

Customer Service Plan

2021/22



Acknowledgment of country



We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this country and their continuing connection to the land through culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

*All Council's Corporate Planning documents can be sourced from shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au
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Executive Summary

Shoalhaven Water, Shoalhaven City Council's Water Utility, is the responsible authority for the delivery of water supply and sewerage services to the Shoalhaven City. The water supply and sewerage networks are large, extending across a large city boundary encompassing rural, residential, commercial, industrial and native vegetation areas.

The purpose of the Customer Service Plan is to clearly articulate:

- Shoalhaven Water's responsibilities for providing this essential function in a sustainable way,
- the minimum levels of service customers can expect, and
- our performance as a water utility and compare these with industry benchmarks.

Shoalhaven Water's Vision, Goals and Values are summarised below. They are consistent with Council's "Shoalhaven 2027, Community Strategic Plan", which is the blueprint document for the future, and which identifies the need to:

- Be financially sustainable into the future, reflecting the strategic priorities of Council and the community and,
- Deliver customer service excellence in all its operations and dealings with Shoalhaven residents, visitors and stakeholders.

The Shoalhaven Water Customer Service Plan meets this blueprint and is broadly consistent with the Council Customer Service Charter, Community Engagement Policy and NSW Department of Industry - Water's Customer Service Plan Guidelines.

The Shoalhaven Water Customer Service Plan is a centric water utility document.

Our Vision

Defined by our spectacular beaches, surrounding natural forests and lakes, Shoalhaven Water connects distinct communities with water supply and sewerage services. Our Vision is "Through our Business Excellence, we will be a Leader in the Water Industry".

Our Mission

Leading the way towards a bold future that can sustain growth and economic development while retaining a lifestyle which is uniquely Shoalhaven, our Mission is to "Provide efficient, effective water and wastewater services to the Shoalhaven".

Our Values

Our strategic decisions and day to day activities in achieving our Vision and Mission will be guided by the following organisational values:

Our Customer – Striving to understand and exceed customer expectation and satisfaction with an emphasis on quality of service, consultation and continuous improvement.

Our Business – Provision of efficient and effective water and wastewater services, to an agreed "Levels of Customer Service" in an equitable and commercial manner.

Our Environment – Operating Shoalhaven Water in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner for the betterment of present and future generations.

Our Community – Ensure quality of life and health to our community.

Our Team – Providing the Shoalhaven with efficient, dedicated and enthusiastic staff by working through trust, learning and communication.

Our **Water and Wastewater** Facilities

Shoalhaven City Council through Shoalhaven Water owns and maintains a significant underground network of water and wastewater mains. This infrastructure delivers water throughout the city to most urban towns and villages and collects then treats wastewater (sewage) from those homes and businesses.

The city's water and wastewater network and assets include:

- 13 Wastewater treatment plants
- 4 Dams
- 4 Water treatment plants
- 1,615 Kilometres of water mains
- 1,245 Kilometres of sewer mains
- 219 Wastewater pump stations
- 26 Water pump stations, and
- 39 Water reservoirs

As the water utility provider for the Shoalhaven community, Shoalhaven Water will deliver high quality water and wastewater services across the Shoalhaven, a large proportion of which are located upon environmentally sensitive areas.

Our customers comprise a growing population of more than 104,000 people, 48,300 residential property connections, 3,500 commercial property connections and peak (tourist) population estimated at 450,000.

Background

The purpose of this document is to describe the Shoalhaven City Council's water and wastewater customer services and responsibilities in accordance with the legislative framework for Local Government Water Utilities in NSW.

The NSW Department of Industry - Water requires each Water Utility to publish a Customer Service Plan. This document provides:

- An explanation of the services offered for drinking water, reclaimed effluent, septic waste, effluent, wastewater collection and treatment. General information is also provided about the provision of trade waste services; however, trade waste customers are generally expected to have individual contracts with Council that will contain information specific to their requirements,
- Information on a range of customer service processes including connections, metering, billing, managing maintenance work (eg backflow devices), complaints and dispute resolution,
- A list of key performance indicators (KPI's) and targets to express the levels of customer service or "**Customer Service Standards**" that Shoalhaven Water aims to deliver to its customers and the environment. This includes critical items such as standards for drinking water, water pressure, water supply interruptions, wastewater overflows and odours, response times and repair completion times as may be applicable, and
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Project Delivery Plans undertaken during the course of major capital works programs.

Overall, this document informs the customers of the service that they can expect from Shoalhaven Water and our performance as reported in the various NSW Government and/or National regulators. The document is available to all customers and is not necessarily limited to the owners of individual properties that utilise our services.

The "**Customer Service Standards**" as set out in this document are not a contract and are not intended to create any contractual obligation or rights. The times, service levels and benchmarking are not intended to be prescriptive of exact times or "**Service Standards**" to be provided, rather a guide as to the core business responses that customers can expect to receive from the services of Shoalhaven Water.



Throughout this document you will see our Key Performance Indicators (KPI) which are linked to National Performance Reporting. To see how we are performing in the delivery of services, see KPI results in Appendix 2.1.

Our Services

Water Supply

Drinking Water Supply

Shoalhaven Water distributes a reliable supply of drinking water to meet the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011 via our network of reservoirs, pump stations and mains connected to the 3 water supply schemes.

A full outline of the water supply system including water extraction entitlements and licences is contained within the **Drought Management Plan**. Additional detail about the Shoalhaven Water Supply is also available on our website, visit:

www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au



National Performance Report - H3
See Appendix 2.1

Standard Service Area

Shoalhaven Water provides drinking water to customers within specified urban and some semi-rural areas of the city. This generally covers those developed properties within the urban areas from Lake Tabourie to Berry. Further details about a connection entitlement to the schemes and the service areas can be obtained through a number of Policies including the **Rural Water Supply Policy and the Provision of Water & Sewerage Infrastructure - Developments not included in Development Servicing Plans**.

Areas/Properties other than those of the Standard Service Area

There are currently no properties in the Shoalhaven subject to a private arrangement for water supply services under the Water Industry Competition Act 2006 (WICA).

Standard Water Connections

A standard water connection is based on a single residential size of 20mm. Applications for new water connections, upgrades of existing connections, downsizing or disconnection of water connections can be made by completing an online request on our website. Shoalhaven Water undertakes all standard metering services at a fixed cost as per the Council's annual fees and charges. A quotation will be provided for unusual connections or services requiring specific works.

Metered Standpipes

Customers can apply to Shoalhaven Water to hire a metered standpipe to draw water in bulk from the drinking water supply.

These include:

- Domestic licensed water carriers that operate drinking water tankers and deliver to residential properties outside of the service area, and
- Water users that use water straight from the water mains.

All hirers must agree to the terms of the hire including compliance with AS3500 (NSW Code of Practice, Plumbing and Drainage) and Council's policy on cross contamination control and backflow prevention. The **Metered Standpipe Hire Request** and associated **Hire Agreement** is available on the Shoalhaven Water website. The size of standpipes available for hire, conditions and charges is further outlined in the "Our Charges" Section 3 of this document.

Included in the **Hire Agreement** is a listing of prohibited hydrant points across the city where extraction of water supplies using metered standpipes is prohibited.

Bulk Tanker Water Filling Stations

A number of fixed water tanker bulk water filling stations are installed across the city. These units enable water to be extracted from the main direct into a water tanker. The key operated units provide bulk supplies more quickly and volume data inputs regulate the amount of water required. The charge for water supply through these units is 50% of the normal volumetric water usage charge.

Detail including the unit locations, access and costs are available on the Shoalhaven Water website.

Water Bottle Refill Stations

As a community service, a range of water bottle refill stations have been installed at high profile access points across the city to enable water bottles to be filled. The availability of these units and their use is a positive awareness and education program with benefits to customers, the community, Shoalhaven Water and visitors.

An interactive map of our water refill stations can be found on our website.

This community engagement initiative is a long-term project with an aim to install 3 units per year across the city.

Wastewater - Collection, Treatment & Disposal

Wastewater Systems

Shoalhaven Water operates a number of wastewater systems and treatment plants across the city. Shoalhaven Water is subject to stringent environmental and health protections standards and is licensed to operate the wastewater treatment plants by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Included in the Wastewater Schemes is the REclaimed water Management Scheme (REMS) which reclaims treated wastewater for use in agriculture, golf course and sporting grounds.

Shoalhaven Water also manages a human waste removal services to properties located in nonsewered areas of the City.

Further information on the wastewater schemes across the city is available on our website.



