

# Concealed Leak Remission Policy



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# 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to meet the requirements of Section 19 of the South East Queensland Customer Water and Wastewater Code. This section requires service providers to have a concealed leaks policy.

The policy offers partial financial relief to customers who receive higher water bills due to concealed leaks in their Property Water Supply. It outlines the criteria for assessing eligibility and explains how relief is provided when leaks are not readily visible.

## 2. Legislative context

This policy is aligned with:

- South East Queensland Customer Water and Wastewater Code, section 19.
- South East Queensland Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remission Scheme, administered by Seqwater and the Queensland State Government.
- Logan City Council's statutory obligations under relevant water supply and local government legislation.

## 3. Principles

Council applies a transparent and equitable approach to concealed leak remissions, guided by the following principles:

### 3.1 Transparency

Council is committed to providing a clear and accessible process for customers to apply for remission of water consumption charges due to concealed leaks.

### 3.2 Responsibility

Customers are responsible for their internal plumbing infrastructure and are encouraged to take regular readings of their water meter to understand and monitor their consumption. Council may notify customers of unusual consumption, but this is a courtesy service only.

### 3.3 Fairness

Remissions are calculated based on defined eligibility criteria and leakage estimates, ensuring consistent and fair outcomes for all applicants.

### 3.4 Compliance

All repairs must be undertaken by licensed plumbers, and applications must be supported by appropriate documentation from a licenced plumber (e.g., invoice or report on letterhead that includes the licence number).

## 4. Our approach to Concealed Leaks

### 4.1 What is a concealed leak

A concealed leak is water escaping from the main internal property water supply where an occupant could not reasonably know of its immediate existence. The main internal water supply is defined as the underground pipe from the rear of Council's water meter to the initial connection point of the main dwelling or building.

### 4.2 What type of concealed leaks are covered under this policy

This policy covers concealed leaks escaping from the property water supply, which is the underground pipe from the rear of Council's water meter to the initial connection point of the main dwelling or building.

Leaks inside houses or in pipes to other buildings or taps are not included under this policy.

### 4.3 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a remission, the applicant must be a customer and either:

- a residential property owner-occupier
- a residential property non-owner-occupier (landlord)
- body corporates for Community Title Schemes
- residential properties owned by incorporated entities (with some exceptions)

- residential properties held in trust (with some exceptions)
- where the concealed leak occurred on the common property of a residential community titles scheme, the water consumption charges have been billed to the body corporate account or apportioned to multiple properties within the residential community titles scheme (who are directly billed a percentage of the overall water consumption charges)
- where the concealed leak has occurred on a designated fire service – a commercial property owner.

No other property owners are eligible to receive financial assistance under this policy. The property must be residential (except for designated fire services).

The leak must be concealed and repaired by a licensed plumber within one month of notification, identification or rate notice issue containing the increased water consumption charges due to the concealed leak.

The property must not have undergone development, excavation, or landscaping in the previous 6 months.

In the absence of advice from Council, the concealed leak must have been repaired within one month of the issue date of the rate notice containing the increased water consumption charges due to the concealed leak. While Council makes reasonable efforts to notify a customer of a potential internal leak, it takes no responsibility to confirm that notification has been received.

In exceptional circumstances, where the customer can demonstrate valid reasons for delay (e.g. illness, access to trades, or hardship), Council may extend the timeframe for repair or application submission.

#### 4.4 How to identify a Concealed Leak

Look for these signs:

- A sudden spike in your water bill

- Noisy or running water sounds when no taps are on
- Refer to the Water Leaks page on Council's website for more information.

#### 4.5 Application Process

An application must be made on the prescribed form by the customer or their authorised agent within 3 months of the issue date of the rates notice containing the increased water consumption charges due to the concealed leak.

The customer must provide, documented evidence from a licensed plumber (e.g., invoice or report on letterhead that includes the licence number) detailing work undertaken to repair the concealed leak and reading of the water meter after the repair. This must accompany the application.

Where a customer is experiencing financial hardship and does not meet eligibility for remission, Council will refer them to its relevant hardship support programs.

#### 4.6 Calculation and payment of remissions

Where all eligibility criteria are met:

- Logan City Council will provide a maximum of 70% remission of the estimated leakage amount for the Logan City Council water usage charge; or 100% remission where the customer is an Eligible Pensioner.
- a 70% remission will be provided for the State Bulk Water Charge component of the estimated leakage amount under the South East Queensland State Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remissions Scheme; or 100% remission where the customer is an Eligible Pensioner.

Where a concealed leak has impacted more than one billing period and all eligibility criteria are met, consideration may be given to a remission for a maximum of 2 consecutive billing periods. This means the period in which the concealed leak was repaired, and the preceding period).

Where a concealed leak occurs in a designated fire service and all eligibility criteria are met, the water

consumption charge will be reduced from the designated fire service rate per kilolitre to the normal domestic rate per kilolitre for chargeable consumption. This is determined by the designated fire service water meter.

