

POLICY 1.21 WATER CHARGES

OVERVIEW

This policy explains how ILV (we, our, us) will charge for water.

This policy applies to residents in ILV properties and tenancies managed by ILV (except SDA tenants who pay Household Board).

WORD LIST

Separate Water Meter: This is where a water meter is readily accessible for reading by the water authority and generates an individual water account.'

Shared Water Meters: This is where a single water meter is used for multiple properties or where individual water meters are located inside the dwelling but are inaccessible to read. The water usage charge will be managed as though it was a shared water meter dwelling as per 4 b) of this policy.

POLICY

We will follow tenancy laws and applicable guidelines.

This policy covers:

- Water charges in properties with separate water meters
- Water charges in properties with shared water meters
- Charges at the end of a tenancy
- Water allowances
- Adjustments to water charges
- Paying your water charges
- Complaints and appeals about water charges.

PROPERTIES WITH SEPARATE WATER METERS

We will charge you for the water you use. This will be the amount shown on the invoice from the Water Authority for the property.

If you share your home with another person (not a partner/friend or family) who has a separate Tenancy Agreement, we will divide the water charges for the property by the number of people sharing the property.

We will add the water charges to your account when we receive a water bill. We may make adjustments to water accounts if an account has been overcharged because of problems with faulty water meters or other billing problems.

If the water meter is not accessible for reading by the water authority, we will charge using the shared water meter method.

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PROPERTIES WITH SHARED WATER METERS

We will calculate the amount everyone living in the building will pay.

We will pay the estimated water charges for the common areas (5% of the total water bill).

We will charge each household in a building (e.g. each apartment) based on the number of people in the household.

We will calculate your water bill as follows:

- Invoice from water authority (Total amount) e.g. \$100
- We will take 5% off this amount (\$5) to pay for water in the common areas
 - We will divide the rest by the number of people living in the building ($\$95 \div 10 = \9.50)
Each person pays this amount.

We will adjust the water charge for new tenants to reflect when they moved in.

END OF TENANCY

You need to pay any outstanding water charges at the end of your tenancy.

The outstanding amount will be calculated based on when you left the property.

WATER ALLOWANCES

Some water authorities provide an allowance for households that use a lot of water. We will help you apply if you live in a property with a separate water meter.

We may also grant allowance (an amount we do not charge you for) if you live in a property with a separate water meter and you use a lot more water than other similar sized households. For example:

- Where a person is on kidney dialysis, or
- Has a health condition or disability which means that they need to use significantly more water than normal, and/or
- There are more than six people living in the home

You need to apply and tell us why you think you are eligible for a water allowance. You need to provide documents to support your application e.g. evidence of a health condition/disability that requires a high amount of water.

We will tell you the outcome of your application within 28 business days.

If we grant you an allowance, it will be for 12 months. You will need to apply again after 12 months.

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The special allowance is 100 kiloliters every three months. We will take off this amount before we send you the water bill.

ADJUSTMENTS

We may adjust water charges on tenant’s accounts in exceptional circumstances such as burst water pipes or undetectable leaks, where the tenants are not at fault or had no way of detecting that a leak existed. We will not adjust your water charge if you are away from the property.

PAYMENT OF WATER USAGE CHARGES

You can pay your water charges:

- By paying a set amount each fortnight e.g. via
 - Regular deduction via Centrelink
 - Regular deduction from your bank account (Direct Debit)
- Via bank transfer when you get your bill (you need to pay within 21 days).

If you do not pay your water charges, we may take action through the tenancy tribunal.

Talk to us if you have any problems paying your bills.

IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY WITH OUR DECISION ABOUT WATER CHARGES

If you are not happy with the decision/s we make about water charges (in properties with shared meters), you can:

- Speak to our staff about why we made that decision
- Ask for a review of the decision (Refer to ILV Policy 1.4 Appeals)

You can also contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman about any dispute regarding the metered service of the water authority.

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RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION OR OTHER RESOURCES

Legislation and Guidelines

- Applicable tenancy legislation
 - Residential Tenancy Act 2010 (NSW)
 - Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019 (NSW)
- Relevant Water Charging Guidelines
 - o Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines - NSW

Policies

- ILV Policy 1.4 Appeals

Resources

- Tenanhelp Tenanhelp.com.au (State specific information for tenants)
- Disability Housing Information line 1800 843 929 or email housinginfo@pwd.org.au Information for people living in SDA properties and their supporters

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