

Water Rates Remission Policy

1. Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2002
- Local Government Act 1974

2. Definitions

Estimated average consumption

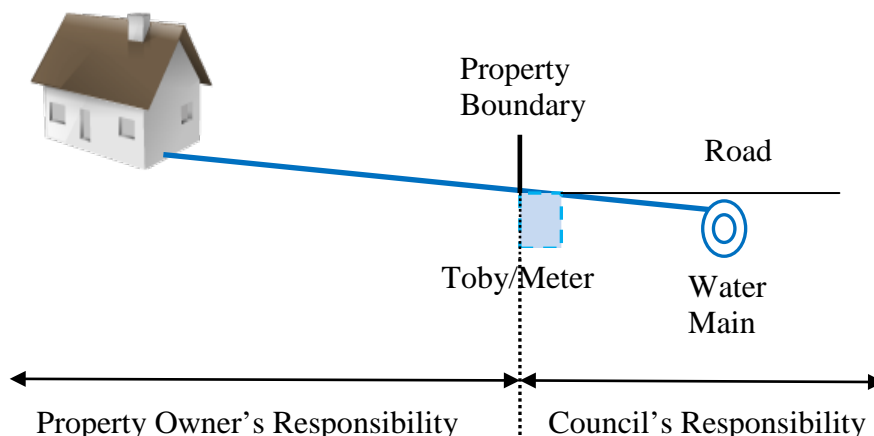
means the consumption for the period since the previous reading of the meter based on the average of the previous four or six billing periods charged to the customer in order to account for seasonal variations.

Excessive water consumption

means a significant increase in consumption of water, based on the *estimated average consumption* that is directly attributable to leaks in the internal reticulation (water supply) of a property connected to the Council's water supply network

Internal reticulation

means any plumbing and fittings that are the property owner's responsibility (as per figure below)



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3. Policy Objective

To provide certainty regarding the conditions which must be satisfied before Council will accept an application for the remission of *excessive water consumption* charges from a metered Council water supply caused by previously undetected leaks.

To provide fair and reasonable relief to ratepayers who have *excessive water consumption* due to leakage and to encourage customers to get all leakage repaired in a reasonable timeframe.

4. General Obligations

Council has no obligation to pay for water losses within private properties. It is the property owner's responsibility to maintain the plumbing and fittings and to pay for any repairs to the *internal reticulation* serving a private property.

However Council has resolved to assist customers with a remission if they have had the leak repaired and have not made a remission request within the previous five years.

Customers have a responsibility to ensure the condition of their dwelling does not contribute to a failure of the plumbing system.

Where a dwelling or property is left vacant for an extended period of time owners/occupants should consider shutting off the water supply and draining all pipes and appliances.

5. Conditions of Application

Council will accept applications for remission of *excessive water consumption* charges from a metered Council water supply provided that:

- 5.1. The application must be made in writing and signed by the owner(s)
- 5.2. For properties already connected to a metered Council water supply the application for remission must be made within 6 months of the invoice date. For newly metered properties the application for remission can be made up to 15 months from the date of connection to the metered Council water supply.
- 5.3. The ratepayer must supply to Council evidence that the *excessive water consumption* is a result of a leak at the property
- 5.4. The ratepayer must supply satisfactory evidence to Council within 3 months that;
 - a) A leak has been repaired (plumbers receipt and/or photographs)
 - b) The leak was repaired as soon as possible once it was discovered, or
 - c) The leak was repaired as soon as possible once advised of the excessive water consumption

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6. Conditions of Remission

- 6.1. Only one remission will be granted in any five year period per property.
- 6.2. The maximum remission will be 50% of the cost of the difference between the *estimated average consumption* and the actual water consumption for that billing period.
- 6.3. Remissions under \$5,000 can be approved by the Finance Manager. Remissions in excess of \$5,000 must be approved by the Chief Executive.
- 6.4. A record of the remission, as evidence of a previous failure in the *internal reticulation*, will be placed on the Building File of the property.

7. Estimating Consumption

- 7.1. If any meter is out of repair or ceases to register, or is removed, Council will estimate the consumption for the period since the previous reading of the meter (based on the average of the previous four or six billing periods charged to the customer) and the customer will be charged according to the estimate. Provided that when, by reason of a large variation of consumption due to seasonal or other causes, the average of the previous four or six billing periods would be an unreasonable estimate of the consumption, Council may take into consideration other evidence for the purpose of arriving at a reasonable estimate, and the customer will be charged according to that estimate.
- 7.2. If metering indicates a significant increase in consumption to a premise, which is established as being caused by a fault with the meter or other exceptional circumstances, the Council may estimate consumption as provided above
- 7.3. Where the seal or dial of a meter is broken, Council may declare the reading void and estimate consumption as provided above.

8. When the Policy doesn't apply

This Policy does not apply where:

- 8.1. The circumstances do not meet the conditions of Section 7 above.
- 8.2. Usage above the customer's average monthly consumption is due to seasonal usage such as watering of gardens, filling swimming pools or spas, washing vehicles or similar as this describes water supply knowingly used by the customer;
- 8.3. Water loss is due to theft, vandalism or construction damage as the responsibility to resolve these issues lies with the customer;

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- 8.4. The leak was caused by a third party from whom the customer is able to recover their costs;

9. Associated Council Policies and Procedures

- Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Long Term Plan;
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Annual Plan;
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council Water Supply System – Terms and Conditions for the Supply of Water 2008.

Group	Corporate and Planning Services	Contact Liz Davies	Acting Policy and Planning Manager
Supersedes	2008		
Creation Date	2014	Resolution Reference	Finance and Risk Committee
Last Review Date	2008	Resolution Reference	FR5.1.3
Review Cycle	Review 1 year after completion of District wide water metering and 5 yearly thereafter	Date	
Authorised by	Council	Date	3 July 2014