National Performance Report - E4
See Appendix 2.1

Standard Service Area

Shoalhaven Water provides wastewater services to customers within specified urban areas of the city. This generally covers those developed properties within the urban areas from Lake Tabourie to Berry. Some smaller rural townships within this area are not sufficiently developed to enable the provision of sewerage services. Further details about a connection entitlement to the schemes and the service areas is contained within the ***Provision of "Water & Sewerage Infrastructure – Developments not included in Development Servicing Plans"***.

There is no long term plan to provide sewerage services south of Lake Tabourie.

Wastewater Connections

Several types of wastewater connection are managed by Shoalhaven Water including:

- Gravity, and
- Pressure Systems.

New connections to sewerage areas are subject to entitlement, approval and payment of charges as applicable. Connections might occur as a consequence of:

- New dwellings in developed areas,
- At the request of a customer to replace on-site systems (newly connected villages or where private works to connect to the system is approved), and
- Connections made under the direction of Council to replace an on-site system.

Further details can be obtained from Shoalhaven Water regarding connection or changes to connections. New commercial properties or changes to a commercial undertaking which requires a wastewater service from the sewerage schemes may require a larger connection and approval. This will be co-ordinated by the Shoalhaven Water Asset Planning and Development Section.



Reclaimed Water Scheme (REMS)

Reclaimed water is treated wastewater that has been clarified and disinfected with chlorine but has not been processed through an advanced recycled water treatment plant.

REMS is one of the largest and more complex water recycling schemes undertaken by an Australian Local Government Water Authority and was developed in two stages.

Stage 1A: At a cost of \$34m, the Callala Wastewater Treatment Plant was commissioned in January 2002. It was purpose built for the scheme and it includes connection for irrigation to 14 dairy farms, a golf course and several sporting grounds.

Stage 1B: At a cost of \$110m, stage 1B consisted of major upgrades to the Nowra and Bomaderry Wastewater Treatment Plants which were both commissioned in 2019.

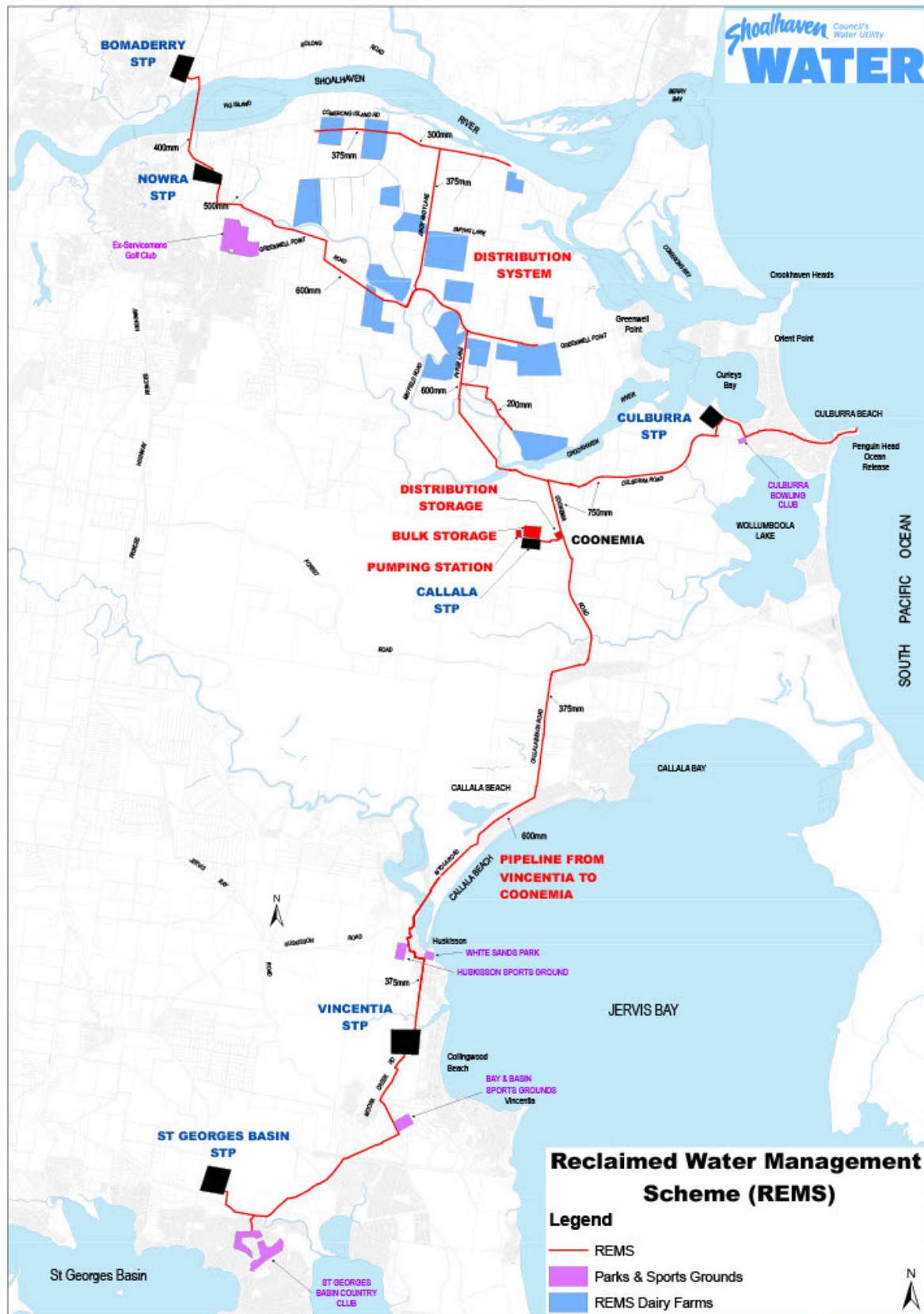
The reclaimed water produced by REMS complies with the Australian Water Recycling Managing Health and Environmental risks, Phase 1 2006 and the NSW Guidance for Recycled Water Management Schemes (2015).



National Performance Report - W27

See Appendix 2.1

REMS Distribution Map



Trade Waste Management

Trade waste is liquid waste generated from any commercial or industrial undertaking. This does not include discharges from domestic wastewater of toilets, hand basins and showers.

Wastes such as cooking oil, grease and food solids are produced by a large number of food outlets across the city. If such waste is discharged directly into the wastewater system it could block the system and cause overflows that could harm public health and the environment. To prevent this, all commercial properties that discharge greasy waste must have a grease trap installed.

Trade waste may also contain a variety of toxic or harmful substances, such as heavy metals, organic compounds, solvents, oils and grease. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to treat higher level substances and they could pose a serious work health & safety risk to staff working at these facilities.

Commercial or industrial premises can only discharge waste to the wastewater system that complies with the **Liquid Trade Waste Discharge to Sewer System Policy**. All such premises that generate trade waste and discharge to the wastewater system must have current trade waste approval from Shoalhaven Water. In some circumstances, (eg ability of receiving sewage treatment plant to take the liquid trade waste discharges or other disposal options available to discharger) and with the concurrence of the NSW Department of Industry - Water, Shoalhaven Water may implement approval conditions different to those contained within the Policy.

Shoalhaven Water operates a waste tracking program to monitor the regular removal and disposal of waste from grease traps and other industrial holding tanks. The approval granted by Shoalhaven Water stipulates how often grease traps must be cleaned out. Any commercial, business, trade or manufacturing customers wishing to discuss liquid trade waste are encouraged to contact Shoalhaven Water.

Human Waste Removal Services

Shoalhaven Water provides effluent pumpout and septic tank cleanout services to residential, commercial and a limited number of large community organisations that are not connected to the mains sewerage system. These premises have on-site systems which are regulated by Shoalhaven City Council's Health & Environmental Services Section. The provision of waste removal services is undertaken by an external contractor and includes:

Effluent Pumpouts

- regular cycle services,
- extra services, and
- emergency services.

Cleanouts of

- septic tanks,
- aerated systems, and
- large systems.

Information concerning the use of on-site systems including "troubleshooting" and warning signs that signal problems with septic tanks, "greywater" diversion and points of contact are available on Shoalhaven Water's website.

An option exists for customers to utilise alternative commercial operators subject to complying with the individual approval for disposal of waste at the premises.

