

## INFORMATION FOR PROPERTY OWNERS WHERE WATER METERS ARE INSTALLED

The Council now has a number of water supplies that use water meters to collect some of their income.

Experience has shown that:

Water usage tends to decline once users pay on a usage basis (this is to be expected of course). Water usage also declines in "wet" seasons, resulting in a reduction in the income collected. Although some costs may be lower due to lower water usage (eg electricity), other costs are based on maintenance undertaken or are fixed charges. In this situation, deficits in water accounts can occur which will need to be recovered from rates in future years.

The users of the system need to assist the Council by advising of any unusual activity that could be defrauding the system (an example is changing the water connection point to take water off prior to the meter, undocumented connections or users without meters).

Water meters do malfunction (usually they slow down and record less) or stop. Users have to accept that, in such situation, that an estimate of previous usage will have to be made by the Council and a revised charge issued. Again, assistance from the users is required to ensure an honest and fair system exists for all.

Water meters can read incorrectly. If a user or the Council suspects this is occurring, the meter can be tested. If the meter is reading incorrectly, the meter will be replaced, with any cost incurred, being a cost to the scheme (attempts will be made to recover costs from suppliers, where appropriate, for faulty meters). If the meter is reading correctly or if it is found to have been tampered with, the cost incurred will be charged to the user.

Water schemes, which are fully metered, enable Council to monitor leakage/efficiency of the scheme, as any water pumped should equal the sum of water consumed through individual meters.

Annual reviews of the uniform rate and m<sup>3</sup> will be required to ensure adequate income is being collected.

If you have any queries, please contact Douglas Marshall, Manager Corporate Services on (03) 3472.800

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