



23 June 2023

Supporting our customers as water prices rise

Hunter Water is encouraging its customers to get in touch if they need help paying their water bills, with a range of assistance programs and support services available.

In recognition that some in our community are doing it tough, Hunter Water's total residential support programs will increase to \$20 million from 1 July 2023.

From 1 July 2023, typical residential water and wastewater bills will increase by 7.5%, or about \$30 per billing cycle, but we're here to help if you're experiencing financial difficulties due to cost-of-living pressures.

"Hunter Water recognises the essential services we deliver to our customers and community, so for anyone who may experience difficulty paying their water bill, we urge them to please contact us as we can work together to find the right support for you," said Executive Manager of Customer Services, Matt Hingston.

"Our non-residential customers, especially small businesses, are also encouraged to contact Hunter Water to discuss their options and how we can tailor our help."

Hunter Water is a regulated monopoly service provider with prices set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). Consistent with IPART's determination, Hunter Water's prices are adjusted consistent with national Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation as determined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

While bills will increase from 1 July 2023, there will be no further increase in customer prices this time next year, with the new prices applying until 30 June 2025.

For the next two years, the typical household's combined water and wastewater bill will increase to \$1,365 per year, while the typical pensioner's bill will increase to \$727 per year.

The Pension Rebate will increase to \$380 per eligible property per year (up from \$354), a boost of \$1.5 million across the Lower Hunter. In the current financial year, Hunter Water's Pension Rebate was provided to 46,000 Hunter households, with support totalling \$17.3 million.

"Pensioners already registered with Hunter Water will automatically receive the increase. For those eligible customers who are not yet registered, please contact Hunter Water online or over the phone to enrol for the rebate," said Mr Hingston.

In addition to the increased Pension Rebate, tailored support is available for any eligible customer or water bill-paying private tenant experiencing financial difficulties, including payment extensions and flexible payment options such as our bill smoothing program called Easy Pay.

On top of direct support, Hunter households have a large degree of influence over their water bills by controlling their water usage. By continuing to Love Water with a WELS 3-star rated showerhead and by reducing shower time by two minutes, the average household could save over 5,000 litres of water per person per year or nearly \$15 per person per year in water charges.

In addition to the water saving, households would also save more than \$50 per person in energy consumption for hot water heating.

- Hunter Water Customer Contact Centre: 1300 657 657 or: www.hunterwater.com.au/assistance
- Hunter Water issues three bills a year, each covering four months.

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