Other Services

Shoalhaven Water provides a range of other services that customers can access which include:

Building, Renovating & Development

- Development Application processing & advice
- Plans of water and sewer mains
- Water & sewer design checks, works as executed and preparation of final plans with estimates
- Water pressure certificates
- Sewer drainage diagrams
- Information for plumbers
- Locating water and sewer infrastructure including Dial Before You Dig (DBYD)

Water Saving Initiatives

- Water demand management advice
- Checking of water meter readings and onsite water loss
- Water meter testing
- Rainwater tank rebate
- Tap Re-washer Service

Education, Information & Referral

- Education and information programs (eg The Tapstar Show and Treatment Plant Tours)
- River flow, rainfall, water storage and consumption information
- Special Meter Readings
- Drinking water quality information
- Free access to the NSW Energy & Water Ombudsman

Details on the response timeframes for many of the above services is contained within the Customer Service Standards at Appendix 1.

Our Charges

All current Fees and Charges are contained within the Shoalhaven City Council document which is issued following public consultation and formal adoption by Council in June of each year. The Fees and Charges applicable for Shoalhaven Water customers are summarised together within the document for ease of access and clarity.

If Fees and Charges are amended, Shoalhaven Water will advise customers via public notice prior to adoption and any subsequent implementation.

All Water Supply and Sewerage related fees and charges stem from the need to ensure the financial viability of the business as calculated within the 20 year Financial Plan. A critical element of the Financial Plan is the Capital Works programs of both the water and sewer funds. Proposed charges, structure of charges together with the revenue policy of Shoalhaven Water are broadly contained within the ***Shoalhaven City Council Delivery Program and Operational Plan***.

Pricing for water supply and sewerage services complies with the NSW Government, Department of Industry - Water's Best Practice Management of Water Supply & Sewerage Guidelines (BPM Guidelines). These guidelines are based on and comply with the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Strategic

Framework for Water Reform, National Competition Policy and the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's (IPART) "Pricing Principles for Local Water Authorities". The key charges for water supply and sewerage services are outlined below.



Best Practice Management - NSW
See Appendix 2.1

Residential Charges

Residential water and wastewater charges comprise three components:

- Water service fixed availability charge,
- Wastewater service fixed availability charge, and
- Water consumption volumetric user charge.

The **water service availability charge** is a fixed annual fee (levied as a quarterly amount at the time of meter reading if applicable) for the connection, or ability to connect, to the drinking water supply system. It is charged in advance and properties with multiple water meter service connections are levied multiple charges. All residential properties are levied a water service fixed availability charge based on a 20mm connection regardless of the actual size.

The **wastewater service availability charge** is also a fixed annual fee (levied as a quarterly amount at the time of water meter reading together with the water charges if applicable) for the connection, or ability to connect, to the wastewater distribution system. It is charged in advance and properties with multiple water service connections will be levied wastewater availability for each connection. This reflects the load that a discharger may place on the sewerage system and accords with the NSW Department of Industry - Water BPM Guidelines. All residential properties are levied a wastewater fixed availability charge based on a 20mm connection regardless of the actual size.

Vacant land where the water or wastewater service is available in accordance with Section 552 of the Local Government Act will be levied an availability charge regardless of whether the property is connected or not. Water and sewerage schemes are significant constructions, with costs that include pumping stations, land purchases, mains and treatment plants. It is not possible for a city to pay for the construction works whilst charging on the basis of an individual property owner's connection, when at a point in time they chose to utilise it.

The water and wastewater service availability charges help cover the fixed costs of:

- The operation and maintenance of the extensive water and wastewater distribution systems,
- Operation of wastewater treatment plants,
- Improvements to wastewater treatment processes, and
- Helping to protect the environment.

The **water consumption volumetric charge** is levied for each kilolitre (1,000 litres) of water used and is based on the reading from a property's water meter. Unlike the service availability charge, this fee is charged after the water is used. The water consumption charge is a single amount per kilolitre regardless of the volume used and is based on the long run marginal operating cost of the water supply system.



National Performance Report - P7

See Appendix 2.1

Non-Residential Charges (Commercial)

Non-residential is a commonly referred term in the water industry but in the Shoalhaven such properties are recognised for billing purposes as Commercial and/or Community Service Obligation (CSO) for ease of description. Non-residential charges are similar to residential charges but are comprised of five components:

- Water service fixed availability charge,
- Wastewater service fixed availability charge,
- Water consumption volumetric user charge,
- Wastewater volumetric user charge, and
- Trade waste volumetric user charge.

The **water service availability charge** and **wastewater service availability charge** are the same as for residential customers if the properties have a 20mm water meter connection. If however a nonresidential property has a larger connection, the customer will pay the service availability based on the proportional size of the water meter connection.

To assist non-residential customers that require a larger connection because of fire service regulations or low water pressure, Shoalhaven Water has an ***Downsize, Disconnect or Nominal Sizing Policy*** to allow the water meter to be “virtually” downsized for the purposes of calculating a lower service availability charge. This process is called “nominally downsizing” the meter and approval which is subject to conditions will be considered on application.

Non-residential customers are levied Water Availability charges in advance as a quarterly amount at the time of the water meter reading together with the water usage charges if applicable. Properties with multiple water service connections will be charge wastewater availability for each of these connections if applicable.

The **wastewater volumetric user charge** for non-residential customers is based on the volume of wastewater that is assumed to be discharged from the property into the system. This is calculated by multiplying the customer’s water consumption by an industry-based sewerage discharge factor. Some high-volume dischargers

are charged based on flow monitoring device installations.

If a customer believes that the actual proportion of wastewater discharged from the property differs from the standard industry-based discharge factor then the property owner can lodge a request for variation based on their data and evidence. Obtaining the necessary information to support a case for a lower discharge factor might entail a property owner:

- Installing a permanent wastewater discharge meter on the point of discharge from the property to the wastewater system, or
- Install permanent water meter within the property to measure amounts of water that DO NOT return to the wastewater system, or
- Install a temporary wastewater flow monitoring device to monitor an agreed specified period.

The **trade waste charges** may be comprised of three parts, one for access, one based on the volume and one based on strength/ quantity of waste accepted by Shoalhaven Water for treatment. The trade waste charges are additional wastewater quality charges to customers that operate commercial undertakings, industry, trade or manufacturing businesses that discharge liquid trade waste other than domestic wastewater.

Full details concerning pre-treatment, discharger categories, applying for liquid trade waste approvals, fees and charges are contained on the Shoalhaven Water website.



See Appendix 2.2



Metered Standpipes

Metered standpipes can be hired on either a short-term or long-term basis in two sizes (25mm or 65mm). Charges for metered standpipes are comprised of three components:

- Quarterly hire charges
- Security deposit, and
- Usage charges.

Customers hiring standpipes are responsible for the care of the metered standpipe. If a metered standpipe is lost or damaged the hirer will be charged the cost to replace or repair it. This cost may be fully or partially recovered from the security deposit if applicable.

Meters are generally read on a quarterly basis. It is not necessary to bring the meter into Shoalhaven Water, photos of the dial will be accepted. However where there is doubt concerning the accuracy of a reading or Shoalhaven Water suspects the meter to be faulty, the meter will be replaced or tested.

All Shoalhaven Water metered standpipes are painted orange for ease of recognition. Privately

owned standpipes **must not be used** in the Shoalhaven and Councils Ranger services and Shoalhaven Water staff are vigilant to identify improper use which if discovered, will result in legal action.

Other standpipes can be used in the Shoalhaven if they are dedicated toward firefighting activities. There is no charge for water taken from a hydrant point for firefighting purposes; this includes training for firefighting and testing fire equipment.

A number of bulk water filling stations are installed across the city for use by water tanker carters. These units enable swift extraction of pre-set volumes of water and can be accessed electronically.

Keys to access the devices are available at a small charge and water volumes are levied at 50% of the normal Usage Charge to encourage the use of these systems which prevent localised discolouration of water.

Our Rights and Responsibilities

This Section provides a general overview of core activities undertaken as standard business practice. In general terms, Shoalhaven City Council through Shoalhaven Water:

- Has the right to enter a customer's property for the purpose of reading, replacing or maintaining the meter, and
- Has the right to enter a customer's property at other times if the situation is deemed an emergency or a breach of legislation is suspected.

Meter readers and Shoalhaven Water staff are required to carry identification and produce if requested.

Customer Service Standards

Shoalhaven Water sets itself very high standards for all its water supply and wastewater services. We have adopted a range of **Customer Service Standards** which describes those key elements of our activities which ensure that our customers are adequately informed about the services they receive and the timeframe that they can expect for those services.

