

Water Charges

T15

Policy context: This policy relates to Section 139 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* and the *Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines*.

POLICY STATEMENT

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline tenant rights and responsibilities in relation to water usage charges.

II. Definitions

- Common area (re: water charges) - A common area for water charging purposes is an external garden, lawn or driveway area that is available for the use and enjoyment of all tenants.
- Minimum Rent - In some situations, SCH will assess a tenant or household member's contribution to the rent payable as \$5 per week, this is referred to as Minimum Rent.

III. Coverage

This policy applies to all SCH managed properties.

IV. Principles

Tenants of SCH properties are required to pay for their personal water usage. SCH is responsible for meeting all other water costs, including water connection charges, sewerage and water usage in common areas.

A Tenant may elect to pay their water usage in advance by equal instalments over the billing period, based on an estimate of the usage, or in one lump sum. If a tenant chooses to pay in a lump sum, it must be paid within 21 days from receipt of the water usage bill from SCH.

For properties that have separate meters, tenants will be charged for all water usage. For properties with shared meters, tenants will be charged a proportion of total water usage based on:

- The number of people living in the unit,
- The total number of people living in the complex, and
- After deducting an allowance for the Common Area (which is payable by SCH).

SCH may allocate, at their discretion, an allowance for extreme medical or health reasons (e.g. a dialysis machine). Written evidence will be required.

Any tenant experiencing payment difficulties should approach their local branch to discuss payment options.

There is no exemption from water usage charges for tenants temporarily absent from their property.

Southern Cross Housing will not raise a water usage charge for tenants in Crisis Accommodation or Temporary Accommodation provided for up to 3 months or less.

Tenants can lodge a complaint or appeal regarding the method of charging for water usage, application of the method, or a decision not to apply an adjustment or allowance.

V. Responsibilities

Finance Officers are responsible for issuing water usage bills and recovering water usage charges.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	T14 Managing Non-Rent Arrears T21 Ending a Tenancy
Other related documents	

REFERENCES

Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines