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Community panel to shape Hunter Water's 2025-2030 price proposal

Hunter Water is calling for community members who receive an invitation in the mail to register their interest to participate in a representative community panel, which will help shape the future services provided by Hunter Water between now and the end of the decade.

The community panel is one of the final engagement stages for Hunter Water's submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), which will set Hunter Water's prices from 2025 to 2030 and include projects and services that are a priority for our customers and community.

Hunter Water has already heard from almost 6,000 people so far this year about what is important to them via earlier prioritisation surveys, bill simulations and focus groups. Now, we are launching into our third stage of engagement to inform our pricing proposal.

Hunter Water Managing Director, Darren Cleary, said the feedback Hunter Water has heard so far will be provided to a new community panel, which will be statistically representative of Hunter Water's customer and community segments, and selected at random to remove biases.

"The 45-person panel will meet over five days from November to March to consider evidence, deliberate, make trade-offs, and provide consensus recommendations on behalf of the entire community," said Mr Cleary.

"One of the main tasks for the panel will be helping us to strike the right balance of keeping bills affordable and providing the services our customers and community want from us.

"Working with an independent engagement expert, we've sent invitations to register interest in being part of the community panel to 12,000 randomly selected customers and community members in the Lower Hunter region.

"We are faced with some important decisions that will impact customer bills. We need the community's help to determine how we balance providing reliable, high-quality services and securing our water future, protecting the environment and creating a positive legacy for future generations, while also keeping downward pressure on prices," said Mr Cleary.

In recognition of the five-day commitment involved, Hunter Water will pay panel members \$170 per full-day session they attend.

More information about Hunter Water's pricing proposal can be found at www.hunterwater.com.au/haveyoursay/2025-2030-price-proposal

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