Shoalhaven Water will make every reasonable effort to:

- Provide water and wastewater services on a continuous basis unless an interruption is required for emergency repairs or planned maintenance of the network, infrastructure or operations thereof,
- Supply high quality drinking water free from harmful organisms, colour, taste or odour in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (Exceptions include the Burrier and Porters Creek untreated water supply). This also includes the NSW Government Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Act,

- Minimise overflows from the wastewater collection system and ensure affected areas are cleaned up and disinfected as soon as possible if such occurs, and
- Compile a summary of all customer complaints as required under the National Perform Reporting framework and report publicly on an annual basis.

Service delivery is not just about response times, it is also about making sure that our business provides a high-quality level of service. Appendix 1 outlines the Customer Service Standards together with the target and benchmark used to partially measure our success as contained at Appendix 2.



National Performance Report - C10
See Appendix 2.1

Meter Reading

Water meter readings are used to calculate consumption charges that appear on the Water Accounts. Shoalhaven Water reads water meters on a cyclic and quarterly basis. Meters are read and Water Accounts issued as soon as possible after the reading of the meter. This ensures that customers obtain consumption information in a timely fashion in order to address any high and unexpected volumes. High level water consuming customers are read on a monthly basis. Final water meter reading can be undertaken on application.

In most cases the water meter is located on the front boundary of a property. There are cases however, where the meter is located further inside a property and meter readers are required to enter the property to take the reading.

Meter accuracy may reduce with the increasing age of the unit or usage as the dials tend to wear and they tend to record less consumption than actually occurs. Shoalhaven Water therefore has a meter replacement program and meters are replaced at Shoalhaven Water expense unless damage has occurred from wilful destruction. Disruption to customers is minimised and for high consumption properties contact is always made before a water meter is replaced. When a water meter is replaced, the final reading is recorded for billing prior to the new meter being installed. Details are always provided to customers.

If a water meter is found to be damaged or stopped, an "estimate" of a property's water consumption will be applied based on historical consumption in only exceptional circumstances.

Water Accounts

A Water Account is sent from Shoalhaven Water to the title owner of a property and will if applicable include the wastewater availability charges. A helpful guide to ***understanding your water account*** can be found on our website.

The Water Account will comply with the 2006 National Guidelines for Residential Customers' Water Accounts. A Water Account will generally include the following information:

- Customer name,
- Your postal address, Property ID, address and description of the property for the purpose of water and sewer services to which the charges apply,
- The date of issue and the supply period,
- The previous and current meter readings,
- Separation of the water and wastewater availability charges including the meter numbers and size,
- Separation of the volumetric charges,
- The total consumption for the current period and comparison with the daily average consumption for the previous period and same period last year,
- The date by which you are required to pay and the ways by which you can pay,
- Information on contacting us including a 24-hour telephone number for faults and emergencies,
- General news about your Local Government Water Utility.

Shoalhaven Water will provide a range of payment options for Water Accounts. In addition to those shown on each Water Account (space limited), a number of other alternative methods are provided and these are summarised upon the Shoalhaven Water website.

Shoalhaven Water will also provide a range of topical information flyers contained within each Water Account to educate, inform and highlight to customers the services provided by Shoalhaven Water. The information flyers are an important means by which we can communicate regularly with customers about initiatives and water saving strategies.

Tenant Water Consumption

NSW water utilities are not required under legislation to provide “tenant billing” for water charges. Water Accounts are sent by Shoalhaven Water after each water meter is read and the account remains the responsibility of the property owner. The owner of a tenanted property can however under certain conditions, specify that a tenant is responsible for and pay water usage charges. This is a private matter for each property owner to consider but Shoalhaven Water is unable to provide a separate account for water usage charges to a tenant or agent.

If a property owner intends that a tenant is to pay for the water usage charges the options are:

- Owner on-forwards the portion of water usage as shown on the water account, or
- Owner changes their nominated address for all notices to that of their rental agent who then bills the tenant or to the property address,

Property owners should note that if the second option is preferred, all Council rates, charges and notices are also sent to that address.

Restriction of Water Supply (unpaid charges or misuse of water)

Under the Local Government Act and General Regulations, Shoalhaven Water may restrict or cut off the supply of water in a number of circumstances including:

- If any rates or charges in respect of the water supplied to the premises are unpaid,
- If the owner or occupier or person requiring a supply of water fails to comply with a lawful order or requirement to repair or alter water connections, pipes, fittings or fixtures connected to the water supply system.

In the cases above, Shoalhaven Water will not undertake the restriction of water supply to critical customers, pensioner accounts or properties with farm animals in accordance with Shoalhaven Water - Debtor Management Policy.

The restriction of water supply will not be undertaken for unpaid charges without a reminder and notice of restriction being first provided. In cases where the property address and owner postal address differ, an advice will be sent to the occupier of the pending action.

Resumption of full supply will occur when the reason for the restriction of services no longer applies and the payment of the applicable charge has been made.



National Performance Report - C18
See Appendix 2.1

Undetected Water Leaks

Shoalhaven Water will make available, assistance to customers by providing some relief for significantly higher Water Accounts emanating from undetected water leaks. Whilst water that has passed through a meter connection is the responsibility of a property owner, as an act of good faith, some assistance can be provided. The full details concerning **Undetected Water Leak Assistance** are contained on our website and Section 5 - Your Rights and Responsibilities.

Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW

With an emphasis on quality assistance and continuous improvement, we understand that customers may seek to obtain an independent means by which to resolve any concern which they might hold about our provision of services. Shoalhaven Water maintains for its customers, membership of Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON). Customers can contact EWON and at no expense to themselves, EWON can investigate, mediate and resolve complaints independent of any interference by Shoalhaven Water. EWON can be contacted on 1800 246 545 or contacted via their website.



See Appendix 2.4

Website

Although Shoalhaven Water is a part of Shoalhaven City Council, we maintain a website which is consistent with the Water Industry to provide specific information to our customers regarding water supply matters. The website is maintained with important news items including significant water supply outages, restrictions or sewer related disruptions during emergency or weather impacting events. The information is updated regularly and includes environmental data concerning river flows, water consumption and rainfall.

The website includes important demand management initiatives and a dedicated Education portal for primary school aged students which has been endorsed for use as part of specified curriculum.

Visit www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au

Customer Surveys

We will undertake targeted customer surveys on the range of services provided. The surveys will be undertaken in a range of ways including web based, follow-up calls and walk in. Our customers are encouraged to provide feedback via phone, email, mail or online messaging.

Water Restrictions

Although the supply is designed to be secure, there will be times under prolonged drought conditions when Shoalhaven Water will be forced to restrict water usage in order to preserve the City's supplies to meet the essential needs. There are four categories of restrictions, each with an increasing impact on water consumption.

Water restrictions will always be widely advertised to ensure total awareness by all customers. Details concerning the "triggers" for water restrictions and the restriction categories are contained within the Shoalhaven Water **Drought Management Plan**.

Stakeholder Engagement

As Council's Water Utility, Shoalhaven Water is required to comply with the Local Government Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines. This includes a requirement to prepare:

- Community Strategic Plan (CSP),
- Resourcing Strategy,
- 4-year Delivery Program,
- Annual Operational Plan, and
- Annual Report

The **Community Strategic Plan** sits at the top of the Council planning hierarchy and identifies the community's main priorities for the future and the ways to achieve these goals. Council has adopted a **Community Engagement Strategy** which is a planned process whereby Council will work with the whole of the community to address issues affecting their well-being.

Shoalhaven Water conducts Stakeholder Engagement and Project Delivery Plans for major capital works and seeks comment, feedback and opinion on a continual basis via website, telephone or mail.

As a proactive measure to engage the community, Shoalhaven Water attends, sponsors and takes an active role in a range of Community Events where the services and capital works projects are publicly displayed.

Additional information is contained within **Section 6 - Working Together**.

Repairs and Maintenance

In our **Asset Management Plan - Wastewater** and **Asset Management Plan - Water Supply** we have documented our commitment to a clear understanding of our infrastructure systems and how such relate to/impact upon various customer groups. By identifying critical assets it will allow Shoalhaven Water to develop appropriate management strategies that minimise the risk of catastrophic events and achieve optimum balance between the risk of asset failure and the lifecycle costs of inspecting, maintaining, repairing and renewing assets.

This section of the Customer Service Plan provides however, some specific core business actions with regard to continuation of services as a result of works involving repair or maintenance of infrastructure.

