

Tenants & Landlords – Water Consumption

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Water charges and tenants

Property owners may pass on the full water consumption costs to tenants if:

- the rental premises are individually metered (or water is delivered by vehicle)
- the rental premises are water efficient
- the tenancy agreement states the tenant must pay for water consumption

Water efficient premises should meet the 3-star WELS rating, which is:

- a maximum flow rate of nine litres per minute for showerheads, internal cold water taps and single mixer taps (excluding taps for bathtubs and appliances); and
- dual flush toilets using less than 6.5 litres on full flush, 3.5 litres on half flush and 4 litres for the average flush volume (based on the average of one full flush and four half flushes).

If the premises are individually metered but not water efficient, and the agreement states the tenant must pay for water, the lessor must pay for a reasonable amount of water. The lessor and the tenant should agree upon what is a reasonable amount at the start of the tenancy and include the amount as a special term in the tenancy agreement. The tenant is liable for any consumption above the agreed amount.

You can find more information and download a [RTA water charging fact sheet](#) from the [RTA website](#) or phone 1300 366 311.

Tenants and property owners/agents should become familiar with the location of the water meter and note the reading at the start and end of the tenancy on the entry/exit condition reports.

Property owners are required to provide evidence of the water consumed to verify the amount tenants are being charged for water consumption.

Council does not bill tenants directly for water consumption.

Council encourages all residents to monitor their consumption and be aware of leaks, regardless of billing arrangements. To avoid higher water consumption charges, leaks should be reported to the property owner or managing agent immediately for investigation.

How can I verify my water consumption?

Property owners will receive a rate notice from Council which includes their water charges. They should provide their managing agent or tenants with a copy of water charges or evidence of water consumption to verify the amount to be charged.

If you are concerned about the amount of water use you have been charged for, paid or any other matter relating to your tenancy you should contact the property owner or managing agent.

If, however, you are unable to resolve a payment issue, you can contact the [Residential Tenancies Authority](#) on 1300 366 311.

Council may be able to provide you with consumption history for the property in some instances.

I am a tenant moving house, what do I need to do?

You will need to confirm with the property owner (or their appointed agent) that the water meter will be read at the property you are vacating. This will ensure that you are only charged for the water that you use.

Recording meter readings at the beginning and end of each tenancy enables the property owner or agent to determine the volume of water used by each tenant and to bill them the correct charges.

Council does not disconnect the water supply when a property is vacated, so water will be available to you at any property you move to.

I suspect a leak at my rental property, what should I do?

To avoid higher water consumption charges, leaks should be reported to the property owner or managing agent immediately for investigation.

A brochure on how to check for water leaks is available on Council's [website](#).

Can tenants be billed directly for water usage?

No, Council only sends a rate notice to the property owner and cannot bill tenants directly for water usage. Unlike other utilities, there is currently no direct billing relationship between Council and the tenant.