



# Customer Contract summary

## Want to know more about your contract with us?

### Find out about your rights and obligations when using our drinking water, sewerage and stormwater services.

Your contract also explains what to do in terms of disputes, and what rights you have throughout this process. Your contract is a legally enforceable document and is a requirement of the *Hunter Water Act 1991*.

Your contract includes:

- what a customer contract is and who it covers
- what services Hunter Water provides
- what you must pay and how you can pay
- what to do if you are unable to pay your account
- restriction or disconnection of services
- redress and rebates
- responsibilities for maintenance and repair
- defective or unauthorised work.

You will also find information on Hunter Water's right to enter onto your property, what you can do if you are not happy with services we provided, and who you can speak to if you have questions.

Visit [hunterwater.com.au/contract](https://hunterwater.com.au/contract) to download your free, full copy of our Customer Contract

## Your rights and obligations

If you are a customer with a standard, authorised connection it is important you know your key rights and obligations.

We may enter a separate agreement with you for the provision of different levels of service. For example, a non-standard water connection, a non-standard sewerage connection, a trade waste connection or recycled water connection.

### Our services

These include:

- supplying drinking water that complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- supplying recycled water for non-drinking purposes where available
- collecting and treating your household wastewater
- collecting and treating trade waste, if you have an agreement with us
- providing stormwater drainage if your property is in a declared stormwater drainage area.

### Interruptions to your services

There may be times when we need to interrupt your access to our services for planned works or maintenance, or in emergency situations. If there is an unplanned interruption to your services, we will work towards restoring access as quickly as possible.

For planned interruptions we will:

- notify you of the expected time and duration of the interruption
- provide residential customers with two days notice and non-residential customers with seven days notice
- try to reinstate your services within five hours.

If your services are interrupted by planned or unplanned work, you may be entitled to a rebate. To learn more, visit [hunterwater.com.au/rebates](https://hunterwater.com.au/rebates)

### Maintenance and repair

If you are a property owner, you are responsible for maintaining and repairing the water system, including all pipes and fittings, within your property boundary (excluding the water meter). However, we may maintain and repair your water system up to and including the meter if it is located within one metre of your property.

You are also responsible for maintaining and repairing your wastewater pipes and fittings. If there is a blockage in your wastewater pipes, you will need to arrange and pay for a licensed plumber to clear the blockage. Contact us if you have any questions about your repair and maintenance responsibilities.

If a blockage occurs in our sewer system, we will clear it so long as it wasn't created through negligence, in which case you may need to contribute to the cost.

### Defective or unauthorised connections or works

If your water, wastewater or stormwater services are defective or unauthorised, we may request that you fix them within a reasonable timeframe. If you are unable to carry out these works due to financial difficulty, we encourage you to contact us so we can work towards a solution for you.

If you do not contact us and are unable to fix these services, we may restrict or disconnect your services or solve the defects ourselves and charge you for the costs of the work.

### Can Hunter Water enter my property?

We may need to access your land so that we can maintain our systems, read, fit, exchange or maintain a water meter, or to ensure you are complying with your contract or other applicable laws. Our staff and authorised contractors will always carry identification.

We ask that you always ensure that your property and the land around your meter is safe for our staff and contractors to enter during the day. In emergencies, we may need to enter your property at night.

We will give you at least two days written notice when we need to enter your property for planned work, unless you agree to a shorter notice period. In some circumstances, we may not be able to provide you with notice if the following applies:

- it is an emergency
- it is to read a water meter
- it is to investigate a health or safety issue
- if giving notice would defeat the purposes of entry.

We will always try to cause as little inconvenience as possible when entering your property. Our staff will remove our rubbish and equipment and aim to leave your property, as near as possible, in the condition that it was found when they entered. If we damage your property, you may be entitled to compensation.

## Building over or near our infrastructure

Our infrastructure is vital for delivering our services to the community. In order to protect it, we ask that you do not undertake any excavation, building, landscaping or other construction work that is over, or adjacent to, our infrastructure, without speaking to us and receiving approval first.

We may have to request that you remove any unauthorised work that has the potential to interfere with our infrastructure, or access to our infrastructure, at your own cost.

## What can't I do?

We all love our water, so to help us care for and preserve this precious resource, we ask that you don't:

- wrongfully take, use or divert water from our infrastructure
- interfere with any meters
- wrongfully discharge any substance into our infrastructure
- alter, cause destruction of, damage to, or interference with, our infrastructure.

## Your water meter

It is important that we can access your water meter at all times. If we cannot access your meter, we may estimate your water usage and charge you accordingly.

We may also estimate your water usage if your meter is damaged or stops working.

## Account assistance

If you are a residential customer, you will receive a bill from us every four months. You are responsible for paying the amount on your bill by the due date. We offer a variety of ways to pay your bill including, but not limited to, paying via our website, direct debit and BPAY.

We may charge you interest on overdue amounts and for the fees we incur in recovering amounts owed to us. If your account is overdue and you have not made a payment arrangement with us, we may restrict or disconnect the water supply to your property.

We understand that bills can influence your household budget, and are sometimes hard to meet. If you are having difficulty paying your bill or meeting a payment due date, we can help tailor a solution for you.

This may include an extension, a payment plan with regular instalments, access to our Payment Assistance Scheme, and/or the option of free financial counselling services. Private tenants who pay for water usage may also be eligible for assistance.

By reaching out to our team, we will review your account and work with you to tailor an arrangement that best suits your circumstances, ensuring you avoid any unnecessary collection action or fees. Contact us to discuss your options and the support available.

## Support for pensioners

Eligible pensioners can receive a rebate of up to \$410 per year off the cost of water usage and service charges. Those eligible could save up to \$136 each bill. Pensioner concession card holders and Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders (TPI/TII, war widow/widower or EDA) who own and occupy their home or unit are eligible to apply.

If you are not currently receiving the pension rebate, and think you may be eligible, please visit [hunterwater.com.au/pensionrebates](https://hunterwater.com.au/pensionrebates) for more information or to apply.

## Complaints handling

We aim to provide great services to our customers every day, but we know that sometimes things can go wrong. When this happens, we want to learn and understand how we can improve. If you are unhappy with our service, we welcome the opportunity to put things right.

Tell us your concerns at [hunterwater.com.au/complaints](https://hunterwater.com.au/complaints) or call us on 1300 657 657 and speak with one of our customer service staff who will work with you to understand your concerns.

If we are unable to address your concern and you would like to lodge a complaint for further investigation, you can:

- lodge your complaint online at [hunterwater.com.au/complaints](https://hunterwater.com.au/complaints)
- call us on 1300 657 657 and we will log a case
- write to us at Customer Care Team, PO Box 5171, HRMC 2310.

## External dispute resolution

If you are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint after it has gone through our complaints management processes, you can raise your concerns for external dispute resolution with the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON).

EWON is an independent dispute resolution body that can investigate and resolve any disputes you have with us. For more information, visit EWON at [ewon.com.au](https://ewon.com.au) or phone 1800 246 545.

## Get in touch

We're here for you when you need us.

 1300 657 657 (weekdays 8am-5pm)  
1300 657 000 (emergencies 24 hours, seven days)  
Translation service: 131 450

 36 Honeysuckle Drive, Newcastle NSW 2300

 [enquiries@hunterwater.com.au](mailto:enquiries@hunterwater.com.au)

 PO Box 5171, HRMC NSW 2310

 [hunterwater.com.au](https://hunterwater.com.au)