From time to time, Shoalhaven Water will need to undertake planned maintenance work and emergency repairs to the water supply and sewerage system. Shoalhaven Water always is mindful of the disruption that can be caused to customers and for planned works will always aim in general terms to:

- Provide notice to occupiers of affected properties 24 hours prior to commencing the planned work. For large areas, radio and newspaper notice will be given,
- Dialysis patients and other Critical Water Supply Customers (see Table below) will be advised in advance of planned interruptions and where unplanned interruptions occur, notified and action taken to prioritise re-supply,
- Provide notice to industrial customers 7 days or by agreement prior to commencing the planned work,
- Undertake planned work that involves shutting down the water supply or wastewater system at a time that minimises disruption to customers. Every reasonable effort will be made to perform this work between 8.30am and 3pm in residential areas and between 6pm and 6am in commercial areas, and

- If interruption will be less than 4 hours, notice will only be given to those customers who are put at extreme inconvenience.

For emergency repairs and service faults, Shoalhaven Water will, where possible:

- Respond to service faults within quoted timeframes,
- Maintain a listing of Critical Water Supply Customers and immediately notify outage/ provide regular updates on progress of repairs (See Critical Water Supply Customers table below),
- Attempt to contact all affected properties for isolated supply disruptions and/or use social media, radio or other means to reasonably inform customers,
- Try to limit water interruptions to a minimum,
- Provide alternative water supplies through temporary connections and/or emergency bottled drinking water where possible, and
- Water will be available from reticulated hydrants in urban areas for fire-fighting.



National Performance Report - C15
See Appendix 2.1

TABLE: Critical Water Supply Customers

Grading	Definition	Customer Type
Extremely Critical	Customers for which the disruption of water supply may present a serious threat to human life, safety, or welfare or a serious threat to animal welfare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-patient hospitals and surgical facilities • Dialysis facilities / patient
Critical	Customers for which disruption of water supply would present a significant impact on facility operations but not a serious threat to life or safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctors and dentists • Medical facilities and out-patient hospitals • Assisted living facilities • Educational institutions (eg schools and universities) • Kindergartens / day care facilities • High water users (> 35 megalitres/year) • Medical / food production facilities • Utility facilities which require water for operation (eg gas storage facilities) • Prisons • Zoos or other large scale animal housing or processing facilities

Access to Private Property

If in the event it is necessary to enter upon your property to access water supply (water meter reading notwithstanding) or sewerage infrastructure (eg pressure sewer units, manholes, mains or inspection openings), we will:

- Make every effort to contact the occupier/ owner of the property prior to entering upon the land to undertake urgent repairs,
- Ensure that all Shoalhaven Water staff and/ or authorised contractors as applicable, produce their identifications upon arrival,
- Advise the occupier/owner of the property as to the nature of the work being undertaken, the staff and equipment necessary involved and the timeframe to complete the work,
- Undertake the work as carefully as possible with all effort made to minimise the impact upon the property and disruption to the occupier,
- Leave a "calling card" after completion of the work if the occupier/owner of the property is not present,
- Discuss any reinstatement works with the occupier/owner prior to commencement, and
- Make every effort to reinstate the property to its prior state as quickly as possible after completion of the work.

In all circumstances we will:

- Undertake works in a safe manner in line with best practice,
- Present ourselves in a neat and tidy manner, and
- Conduct ourselves professionally and courteously at all times and refrain from any offensive behaviour or coarse language.

Reinstatement of Surfaces

In the majority of cases, water and wastewater mains are located beneath the street, footpath or inside the rear/side boundary of a property. It is therefore necessary from time to time that landscaping and/or concrete driveway works will need to be undertaken in order to repair or replace water mains and other infrastructure.

Shoalhaven Water will take reasonable care in undertaking these works and where such involve driveways, finding an alternative to cutting wherever possible. Should an alternative solution not be viable, cutting may be unavoidable. Shoalhaven Water will restore the driveway and this includes concrete, exposed aggregate, decorative, pavers or stamped concrete. For works undertaken upon grassed verges or nature strips the replacement of turf may be by way of grass seed and topsoil to promote growth.

Provision of Water Saving Strategies

Shoalhaven Water takes our responsibility to the community and the environment seriously. Water conservation means looking after our resources and protecting the environment. Consequently, Shoalhaven Water provides a number of educational resources and actively facilitates water saving initiatives which promote water, wastewater and associated efficiencies.

Shoalhaven Water maintains and promotes as standard demand management initiatives:

- Water saving rebates,
- Tap rewasher programs,
- Water saving information resources,
- Guided tours, and
- Water Education Website, Tapstar School Water Conservation shows, Teacher Resource Kits and Kids Education and Fun Activities.

Energy Management

As the largest user of energy resources within the Shoalhaven together with the high cost of operating the large water and sewer infrastructure, Shoalhaven Water takes a serious view toward energy management. Shoalhaven Water operates within a highly regulated environment with responsibilities extended to satisfy our broad customer base including various industry stakeholders, private, commercial, government, regulators and visiting consumers.

Shoalhaven Water operates a large number of water and wastewater treatment plants and pumps which consume significant amounts of power. To help reduce costs and greenhouse gas emissions associated with this large electricity load, Shoalhaven Water has installed 8 sites with 260 kilowatts (kW) of solar panels. Adding to this renewable energy is another 4 sites and 230 kW of solar PV approved for installation in 2021. Shoalhaven Water's largest solar PV system is ground-mounted at Vincentia Wastewater Treatment Plant (see photo). Reducing energy consumption and associated carbon emissions is consistent with Shoalhaven Council's Sustainable Energy Policy to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Energy management at Vincentia Treatment Plant



Your **Rights and Responsibilities**

In general terms, customers are responsible for:

- All internal plumbing on the property. Internal plumbing should be maintained, including preventing tree root intrusion on wastewater pipes, and regularly checking for leaks on water pipes,
- Maintaining easy access to their water meter by Shoalhaven Water staff or water meter readers,
- The cost of a sewer blockage on their property if caused by a covered inspection hole, defective fitting on their property or placement of inappropriate items into the wastewater system,
- Ensuring that the stormwater drainage is not connected to or not permitted to enter the wastewater system through the overflow relief gully (ORG).

Customers should advise us:

- Of any dangers on their property e.g. dangerous dogs or obstacles which may prevent, hinder or stop the water meter from being accessed,
- If they require uninterrupted/high volumes of water for use by life support equipment so we are aware of the situation

In addition, customers must allow an authorised person from Shoalhaven Water access to their property to:

- Inspect, make safe, operate, change, maintain, remove, repair or replace any infrastructure or equipment (including but not limited to water meters),
- Disconnect unauthorised connections to the system,
- Connect, restrict, or restore supply.

Information and Privacy

Council collects and holds personal and health information for the purpose of facilitating its business. It is important that the use of this information is confined to the purpose for which it is acquired.

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 [PPIPA] requires all public sector agencies to prepare, implement and review their Privacy Management Plan at least every three years. Shoalhaven City Council complies with the legislative requirements of the PPIPA, the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 [HRIPA] and the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government Code of Practice for Local Government in this regard.

The Council's **Privacy Management Plan** has been publicly adopted in order to inform the community and maintain the education of staff on issues regarding access to personal information and to introduce Council policies and procedures to maximise compliance with the PPIPA and the HRIPA.

Shoalhaven City Council and Shoalhaven Water are committed to protecting the privacy of our customers, business contacts, Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers.

Customer Call Monitoring

When you call our offices you may hear a range of messages in order to properly direct your call to the appropriate area. One such message might include "your call may be monitored or recorded for quality, training and verification purposes. Please let us know if you'd prefer not to have your call monitored or recorded". Any personal information you provide to us will only be used to appropriately respond to your enquiry or request. You can be assured that Shoalhaven Water will comply with the Information Privacy Act when dealing with information.

It is important to Shoalhaven Water that we deliver high standards of customer service. For this reason, ongoing training of our staff is important and call monitoring is necessary as part of that responsibility.

Notification of Special Health Needs

Shoalhaven Water maintains a register of residential properties that operate dialysis machines. This information is available to Shoalhaven Water staff to ensure, as far as possible, that a continuous supply of drinking water is maintained at those locations in the event of a burst water main or a planned shut-down.

Shoalhaven Water will maintain regular contact with customers registered with us including emergency numbers. We also maintain contact and provide our details to Renal Units so that information can be provided to patients. Some special health needs customers also receive a rebate on water charges.

Property Connections

Development of Properties

Enquiries from customers on the development of properties including change in use, reconfiguring of a parcel of land (lot), and operational works involving water supply or wastewater should be directed to us on (02) 4429 3214. Customers should be aware that it is their responsibility to contact Council and/or Shoalhaven Water for any development or redevelopment of their property.

