

Account Disputes – Water Consumption Reading Policy

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

1. POLICY STATEMENT

To guide Council's practice and decision making with respect to account disputes relating to water consumption where the customer believes the water meter or reading may be inaccurate.

2. PRINCIPLES

All water meters in the local government area that are installed or authorised by Townsville Water for installation, remain the property of Townsville Water.

Customers may request to have the water meter reading validated, and/or for a set fee, request to have the meter tested.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all customers who are connected to Townsville Water's reticulated water supply via a council approved water meter which measures the supply of water.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that this policy is regularly reviewed in accordance with council's policy and procedures on policy development.

Managers and Supervisors of Council are responsible for ensuring that the policy is understood and adhered to by all relevant workers.

5. DEFINITIONS

Authorised Person of a service provider - means a person authorised by the service provider under chapter 2, part 3, division 4 of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.

NATA – is the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia

Meter Testing Fee – is a charge set by council to cover the costs of testing a meter. Meter Testing Fees are published annually in the council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Manager – includes persons appointed to positions including the title, Team Manager, General Manager, Principal, Director and Chief.

Workers – includes employees, contractors, volunteers and all others who perform work on behalf of council.

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6. POLICY

6.1 DISPUTES – WATER CONSUMPTION

If a customer disputes the water consumption reading on an account, then Townsville Water will ensure that the meter is re-read by an authorised person to validate the reading before any consideration will be given to amending the account.

6.2 DISPUTES – WATER METER RECORDING ACCURACY

If the customer disputes the water consumption reading on an account because they believe that the water meter is recording inaccurately the customer may, upon prepayment of the Meter Testing Fee, request that the meter be independently tested.

Townsville Water will, on receipt of the Meter Testing Fee, remove the meter and replace it with a new meter. The removed meter will be sent to an independent NATA accredited workshop for testing.

Townsville Water will review the results provided by NATA and will determine if the meter is inaccurate. A meter will be deemed inaccurate if it is over-reading by greater than 4.0%.

If the meter is deemed inaccurate Townsville Water will reimburse the Meter Testing Fee to the customer and adjust the customer's account accordingly. The customer's account will be adjusted for consumption during the period the inaccurate meter was connected and the period that consumption exceeded usual consumption for the property.

If the water meter is deemed accurate all charges stand as levied.

Townsville Water will provide to the customer a copy of the NATA accredited workshop's report for the meter test.

A customer may request to witness the NATA accredited meter test. However, any costs associated with witnessing the test are the responsibility of the customer and will not be reimbursed by Council.

6.3 DISPUTES – REFERRAL OF COMPLAINTS TO COUNCIL

Complaints concerning water meter readings and water meter accuracy are administered by Townsville Water and only referred to Council for consideration if the customer continues to dispute Townsville Water's decision.

7. LEGAL PARAMETERS

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Townsville City Council Fees and Charges Schedule (applicable at the time)

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