



## *Our Vision*

Nambucca Valley ~ Living at its best

## *Our Mission Statement*

'The Nambucca Valley will value and protect its natural environment, maintain its assets and infrastructure and develop opportunities for its people.'

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### **1.0 Policy objective**

To provide a consistent approach to reviewing the water consumption charge as well as related sewer and trade waste usage charges arising out of undetected water leaks.

### **2.0 Related Legislation and documentation**

Local Government Act 1993  
Local Government General Regulation 2021  
Council Policy ES 19 Water Supply

### **3.0 Definitions**

- **Private Water Service** - relates to all water service pipes, including recycled water service pipes, fixtures and fittings on the customer's side of the meter (outlet side), or 1 metre inside the property boundary for unmetered properties (excluding separate fire services).
- **Customer** - the owner/ratepayer of the property or an applicant on behalf of the owner who has previously given proof to Council of their agency agreement or power of attorney, etc.

### **4.0 Policy Content**

Council will consider applications to vary water consumption charges and related sewer and trade waste usage charges (if applicable) where:

- The water service is constructed of material approved by Council including
  - copper pipe
  - polyethylene (PE) pipe for pressure applications and
- A defect in the private water service has occurred which is not readily visible or apparent (e.g. below ground, under a concrete slab, in a wall cavity, etc. It does not involve leakage from an appliance, fixture, water pump, visible hot water system or the like. Lush grass or damp soil does not constitute being concealed from view.) to the owner or occupier, was not due to the neglect of obvious defects in the private water service, and Council is satisfied that there has been immediate and effective action to make repairs and

- Where solar hot water systems are located on rooftops and overflow is directed into the gutter or down pipe and
- The private water service is repaired within 14 days of an occupant/property owner or authorised representative becoming aware of the leak including, but not limited to, being notified by Council of an increase in water usage and a report from the plumber submitted to Council confirming the repairs are in accordance with the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011 No. 59 Section 6 Part 2 Division 1 which states:

*6 Plumbing and drainage work to be carried out only by authorised persons A person must not do any kind of plumbing and drainage work unless the person:*

*(a) holds an endorsed contractor licence or a supervisor certificate in force under the Home Building Act 1989 authorising the holder to do that kind of work, or*

*(b) does the work under the immediate supervision of the holder of such a licence or certificate, or*

*(c) holds a tradesperson certificate in force under the Home Building Act 1989 authorising the holder to do that work under supervision and does that work under the general supervision of the holder of a licence or certificate referred to in paragraph (a)*

An application must be completed and lodged to Council within 21 days of the repair being completed using the application form located here.

Where an account is approved under this policy the following variation guidelines will apply:

- The variation will reduce the charges to an amount which is the lesser of the actual metered amount or twice the average water usage for the property as determined using three (3) previous equivalent billing periods not affected by the undetected leak (excluding nil consumption periods and replaced meter periods). However reductions up to \$1,000 will be granted at the full value of the variation calculated, any reduction amount exceeding \$1,000 will be discounted by 50% (e.g. total calculated rebate is \$3,000, the variation applied to the account will be \$2,000. The first \$1,000 applied at 100% with the remaining \$2,000 applied at 50% (\$1,000) granting a total variation of \$2,000).
- Sewer and Trade Waste usage will be varied in a similar way, but without doubling the average.

Where a customer is unaware of a leaking water service, and the leak is not due to neglect and was concealed from view, an allowance will be granted for the period of the leak i.e. granted on the current billing period if the leak was detected in that billing period or for the previous billing period (if it can be determined a leak had occurred) and the current billing period up to the date of repair.

## **5.0 Implementation**

5.1 Claims for undetected water leak allowance must be submitted and the customer is required to advise:

- how they became aware of the leak,
- the date they became aware of the leak and
- the details of the repair via a plumber's statement (as detailed below)

5.2 Before the allowance is granted, as per Section 4 of this policy the leak must be repaired by a licensed plumber or under the supervision of a licenced plumber, who must also provide a written report on the leak stating:

- the date the leak was detected,

- where the leak was situated,
- where the water was escaping,
- the date the leak was repaired,
- the meter reading at the time the leak was repaired (if available),
- possible cause and
- copy of plumber's invoice.

5.3 If the homeowner on a rural property carries out their own repairs, (which is not recommended by Council) this work must be signed off by a licenced plumber. The plumber's report is to contain the information as above at 5.2 and confirm the repairs are in accordance with Clause 6 of the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011.

5.4 A reply to the customer must be confirmed in writing to ensure the customer is aware of their responsibility to cover further costs associated with leaks to their property.

5.5 If an Application is not approved, the property owner (or authorised representative) will be advised in writing and granted 30 days from the date of this advice to either pay the Water Account in full or enter into a suitable payment arrangement with Council.

Requests for reviews outside this Policy will be referred to the General Manager for consideration.

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
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