Redevelopment of Properties

Sometimes when a property is redeveloped, it is necessary to relocate or upgrade the existing water supply and/or wastewater connections. It is an owners responsibility to contact Shoalhaven Water if a redevelopment is to occur, to seek advice about any conditions or works necessary appropriate to the changes.

Disconnection of Water Supply or Downsizing of Water Meters

If a property owner no longer requires water supply, Shoalhaven Water can disconnect the water meter and/or the service line to the main. This action may incur a cost. Customers should note that the applicable fixed Availability Charges will apply for single services in accordance with legislation if those services remain available even though such may not necessarily be used.

Multiple connections or downsizing of water meters, disconnection/downsizing or nominal sizing can be undertaken at Shoalhaven Water's expense, subject to customers completing the required documentation. Customers may be required to obtain at their expense an independent Hydraulics Assessment to confirm the sizing of connections applicable to the development. See **Metering** for further details.

Flow and Pressure Tests

Flow and pressure tests can normally be undertaken for customers by licensed plumbers. Shoalhaven Water can provide a water pressure certificate on payment of the applicable charge.

Backflow Prevention

Backflow prevention is the term used to prevent the reverse flow of water from a potentially polluted or contaminated source into the potable drinking water supply system. This can more often occur in commercial and industrial facilities that have:

- Taps or running water outlets in a contaminated area,
- Submerged water outlets used for filling tanks in a commercial/industrial process, and
- Water supply connected to commercial or industrial process pipes.

Backflow prevention is also required for properties that have rainwater tanks connected to the internal plumbing. The installation of new water meters will generally suffice for appropriate backflow prevention.

Most commercial premises have a backflow responsibility. Backflow is prevented with larger metered connections by installing a prevention device such as a one-way valve that prevents contaminants from entering the drinking water supply system. These are supplied in testable and non-testable types depending on the risk associated with the possible contamination. Testable devices require annual testing to ensure satisfactory operation. Further information on backflow prevention requirements is available on the Shoalhaven Water website.

Disconnection of Sewer

Customers no longer requiring an existing sewer connection or seeking relocation, the disconnected service must be cut off and capped by a licensed plumber to prevent water or soil entering the system.

Prior to commencement of works, owners should seek guidance from Shoalhaven Water's Development Services team. Customers should ensure that the connection pipe is cut off as deep in the ground as is practical to avoid being damaged by future landscaping or building works. Please note that disconnection of sewer does not preclude payment of the fixed Availability charges for sewerage services.

No Building over Sewers

Customers have a responsibility to ensure that construction is not undertaken without approval adjacent to or over our sewer assets. Shoalhaven Water's first position is that structures are not to be constructed over, or close to, sewers. Each case will however be considered on their merit having regard to the **Building over Sewers Policy**.

No Discharge of Stormwater into the Wastewater System

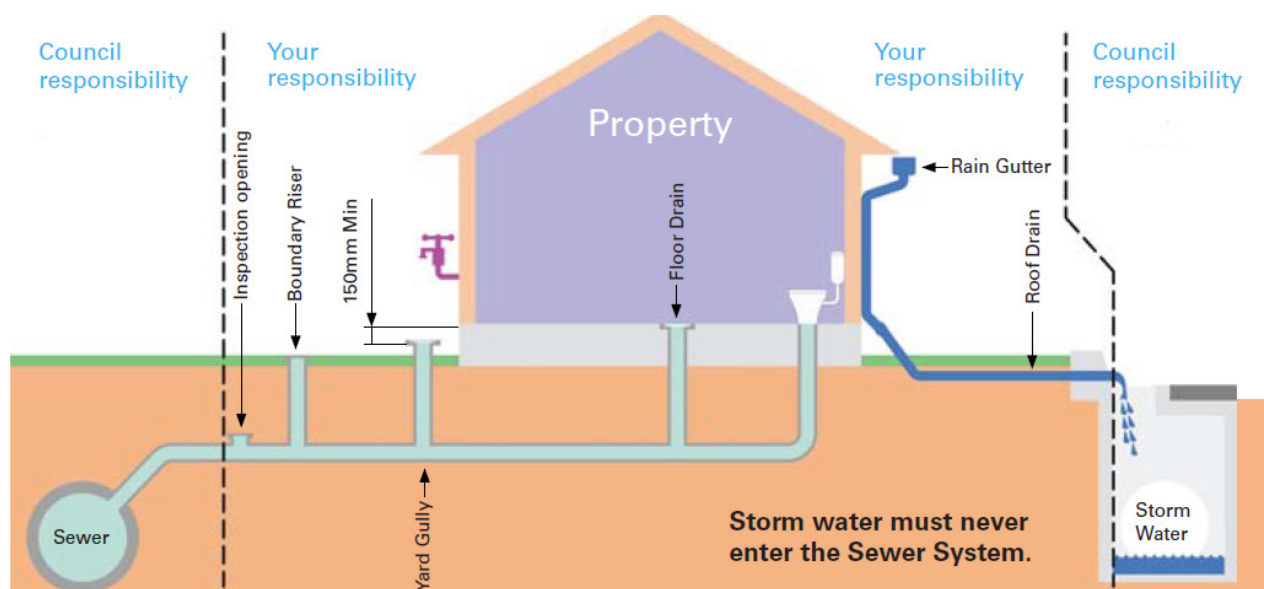
It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that stormwater is not discharged into the sewer. This can cause wastewater overflows into properties downstream, public health impacts and environmental damage.

Illegal sources of stormwater can include:

- Connection of roof downpipes into the wastewater system (including carports, patio covers, and extensions added after a property was originally constructed),
- Connection of garden drains and "ag" pipes from behind retaining walls,
- Concreting, paving or turfing up to the level of the yard gully (see photo next page), and
- Inadequate property drainage that leads to flooding of the yard gully during heavy rainfalls.

Shoalhaven Water regularly inspects and investigates areas that incur wet weather inflows into the wastewater system or overflows to the environment.

The below diagram shows where Shoalhaven Water's responsibility ends and the home owner's begins.



Yard Gully

The yard gully is a fitting outside the home designed to release wastewater overflows safely. The shape and size of the yard gully can vary but in general they are round grated drains between 100mm and 150mm in diameter. The grating may be metal or plastic and black, white or silver in colour.

In the event of a wastewater blockage or high stormwater inflows into the sewerage system, the yard gully should “pop off” to release the pressure and direct any wastewater away from the home. Such prevents wastewater entering into the home from toilets, drains, shower drains or other disposal points.

Plumbing regulations require that the yard gully must be installed at a level that is at least 150mm lower than the lowest drain inside the home (particularly the shower, toilet and any laundry or bathroom floor drains). It must also be installed at least 75mm above the surrounding ground level to ensure that stormwater does not flow into the wastewater system via the yard gully.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure that their home has a properly installed and operational yard gully. It must not be:

- covered by an object such as a pot plant,
- covered by landscaping or garden beds, and
- unable to pop-off because it is locked in place, corroded, filled with silt or concreted in.

If a property owner notices that toilets are slow to empty or gurgling it may be a problem in the

The yard gully may look something like this:



Pressure Sewer Systems

Shoalhaven Water have pressure sewer systems operating at a number of locations across the city. These systems involve a “grinder pumping unit” installed upon the owner’s property. Whilst Shoalhaven Water is responsible to maintain these units they are driven by electricity from the property switchboard which is the owner’s responsibility together with the house drainage.

In order for these systems to operate effectively, avoid blockages and damage to the units.

To avoid system failure, NEVER dispose of the following items into any form of the sewerage system:

- Glass, metal, gravel or sand,
- Seafood shells and kitty litter,
- Cloth, nappies, or plastic,
- Explosives and other flammable materials,
- Lubricating oils, grease, strong chemicals or stormwater

Information together with the responsibility for the systems, helpful hints, maintenance and contact numbers in the event of problems can be found on our website.

On-Site Effluent, Septic or Aerated Systems

All on-site human waste disposal systems for properties not connected to the reticulated sewerage system are the responsibility of the property owner. Shoalhaven Water provides a contracted cleanout service for property owners across the city to cater for this need.

Customers of on-site systems have a responsibility to maintain the workings in an environmentally sustainable fashion. The on-site systems might include pump stations, and many types of wastewater treatment and land application such as septic tanks, aerated wastewater treatment systems, bio filter systems, composting toilets and activated sludge systems.

On-site wastewater facilities within the Shoalhaven are regulated by Council’s Environment & Health Section.

Metering

Special Meter Readings

Property owners or their representatives (conveyancer, solicitors etc) can request a special water meter reading, for example:

- If the property is being sold and a water charge adjustment is required as part of the final settlement figures, and
- If a tenancy agreement requires the tenant to pay or contribute to the water consumption charges.

