

	WATER LEAK POLICY	Doc No. 1	
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Controller	Approved by: Council	Review Date	
General Manager	Minute Number 2020/107		

WATER LEAK POLICY

Background:

This policy has been developed to provide guidelines and procedures for decision-making on the extent of, and the conditions under which, a reduced water account may be offered to property owners who have received unusually high-water use charges due to a 'Concealed Leak'.

This policy applies to all requests for a reduction in water charges from customers using water provided by Balranald Shire Council who receive a metered supply of water to residential and non-residential property.

POLICY STATEMENT

Principles

Council is responsible for repairing water leaks on council-owned infrastructure up to and including the water meter. The property owner is responsible for reporting an unusually high-water bill to Council for consideration under this policy. Council is then responsible for investigating whether usage is historically high and in excess of expected 'Average Consumption'. Subject to any Council resolution approving the reduction in a water account under this policy, the property owner is responsible for the payment of the water account in full including consumption related leaks.

The Council is not responsible for diagnosing and/or repairing water leaks in the pipes carrying water from the water meter onto the owner's property. These and any associated water damage from such a leak remain the sole responsibility of the property owner.

Applicability

Council will only consider a request for a reduction of a water account due to a water leak where:

- the leak was a concealed leak;
- must have been a significant leak;
- the property owner took all reasonable steps to ensure the leak was repaired as soon as possible;

- the leak was repaired by a licensed plumber with the necessary certificate completed and a copy of the plumber's invoice attached outlining the date the leak was detected, where it was situated, details of cause, date repaired and cost of the repairs;
- The applicant must be the person liable for the water user charges for which the property for which the application applies;
- A written application must be received by Council within 30 days of the owner becoming aware of the leak or within 14 days of the issue of the water usage account, whichever comes first; and
- Only one application per property per financial year will be considered.

A concealed leakage is determined as occurring within pipeline breaks or connections in the ground, under slabs, or within walls and was not clearly visible by the owner. It does not include leakage from an appliance, fixture, water pump, hot-water system or the like.

Significant leakage is determined if the water usage for the period in question is 1.5 times greater than the previous 2 years daily average usage for potable water, or 1.5 times greater than the average of two same water bill periods for non-potable water (eg to allow for summer and winter variance for non-potable water usage).

Where an application is approved the water usage charge will be adjusted in accordance with the "average usage" calculated on the usage details for the subject property over the previous 2 years, whether there has been a change in ownership or not.

Financial Implications

The allowance will be equivalent to 50% of the increase above the water usage bill of the previous corresponding period, to a maximum of 250kl of that water service affected by the leak. (eg potable or non-potable)