

Central Tablelands *Water*



Undetected Water Leakage Allowance Policy

Policy Title:	Undetected Water Leakage Allowance Policy	
Responsible Officer:	Director Finance and Corporate Services	
Adopted:	Date: 12.10.2016	Minute Number: 16/079
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New Review:	Date:	
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Purpose

Central Tablelands Water (CTW) regularly receives requests from consumers asking for water accounts to be waived due to higher than usual water consumption caused by undetected water leakages.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- i. all requests for reduction in water accounts due to leakage are considered and processed in a consistent, fair and impartial manner

Policy Objectives

1. The property owner (as listed on the water account) is responsible for the reticulation, use and payment of all water which passes through their water meter. The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and repair of their internal plumbing.
2. CTW has no obligation to grant an allowance on water accounts affected by leaks in private plumbing. It will only consider, in its absolute discretion, applications for water account adjustments due to undetected water leakage which are made in writing.
3. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services is responsible for the administration of this policy. The General Manager will ultimately determine and approve all allowances relating to applications for adjustments under \$1,000. The General Manager will determine and approve all allowances relating to applications received from staff and councillors. Any adjustments over this amount will be directed to Council for approval.

Policy

1. CTW has no obligation to adjust water accounts affected by leakage in private plumbing. It will consider applications for water leakage allowances due to undetected water leaks in the following circumstances:
 - i. The undetected water leak was in a location that was not readily visible or apparent (eg below ground, under a concrete slab, in a wall cavity etc)
 - ii. The undetected leak was repaired by a licenced plumber in a timely and effective manner to minimise water loss. Repairs must be completed within 14 days of a water account being issued or the customer becoming aware of a possible leak via notification by CTW or otherwise.

A customer is deemed to be notified by CTW of a possible water leak:

- On the day a customer receives a “Higher Than Normal Usage” card via mail or similar notification by a CTW representative
- On the day a CTW staff member telephones the property owner (or managing agent); and

- iii. Payment of the water account would result in financial hardship for the customer (e.g an aged pensioner)
2. All requests for undetected water leakage allowance must be in writing and provide the following information:
 - i. A statement from the property owner clearly outlining:
 - the date and circumstances leading to the leak being detected;
 - the date the leakage was repaired by a licenced plumber;
 - the cause of the leakage;
 - the reason why the leakage was not readily visible or apparent; and
 - the reason why payment of the water account will result in financial hardship.
 - ii. A statement signed by the licenced plumber who repaired the leak, clearly explaining why the leak was undetected by the customer and certifying that the repairs comply with AS/NZS 3500
3. An application for undetected water leakage allowance may be declined if it is found that:
 - i. the customer failed or neglected any visible or obvious defects in their private water service;
 - ii. the customer ignored or failed to investigate any visible signs of leakage including soaking or dampness in walls, consistently wet grass or damp patches in lawns or running toilets;
 - iii. the customer failed to repair and or renew the faulty pipework, fittings and fixtures for which they are responsible;
 - iv. any documentation or statements received are found to be misleading or false;
 - v. the undetected leakage was caused by wilful, accidental or negligent damage to the customers internal plumbing
4. If an application for water leakage allowance is not approved, the customer will be advised in writing and granted a further 28 days from the date of the advice to either pay the account in full or enter into a suitable payment arrangement.
5. If an application for a leakage allowance is approved, the customer will be advised in writing that payment of the adjusted account will be due 28 days from the date of the advice.
6. A water leakage allowance will be granted on a “one off” basis. However, the allowance can be applied over two consecutive billing periods where there is evidence that the leak may have affected the consumption charges over more than one billing cycle. Requests for reduction in water charges for subsequent water leaks will not be considered.
7. Where a leakage allowance is granted, the following will apply:
 - i. the water account for the period will be adjusted based on the average consumption for the period that the undetected leakage occurred

- ii. the average consumption will be calculated by averaging three (3) previous corresponding billing periods (ie if the water account in question was issued in May, the three (3) previous corresponding May water accounts will be averaged)
- iii. the leakage allowance is applied to the billing period/s in which the undetected leakage occurred up to a maximum of two (2) consecutive billing periods

Variation

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy.