

MEDIA RELEASE

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Water watcher pricing plan rolled out across city

Townsville residents can now choose whether to sign up for a consumption-based water pricing scheme or remain with a standard water allocation.

As part of a move to standardise water pricing arrangements across the amalgamated city, all ratepayers can opt for the Water Watcher scheme which had previously only been available in the former city of Thuringowa.

The scheme enables residents to pay a fixed fee for infrastructure costs, and a charge per kilolitre of water used.

Townsville Mayor Cr Les Tyrell said the user pays scheme had many advantages, particularly for single households and residents living in units or flats.

“At the moment, most people in the city pay for a full allocation of 772 kilolitres, but a large percentage of people don’t use anywhere near that figure,” Cr Tyrell said.

“Smaller households commonly use about 420 kilolitres, while the figure for those living in units is around 240 kilolitres.

“By taking up Water Watcher, residents need only pay for what they use, just like electricity and phone bills.

“It firmly puts the control over water bills in the hands of residents, and for low water users this will mean more money in the pocket.”

Cr Tyrell said the Water Watcher scheme was also aimed at encouraging responsible water use.

“Given the abundance of water we see during the wet season, it can be easy to forget that it’s a precious resource, but it really is something that needs to be managed in a sustainable way at all times of the year,” Cr Tyrell said.

“The consumption based scheme is about promoting careful water use.”

Standard allocations will remain an option for residents until 30 June 2010.

Prior to that date, Full Council will consider Queensland Government requirements - under the National Competition Policy - to move to a consumption-based pricing scheme across the city.

The Queensland Local Government Act also requires larger council water businesses to assess the cost effectiveness of this type of scheme.

Media Information >> Cr Les Tyrell 0419 772 618