

POLICY ON REMISSION OF EXCESS METERED WATER RATES

This policy is made in accordance with sections 102 and 109 of the Local Government Act 2002 and is applied as per sections 85 and 86 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.

OBJECTIVES

To ensure the efficient use of water by ratepayers, and provide an incentive to ratepayers to promptly repair any leaks to their reticulation, and to moderate financial consequences for significant or severe leaks.

1. CONDITIONS AND CRITERIA

- 1.1. This Policy applies to ratepayers who have excess metered water rates due to a leak in the property's reticulation. Reticulation is defined as all water supply pipes and connections that commence at the point of supply (generally at the water meter) and covers the whole of the ratepayer's property. Residential and non-residential ratepayers have some different eligibility for remission as detailed in this Policy.
- 1.2. For the purposes of this Policy, "residential" means any land used for residential or residential/lifestyle purposes, including land not zoned for those purposes on which a dwelling is located. 'Dwelling' means a building or group of buildings, or part of a building or group of buildings that is a) used or intended to be used only or mainly for residential purposes; and b) occupied or intended to be occupied exclusively as the home or residence of not more than one household, but does not include a hostel, boarding house or other specialised accommodation including retirement villages or gated communities with multiple dwellings serviced by a single point of supply.
- 1.3. A remission will only be granted on the most recent water invoice.
- 1.4. No remissions will be granted on any leaks associated with reticulation installed within the last five years.
- 1.5. The leak must be repaired by a registered plumber as specified in clause 2.1. The only exemption to this requirement is that provided for Murchison as noted in the Sanitary Plumbing (Exemption) Notice 1978 SR 1978/340.
- 1.6. Where a residential ratepayer makes a first remission application in a five year period, any remission granted will be set so that the ratepayer is not liable for the charge relating to the amount of water leaked. The amount of water leaked is assumed to be the difference between the volume that was invoiced, and the calculated maximum volume consumption. The calculated maximum volume consumption is the maximum daily consumption for that rating unit charged at any one time in the past three years, multiplied by the equivalent days of the affected invoice, provided it has been in the same ownership.
- 1.7. Where ownership of the property has been for less than six months, staff will monitor consumption for a period of three months following completion of all verified repairs to the property's reticulation, to establish a reasonable consumption figure to include in the calculation of the remission.

- 1.8 Where a residential ratepayer makes a second application for a remission following a leak within five years of the first application, the first 1,000m³ of water leaked will not be eligible for remission. For leaks in excess of 1,000m³, any remission granted will be calculated on the leaked volume in excess of 1,000m³. The ratepayer will still be liable for 6% of the current volumetric water rate on the leaked volume in excess of 1,000m³. The 6% charge represents Council's approximate marginal cost of supplying water for the quantity of the leak in excess of 1,000m³.
- 1.9 In order to qualify for a remission, a non-residential ratepayer making a first application for a leak, or second application for a leak that is within a five year period of the first application, must supply Council with a record of water meter readings taken at least monthly covering the period charged for on the invoice. This is to ensure water leaks are identified in a timely manner. The same mechanisms for determining the volume of leaks will be used as in clauses 1.6 and 1.7. The first 1,000m³ of water leaked will not be eligible for remission. For leaks in excess of 1,000m³, any remission granted will be calculated on the leaked volume in excess of 1,000m³. The ratepayer will still be liable for 6% of the current volumetric water rate on the leaked volume in excess of 1,000m³. The 6% charge represents Council's approximate marginal cost of supplying water for the quantity of the leak in excess of 1,000m³.
- 1.10 Where there is a third application for remission from either a residential or non-residential ratepayer within five years of the first application, or a leak that does not qualify under clauses 1.1-1.9, the application will be declined. If an application relates to subsequent leaks beyond five years after a first application, it will be considered under this Policy.

2. PROCEDURE

- 2.1 All applicants must submit their application for remission within six weeks of the date of the most recent water invoice, stating that there are no further leaks on the property and must provide proof of repair. The proof of repair must be carried out by a registered plumber. (The only exemption to this requirement is that provided for Murchison as notified in the Sanitary Plumbing (Exemption) Notice 1978 SR1978/340).
- 2.2 Applications for remission must be made on the prescribed form.
- 2.3 Council may delegate authority to consider and approve applications to Council staff. In the event of any doubt or dispute arising, the application is to be referred to the Full Council or any committee it delegates to for a decision.