A special water meter reading is ordered by contacting Shoalhaven Water. Readings are generally carried out each week and a standard fee is payable upon application. A Water Account is generated as part of the reading process and this includes the Water Availability (fixed charges) if applicable.

Shoalhaven Water will take all reasonable action to provide the meter reading in the week after it was ordered.

Sub-Metering of Multi-Unit Developments

Historically, multi-unit developments had two options for the management of their water consumption;

- Have the total consumption recorded on the "Parent or master" meter and any "Child or submeter" which might be attached to a manifold and which is then connected directly to the water main, billed direct to the individual strata owners and body corporate as applicable, or
- Have the total consumption recorded on the "Parent or master" meter billed entirely to the Body Corporate.

It is a NSW Government Best Practice to separately meter new developments. All "Child or submetering" must be accessible for reading and periodic replacement.

During the planning of new multi-unit complexes, discussions will be conducted with developers to ensure compliance with Policy for water supply connections. All requirements for connection will be contained within Development Application Conditions issued by Shoalhaven Water.

Meter Accuracy Testing

Customers have the right if they are concerned that the water meter is not responding correctly, to have the meter tested. Contact us directly to discuss your options. Fees will apply.

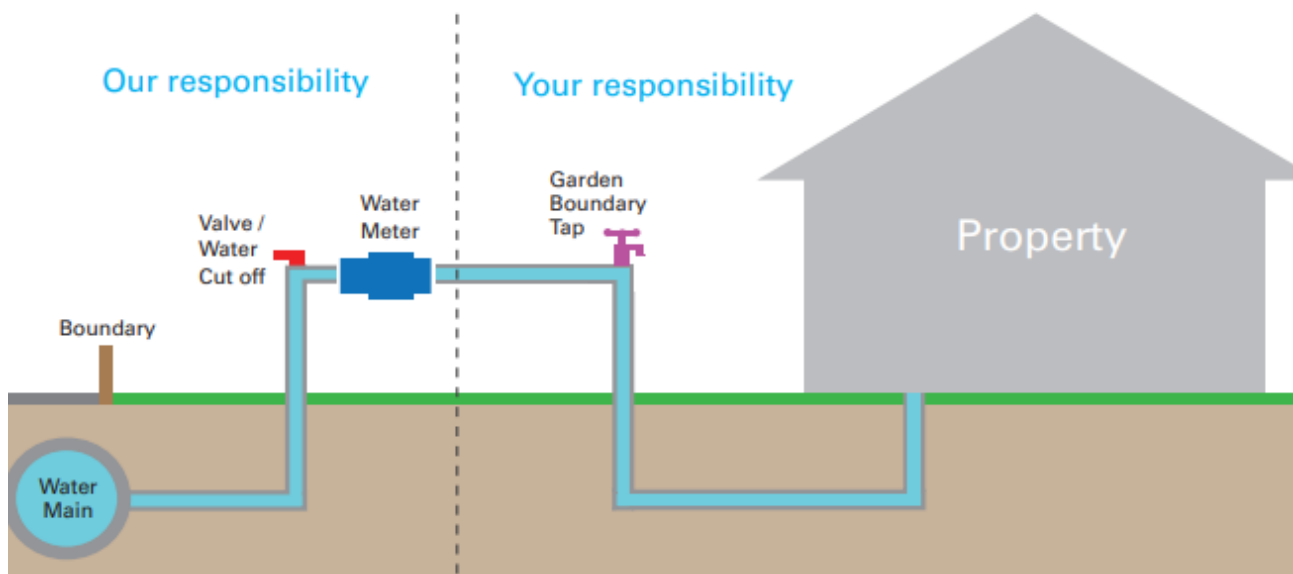
There are two options available:

1. Water Meter Accuracy Test (Non-NATA test method) undertaken by Shoalhaven Water for 20mm and 25mm meters, and
2. Water Meter Test and Strip Analysis (undertaken by a NATA accredited and independent test facility).

An accuracy test undertaken by a NATA accredited facility is carried out under 4 water flows. As a full mechanical inspection is undertaken, the meter is not able to be returned for use. The compliance conditions of the NSW Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 requires that water meters have an acceptable level of confidence within a maximum permissible limit of error + or – 4%.

Customers that opt to have the meter tested by the NATA accredited facility and that test returns an error rate outside of the maximum permissible limit of error to Shoalhaven Water benefit, the cost of the test will be refunded. An adjustment will also be made for the estimated amount that has been over-charged.

Customers must pay the fee for the applicable test when the application is lodged. Shoalhaven Water will take all reasonable action to have the independent meter testing results returned within four weeks however we seek customer's patience as testing is largely out of our control. The analysis report will be provided to the customer once it has been received.



Monitoring of Water Use and Water Leaks

Customers are responsible for all water that has passed through the water meter and this is commonly referred to as being “downstream” of the water meter. Consequently, customers are also responsible for water leaks that occur upon their property from failure of the internal water lines or devices. The above image shows where Shoalhaven Water’s responsibility ends and the home owners begins.

Shoalhaven Water recommends that all customers monitor their water use regularly by reading the water meter. If the property is vacant it is strongly recommended that water be turned off at the valve which is located near the meter. These valves also have a facility which allows them to be locked, customers can call us to request a lock free of charge for this purpose. Such action will prevent loss of water through burst lines or water tamper/theft.

Larger water consumers may wish to monitor their water consumption more regularly. There are data loggers available from private companies which typically consist of an electronic probe connected to the water meter that transmits pulses from the water meter to a data collection point. This process allows an analysis of water consumption across 24 hour periods. Shoalhaven Water must be contacted and approval given before a data logger is installed upon the water meter. This is to ensure that the probe does not affect the functioning or reading of the water meter.

Identifying Leaks

To perform a water leak check, turn off all the taps and water-using appliances in and around your property. Then check your water meter.

Look for movement on the RED DIALS.

If the dials on your water meter are moving, there could be a water leak.

If there is no movement of the dials, there may still be a slow water leak. As water pressure is at its highest during the evening, follow the same steps above but read the water meter before going to bed. Do not use any water throughout the night and read the meter again in the morning before using any water including the flushing of toilets.

If the dials have moved a water leak is most likely occurring. To fix, check all fixtures and fittings or call a licensed plumber.



Undetected Water Leaks

Shoalhaven Water is responsible for all water breaks and repairing leaks to the water main. This includes all water lines upstream of a water meter in road reserves.

The property owner is responsible for breaks and repairing water leaks downstream of a water meter within their property. In the event of a burst or leaking pipe, the property owner must arrange and pay for a licensed plumber to undertake the repair.

In some cases where an undetected water leak occurs on a property and is not associated with fittings some assistance may be provided.

The full conditions of the assistance able to be provided are contained within the Council's **Undetected Water Leak Policy**. An application of the undetected leak reduction does not remove the customer's obligation to pay outstanding charges for the water supplied.


 See Appendix 2.3



Tapstar & Dripette promote the Water Conservation message at a Community Event

Water Conservation

Shoalhaven Water has not adopted any permanent water conservation measures. Customers have a strong desire to conserve water and this has been reflected by the historical level of residential water use.

 National Performance Report - W12
See Appendix 2.1

Customers are responsible for the level of their water consumption and are provided with timely information by which they can reconcile the use against affordability. Water Accounts are issued on a cyclic basis and within a short timeframe of the water meter reading as this ensures that unexpected water loss is identified by customers early.

 See Appendix 2.3

To assist customers with achieving water conservation, Shoalhaven Water has a number of industry centric initiatives including a Rainwater Tank Rebate. Customers and the community can also access a number of initiatives which are a core business activity for Shoalhaven Water to encourage water conservation.

These include:

- Tap re-washer program,
- Water refilling stations,
- Reclaimed Water Management Scheme (REMS),
- Household, commercial and industrial water audits,
- Promotion of conservation initiatives with NSW Government agencies,
- Active involvement at community events and dedicated funding support,
- Tapstar education program for primary school aged students and other community events, and
- Information flyers with each Water Account.

Water Accounts

Payment

The owner of the property is responsible to acquit any charges overdue or payable. Payments are required 30 days after the Water Account is issued. Payment options available to customers include:

- Online at our Website
- BPay
- Direct Debit
- Credit Card
- Centrepay
- In person

Shoalhaven Water encourages customers to sign up to receive an electronic version of their Water Account. By choosing eNotices, customers can have their accounts sent direct to their email. Details on how to sign up for eNotices can be found on Shoalhaven Water's website.

