



BILLING POLICY

1 Overview

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

This Policy governs the commitment and approach Hunter Water Corporation (Hunter Water) will take to billing customers for water, wastewater and ancillary services.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to customers who are account holders with Hunter Water in accordance with the Customer Contract as well as those billed for miscellaneous products and services.

2 Policy Statement

Hunter Water is committed to complying with all legislative and regulatory requirements in billing accounts to its customers.

3 Application of Policy

Hunter Water is committed to:

- Issuing timely and accurate bills.
- Providing information to customers regarding its IPART approved prices each year.
- Ensuring customers have a range of convenient options to make payments that are detailed on the bill.
- Adjusting disputed amounts are promptly investigated and that no debt recovery action is taken until an outcome is reached.

Customers are required to:

- Pay the account on or before the payment term of 21 days or notify if there is any dispute or financial difficulty affecting the capacity to pay.
- Ensure the customer contact information is up to date.
- Advise Hunter Water immediately if there are changes to property end-use or type of connections ensuring relevant service applications have been made with Hunter Water.
- Ensuring that the meter is accessible for reading or if not possible, when requested the customer will supply a reading to enable accurate billing.

To calculate an accurate bill relevant to each property, Hunter Water requires the following information:

- The property's end-use description to be provided by the customer (e.g. standalone house, strata units, multiple occupancy, commercial, etc).
- The type/number of connections to water and sewer services including the correct meter sizing to the individual property.

- The application of attributes that are unique to each property subject to their allocation or type of end-use. For example, multiple occupancy properties require the number of dwellings; properties located within the stormwater drainage catchments managed by Hunter Water; and non-residential properties will have a Sewer Discharge Factor (SDF) percentage which is used for the calculation of sewer charges.
- The application of prices for water, sewer, and stormwater drainage and usage as determined by IPART which are used to calculate charges for each property based on the relevant property end-use, connection types, and relevant property attributes.
- The consumption recorded on the water meter(s) to calculate water usage and for non-residential properties to calculate the sewer usage. Some larger developments may have a dedicated sewer meter for the calculation of sewer usage and other trade waste charges in addition to the water meter(s).
- Where applicable, an estimated consumption based on a similar bill period may be used to calculate the usage amount where the water meter is not able to be assessed and no reading has been returned by the customer, or where the meter has stopped working or is damaged and requires replacement.
- The application of any special circumstances that may warrant approval of ongoing rebates and/or allowances on the bill for eligible customers (e.g. pension concessions, charitable rebates, water usage allowances for nursing homes etc).

4 Policy

4.1 Overview of Services

Hunter Water provides the following services to homes and businesses across the Lower Hunter Region:

- Drinking water
- Recycled water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater

The provision of these services requires continual development, maintenance and review of infrastructure and distribution assets.

4.2 Responsible Party

Property owners are responsible for paying Hunter Water charges, including where the property is rented and the tenant has agreed to pay water bills.

4.3 Customer Charges

The amount that Hunter Water may charge its customers is determined by IPART.

Hunter Water issues three bills per annum, each one covering a period of 4 months. The two main items on the bill are service charges and usage charges.

The complete list of current charges is located on the Hunter Water website including:

Residential

<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/residential-pricing-fees-and-charges>

- stand-alone house connected to water and sewer
- stand-alone house connected to water only
- stand-alone house connected to water, sewer and recycled water

- flat or unit connected to water and sewer

Business

<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/business-pricing-fees-and-charges>

- water charges (fixed, usage and zone based)
- sewer charges (fixed, usage and sewer discharge factor)
- recycled water charges
- stormwater charges
- trade waste fees (including tankered waste)
- miscellaneous services

4.4 Payment Options

Hunter Water supports its customers who may experience financial hardship with a range of policies and options. Early contact by the customer with Hunter Water is recommended.

Details of eligibility and approach are located on the Hunter Water website

(<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/get-help-paying>) and include:

- pension rebates for eligible customers
- splitting the bill into smaller regular payments
- allowing additional time to pay
- personalised support

4.5 Customer rebates

Situations may occur and water service has been interrupted, or sewer overflows are experienced.

Where there are unplanned interruptions to your drinking water service of more than five hours in duration due to a failure of water infrastructure, then Hunter Water will apply a rebate to the water usage component of your next bill.

Details for the customer rebate are located on the Hunter Water website

(<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/customer-service-delivery-rebates>).

4.6 Customer refunds

Where a customer has overpaid their account then a refund may be requested via direct deposit to a bank account using a request form located on the Hunter Water website (<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/customer-refunds>).

5 Definitions, Acronyms and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
Bill	A summary statement providing a list of charges for services provided by Hunter Water that are due and payable
Consumption	The amount of water consumed during a given period which is measured in kilolitres (kLs)
Customer	Any person taken to have entered a Customer Contract under section 36 of the <i>Hunter Water Act 1991</i>

Term	Definition
Customer Contract	Means the customer contract at Scheduled C of the operating licence granted to Hunter Water under section 12 of the <i>Hunter Water Act 1991</i>
IPART	Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW who regulate Hunter Water's pricing
Property End-Use	The type of property being serviced by Hunter Water, this may include commercial, residential house, multiple occupancy or mixed use
Property Attributes	Unique characteristics that form part of the basis for applying charges to an individual premise e.g. the number of dwellings, sewer discharge factor percentage etc
Sewer Discharge Factor	The percentage of water supplied to a property which is assessed (in the case of non-residential) or deemed to be discharged into the sewerage system (as is the case for residential)
Sundry Debtors	Debtors invoiced for the supply of non-regulated miscellaneous products and services
Water Meter	Device used to measure a customer's water use

6 Associated Regulations and Standards

Document ID	Document Title
Contract	Hunter Water Customer Contract https://www.hunterwater.com.au/about-us/publications/customer-contract
Determination	IPART Price Determination https://www.hunterwater.com.au/about-us/publications/ipart-and-pricing-proposals
Policy	Debt Recovery and Hardship https://www.hunterwater.com.au/about-us/publications/policies
Standard	Sewer Discharge Factor
Standard	Over and Undercharging
Standard	Rebates and Allowances for Customer Bills
Standard	Change of Ownership
Standard	Billing Process

Signed:

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