
Leakage amount	Difference between the average water consumption for the nominated period and the actual water consumption. The average of the owner's or occupier's water consumption is calculated using previous history data as recorded by Council over the immediately preceding four billing periods for the designated meter; or if this method is not practicable (e.g. new property owner), other reasonable methodology as determined by Council.

TERM	DEFINITION
Designated fire service	A meter installed for the purposes of providing water for fire-fighting purposes only.
Owner-occupied residential property	A single self-contained dwelling house, home unit or townhouse that is either categorised by Council for rating purposes under Council's Differential Rating Category Residential 1 or the property owner can provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the dominant purpose for which the land is used is by a household that includes the owner of the land.

Policy statement:

1. Concealed leaks on properties do occur and can remain undetected for a length of time if the customer does not monitor their consumption via their water meter on a regular basis.
2. Where Logan City Council becomes aware of an increase in a customer’s consumption through the regular meter reading cycle, Council will attempt to notify the customer. Customers must not rely on Council to provide this information, as it is provided where possible as a courtesy only. Customers are encouraged to take regular readings of their water meter to promptly detect any unusual increases in consumption. Although maintenance of the customer’s infrastructure remains the responsibility of the customer, Council recognises that some customers may require assistance to reduce the water consumption costs incurred in this situation. Hence, this policy has been put in place to assist with such situations.
3. Where a concealed leak has impacted more than one billing period and eligibility criteria is met, consideration may be given for a maximum of two (2) consecutive billing periods, the period in which the leak was repaired and the preceding period may also be considered for adjustment.
4. Where a concealed leak has occurred at an **owner-occupied residential property** and eligibility criteria have been met, Council will provide a reduction of one hundred percent (100%) of the Council water consumption charge (i.e. excluding the State Government Bulk Water Charge), for the leakage amount.
5. Where a concealed leak occurs in a **designated fire service** and eligibility criteria have been met, the water consumption charge will be reduced from the designated fire service rate per kilolitre to the normal domestic rate per kilolitre for the amount of chargeable consumption, as determined by the designated fire service water meter.
6. **Eligibility criteria for the above to be granted:**
 - (a) For the water leak to be considered concealed it must be in the property water supply as defined in this policy, difficult to locate and there must be little or no visual evidence of the leak.
 - (b) The property on which the leak has occurred must not have been subject to development excavation or construction within the previous six (6) months.
 - (c) The property must be an **owner-occupied residential property** at the time the concealed leak is repaired. Note this criteria does not apply for a concealed leak that occurs in a **designated fire service**.

- (d) The leak must not be within a dwelling or building on the property. Faulty toilet cisterns, tap washers, tap o-rings, leaking hot water services, leaks within walls and floors and shower recesses, leaking sprinkler and irrigation systems, leaks in hoses, hose pipes, external taps and fittings, leaking swimming pools, spas, water features and solar heating systems including the pipe work supplying these, leaking water tanks and faulty tank float valves will not be considered under this policy. Water lost as a result of theft, vandalism, leaving a tap running or unexplained water use is also not eligible for a remission under this policy.
- (e) The leak must be fixed within one (1) month of identification/notification of the leak by Council via a card left in the letter box, phone call or letter advising of increased consumption. In the absence of advice from Council, the leak must have been repaired within one (1) month of the issue date of the rate notice containing the increased water consumption charges due to the concealed leak.
- (f) An application must be made on the prescribed form by the property owner/authorised agent within three (3) months of the issue date of the rates notice containing the increased water consumption charges due to the concealed leak.
- (g) The body corporate must apply on behalf of all owner occupied residential units that are part of a Community Title Scheme where water consumption is divided between each unit using the Contribution Schedule Lot Entitlement (a copy of the relevant rate notice is not required in this instance).
- (h) Documented evidence from a licensed plumber (e.g. invoice or report on letterhead which includes the licence number) detailing work undertaken to repair the leak, must accompany the application.
- (i) A copy of the relevant rate notice must accompany the application.
- (j) An application must be made in writing for consideration for a remission for a second consecutive billing period. A copy of the relevant rates notice must accompany this application (documentation from the plumber is not required).
- (k) The owner of the property must not have received a financial adjustment on an account for that property due to a concealed leak within the last three (3) years from the end of the rating period that the financial adjustment was applied.
- (l) In cases where it is evident that continual claims are occurring for a property, Council reserves the right to refuse applications under this policy until such time as the property owner has upgraded the property water supply pipe and can demonstrate this by producing documentation from a plumber detailing the work carried out.

Related policies/legislation/other documents:

DOC ID	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOCUMENT NAME