Any remission will be applied as a credit on the customer's assessment notice. Where a change of ownership has occurred, remissions will be assessed for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

The South East Queensland Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remission Scheme is a Queensland State Government initiative and remissions provided under this scheme are administered on behalf of Seqwater and the Queensland State Government by Logan City Council and may be subject to change.

#### 4.7 Exclusions

The customer must not have received a financial adjustment on an account for that property due to a concealed leak within the last 3 years from the end of the rating period when the financial adjustment was applied.

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 the customer has upgraded the property water supply. This must be demonstrated by producing documentation from a licenced plumber detailing the work carried out.

A concealed leak must not be within a dwelling or building on the property or be the result of any of the following:

- Faulty toilet cisterns
- Tap washers
- Leaking water tanks and faulty tank float valves
- Leaking hot water services
- Leaks within the 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
- Solar heating systems including the pipe work supplying these
- Tap o-rings
- Water lost as a result of theft or vandalism
- Leaving a tap running or unexplained water use is also not eligible for a remission under this policy.

Council reserves the right to request additional documentation or conduct inspections where repeat claims are made, if required.

## 5. Reporting

This policy acknowledges the reimbursement by Seqwater of remissions of State Government Bulk Water Charges and will be reported as cost recovery by Logan Water and in Council's annual report.

## 6. Complaints

Council will aim to resolve complaints directly with customers. Complaints about the State Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remissions Scheme should be referred to the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers.

## 7. Definitions

**Concealed leak:** Where:

- there is water escaping from the main internal property water supply where an occupant could not reasonably be expected to know of its immediate existence
- the leak occurs in the property water supply on the residential side of the water meter
- there is little or no audible or visual evidence of the leak.

**Customer:** Residential customer receiving a rate notice with water charges.

**Designated fire service:** Connection and meter for firefighting only.

**Eligible pensioner:** Eligible pensioners must be eligible to receive a pensioner water subsidy on their Rates Notice and are the owner/ part owner or life tenant of the property, live on the property permanently and have one of the following:

- a current Queensland Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, or
- a Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card; or
- a Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card.

**Financial hardship:** A situation where a customer is unable to pay water charges due to temporary or ongoing financial difficulty, as assessed under Council's hardship policy.

**Leakage amount:** The difference between the average water consumption for the nominated period and the actual water consumption. The average of the water consumption is calculated using data recorded by Council over the immediately preceding 4 billing periods for the relevant meter. If this method is not practical (for example, there is a new property owner), another reasonable methodology will be determined by Council.

**Notification:** Any form of communication from Council.

**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.

This does not include water service lines or plumbing that feeds off the 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.

**Residential property:** A single self-contained dwelling house, home unit or townhouse that:

- is categorised by Council as Residential 1 or Residential 2 under Council's differential rating; or
- can be demonstrated to have a dominant purpose for residential use.

**Residential non-owner occupied:** The owner of a residential property who does not reside at the property.

**Residential owner-occupied:** a person who owns a residential property (such as a house, townhouse, or apartment), and lives in that property as their primary place of residence.

**Residential community title scheme:** Scheme land with common property and body corporate.

**South East Queensland Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remission Scheme:** An initiative by the Queensland State Government effective from 2 August 2023, providing financial assistance to eligible customers in relation to the cost of the State Bulk Water Charges incurred due to a concealed leak at their property.

**State Government Bulk Water Charges:** The price the Queensland Government sets and charges Council to purchase water to supply to customers. This price is passed on to our customers at cost. It pays for capturing, storing, treating and transporting bulk water from the Queensland Government's South East Queensland Water Grid to Logan's water supply network.

**Water consumption charges:** Council's charge for storing water, maintaining it to drinking quality standards and transporting it to customers' homes and businesses. This charge is based on how much water is used at a particular property.

**Water Subsidy:** A subsidy provided to eligible pensioners by the Queensland State Government.

## 8. Document Control

| Version Control | File Number | Document Number | Council Min No. | Description of Change  | Effective Date |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 1.0             | 839409-1    | 9218355         |                 | Creation.  | 30/05/2017     |
| 2.0             | 839409-1    | 9218355         | 32/2023         | Expansion of policy scope and application to 50% total cost of water lost by concealed leak and inclusion of all residential (including pensioner) customers and CTS properties.   | 01/07/2023     |
| 3.0             | 839409-1    | 9218355         | 81/2023         | Change to remissions to address State Bulk Water Concealed Leak Remission Scheme taking remission amount to 70% of Logan City Council Charge and 70% of State Bulk Water Charge; and 100% of Logan City Council Charge and 100% of State Bulk Water Charge for Eligible Pensioner customers. | 20/10/2023     |
| 4.0             | 839409-1    | 9218355         | 172/2025        | Updated policy adopted by Council.   | 10/04/2026     |