



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Natural Resources, Lands and Water

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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HUNTER HAS CHEAPEST WATER BILL IN AUSTRALIA

Hunter Water has for the first time claimed the title of the cheapest water bill in Australia, beating water utilities in every capital city.

Minister for Natural Resources, Lands and Water Kevin Humphries said the title is the result of management's back to basics approach to running a water utility that under Labor had become obsessed with building the Tillegra Dam.

Mr Humphries said Hunter Water's success in having the cheapest water bill in Australia will be embarrassing to the Labor party.

"Rather than encouraging Hunter Water to continue its quest to drive down water prices, the Labor party has criticised management and tried to spook the community about a privatisation agenda that simply doesn't exist.

"Today's number one ranking for cheap water bills is proof that Hunter Water is making decisions in the customer's best interests.

"The difference in Hunter Water today and when the Labor party was in office has never been more evident. Last year water prices were below inflation. It's the same result this year and it will be the same result next year. Under Labor water bills were jumping by 40% every 4 years," Mr Humphries said.

Hunter Water (\$1,079) has the lowest average water bill in Australia, closely followed by Wyong Water (\$1,089) and Sydney Water (\$1,153). Water bills in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland are all substantially higher, some by as much as \$500 per year.

"NSW water utilities were for years held back by a Labor Government that rewarded inefficiency and lived in fear of union threats. Under the Coalition, Hunter Water has been encouraged to get on with the job of delivering clean, safe water that is hundreds of dollars cheaper than water utilities in other States.

"The people of NSW are seeing the benefits of electing a NSW Liberals & Nationals Government that promised to cut out the fat of the NSW bureaucracy and pass on savings to ease cost of living pressures.

"This year Hunter Water has sold its head office building for a record price and sourced a new operator for its treatment plants at a discount of \$23 million to budget. It is now selling Tillegra Dam properties while improving performance with less leaking pipes and fewer mains bursting," Kevin Humphries said.

Water utilities with 100,000 or more connections for a residential property consuming 200 kilolitres of water per year were compared. The study did not take into account any government rebates. The results were based on information from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, Water Services Association of Australia and other water utilities.

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