

## Water Rates Remission Policy

### 1. Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2002
- Local Government (Rating) Act 2002

### 2. Definitions

#### Estimated average consumption

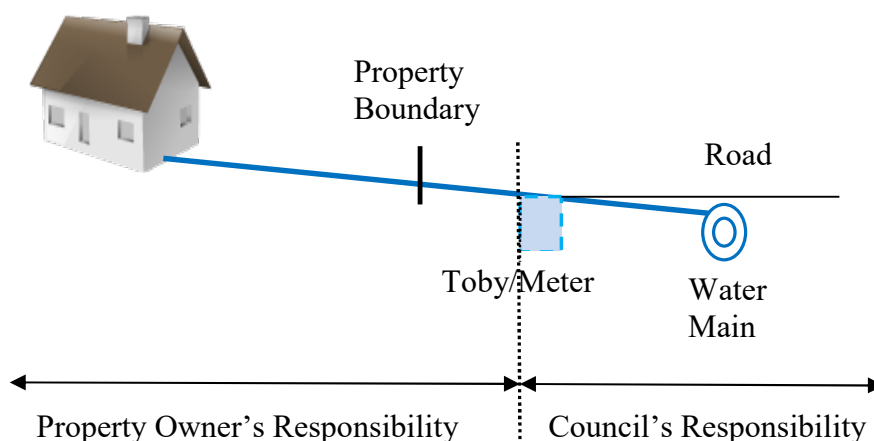
means the consumption for the period since the previous reading of the meter based on the average of the previous four or six billing periods charged to the customer in order to account for seasonal variations (fewer billing periods may be used if meter history is not available).

#### 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 rating unit connected to the Council's water supply network

#### Internal reticulation

means any pipes, plumbing and fittings that are the rating unit owner's responsibility past the point of supply (see the Western Bay of Plenty District Council Water Supply System - Terms and Conditions for the Supply of Water for further detail) – The figure below is indicative.



## Water Rates Remission Policy

### 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 rating unit owner's responsibility to maintain the plumbing and fittings and to pay for any repairs to the *internal reticulation* serving a private rating unit.

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 rating unit 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. The application for remission must be made within 6 months of the invoice date.
- 5.3. The ratepayer must supply to Council evidence that the *excessive water consumption* is a result of a leak at the rating unit.
- 5.4. The ratepayer must supply satisfactory evidence to Council 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.

### 6. Conditions of Remission

## Water Rates Remission Policy

- 6.1. Only one remission will be granted in any five year period per rating unit. However, where a rating unit has a change of ownership, Council may consider an application from the new owner(s) within the five year period.
- 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 Property File of the rating unit.

### 7. Estimating Consumption

- 7.1. For the purpose of establishing actual water consumption and *estimated average consumption* Council may need to estimate consumption as per the WBOPDC Terms and Conditions for the Supply of Water.

### 8. When the Policy doesn't apply

This Policy does not apply where:

- 8.1. The circumstances do not meet the conditions of Sections 5 or 6 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;
- 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
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council Water Supply System Bylaw

## Water Rates Remission Policy

<b>Group</b>	Finance and Technology Services	<b>Contact: David Jensen</b>	Finance Manager
<b>Supersedes</b>	2014		
<b>Creation Date</b>	2008	<b>Resolution Reference</b>	C26.8
<b>Last Review Date</b>	2019	<b>Resolution Reference</b>	C21-9.14
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Review every 6 years	<b>Date</b>	2026
<b>Authorised by</b>	Council	<b>Date</b>	29 June 2021