Hardship Arrangements

Shoalhaven Water recognises that customers may experience financial hardship and this can often be due to circumstances beyond their control. This can affect customers' ability to meet the payment terms for their Water Accounts. The Payment Assistance Scheme (PAS) is fully funded by Shoalhaven Water to assist residential customers facing financial difficulty. This assistance scheme is managed by a range of agencies on our behalf with vouchers issued towards usage charges. The scheme ensures that water supply can be maintained.

Arrangements can also be made by customers to defer payments or make regular smaller payments against their Water Accounts. For further information contact Shoalhaven Water directly.

PAYMENT OPTIONS



Payment by Phone

Call 1300 004 431 to pay by credit card & follow the prompts.
Please note: this is an automated service.



Centrepay

To pay using Centrepay, contact Centrelink and provide Shoalhaven Water CRN 555071469B and your BPAY Ref. No.



Direct Debit

Please complete & return the form on our website



Post Billpay

Pay in store at Australia Post



*2146 60XXXXXX



Billers Code: 858639

Ref: 60XXXXXX

BPAY® this payment via Internet or phone banking from your cheque, savings, debit or transaction account. More info: www.bpay.com.au
BPAY View® – View and pay this bill using internet banking.

BPAY View Registration No.
Please enter the BPAY Reference number (next to the BPAY Logo on your notice)



For emailed notices:

shoalhavenwater.enotices.com.au

Reference No: 19531A7E

To find more payment options or how to receive your water accounts electronically visit www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au Note: Some payment options will incur a surcharge.

Bursts, Blockages & Spills

In a large system like ours, problem can unexpectedly occur and cause interruptions to service and other unforeseen issues, such as water leaks or sewer blockages. As these kinds of service faults are usually unplanned, we rely on the community to tell us about problems. Customers are responsible for contacting us as soon as they are aware of a problem.

Sewer Blockages

It is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain or repair all the sewer pipes inside your property through the point of connection with our wastewater system. This includes the lines down to the connection point of the sewerage main.

In a case where the connection of the private plumbing to the sewerage main is outside the property boundary, then the property owner is only responsible for the private plumbing up to the line of the property boundary. If you are experiencing a blockage or overflow the property owner must contact us first so that we can attend. If the blockage is caused by a fault within the property a licensed plumber will then be required to attend. The property owner must pay for the cost of clearing the blockage and any associated repairs to the private plumbing.

Shoalhaven Water can liaise with the plumber or owner as required in relation to a blockage, location and intentions regarding the problem. If a blockage is located in Shoalhaven Water's area of responsibility within the mains, we will reimburse reasonable charges from a plumber in attending the site or rectify the issue ourselves. To avoid this situation, customers should call Shoalhaven Water first.



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See Appendix 2.1

Water Damage and Sewer Overflows

From time to time, water mains burst as they are under pressure to ensure adequate supply. Sewer pipes may become blocked from tree roots or other debris causing an overflow. Council recognises that such an event is distressing and will, without liability, assist owners and occupiers with support and advice in the first instance and where Shoalhaven Water is liable, take necessary action to rectify the situation. Regardless, if water damage and sewer overflows occur:

- Property owners should contact their insurers, and
- Tenants should contact their insurers in relation to any personal effects and advise the property owner/manager or agent of any damage to the property.



Working Together

Shoalhaven Water is committed to a positive customer and community relationship engendered by continual involvement in the day to day activities of the business. In general, good customer relations are maintained by providing a quality service, keeping our customers informed and responding to the community needs.

The Customer Service Plan has been created to cover these key aspects and include a single point of reference to:

- Set and meet agreed Customer Service Standards (See Appendix 1)
- Benchmarking on our performance and where improvement is identified, act upon such to meet our Customer expectations,
- Clearly define and communicate our charges,
- Discourage the wastage of water and provide a range of community programs to educate on sustainability, and
- Provide strong communication strategies to reach all community members about water supply and sewerage matters.

Customer Satisfaction

The delivery of a personal service approach to our customers, as the essential service provider of water supply and sewerage across the city, is seen by all members of our staff as an important part in attaining strong customer satisfaction results. This is facilitated by maintaining good communication and good performance in all aspects of the business. Shoalhaven Water has a dedicated customer service team able to answer any customer enquiries relating to the services that we supply. Shoalhaven Water effectively maintains “a one-stop shop” as related to water supply and sewerage services during normal business hours from 8am to 5pm. An afterhours service is also available to assist customers 24 hours a day 365 days a year via the number shown below in General Enquiries.

Shoalhaven City Council is transitioning to a ‘one-stop-shop’ for all Council inquiries, including water and sewer services. This transition will ensure that all your Council and Shoalhaven Water inquiries can be resolved in one central location.

Shoalhaven Water undertakes a range of initiatives to seek customer feedback and undertakes formalised surveys of customers in a number of ways including:

- Follow up calls post customer requests for assistance,
- Follow up cards by Operations staff,
- Random customer surveys for areas of concern, and
- Website, counter and community available customer response forms.



Community group tour of water treatment facility

Customer Consultation

The provision of water supply and sewerage services can sometimes lead to conflict within the wider community. This is especially true regarding changes of services, increase to charges and construction of significant new works which have an obvious impact on the environment. Shoalhaven Water is proactive in delivering an ongoing education program about the services provided as a water utility. In addition, Shoalhaven Water is committed to providing regular updates to the community including:

- Three year price paths for core charges,
- Three year capital works program,
- Quarterly information flyers contained within all Water Accounts,
- News items on the Shoalhaven Water website,
- Updates of outages or events via social media and the Shoalhaven Water website,
- Public presentations on annual budget including capital works,
- Seeking commentary and feedback on significant works in planning stages, and
- Holding public information sessions, displays and presentations.

Shoalhaven Water as a the local water utility for Shoalhaven City Council participates in the legislative requirements of the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework.

It is a core business principle that Shoalhaven Water undertakes community consultation as a plan into projects as applicable, rather than implemented as a reaction to opposition, uncertainty or lack of information.

Contact Us

Shoalhaven Water – City Administrative Centre
PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm
(excluding public holidays)

Phone: (02) 4429 3214

Afterhours Emergencies: (02) 4421 3100

Online Chat Service: www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au

Email: water@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

Assistance in Person

Nowra Administration Office
Bridge Road
Nowra, NSW 2541

Ulladulla Administration Office
Deering Street
Ulladulla, NSW 2539

Complaints

Shoalhaven Water recognises that a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. This accords with the Australian Standard (AS ISO 10002-2006) and consistent with the National Performance Reporting requirements relating to complaints which are independently audited for compliance. The number and type of complaints about the services provided by Shoalhaven Water or staff are captured for reporting and rectification where necessary.

A complaint could include a customer:

- Providing negative feedback about dealings with Shoalhaven Water,
- Dissatisfied with a decision made under Shoalhaven Water policy,
- Dissatisfied with an action or failure to act by Shoalhaven Water, and
- Customer levels of responsiveness as measured by the National Performance Reporting mechanisms for benchmarking which include:
 - Water quality complaints,
 - Water service complaints,
 - Sewerage service complaints,
 - Billing and account complaints – water and sewerage, and
 - Total water and sewerage complaints.

Examples of matters that are not classified as complaints include:

- A request for service or assistance with clarification on a matter,
- An inquiry into the progress of a water meter connection,
- A request to take action on a leaking water pipe or any other service fault,
- An inquiry to seek clarification or further information about a Water Account, and
- Government pricing policy, property connections, restrictions, tariff structures or a correctly calculated Water Account is too high.

However, if no action or inadequate action is taken on a request for service or information, or inquiry seeking clarification, the subsequent contact would be classified as a complaint.

Complaint Handling

When a customer contacts Shoalhaven Water with a complaint by telephone, email, letter or in person, customers can expect to:

- Have their complaint and personal details kept confidential,
- Be treated with courtesy and respect,
- Receive the appropriate support where special needs are identified (eg interpreter service or hearing disabled),
- Receive an acknowledgement of a complaint if sought,
- Be provided with a reference number for any future enquiry or follow-up,
- Have the matter investigated thoroughly and objectively,
- Be kept informed of the process and outcome, and
- Receive a decision on the complaint if applicable.

Customers can be assured that Shoalhaven Water will prioritise complaints based on the seriousness and complexity of a complaint but in all cases we will provide a response within 10 working days. If a customer is not satisfied with the result or wish to seek an outcome without initial reference to Shoalhaven Water, an option exists to seek assistance from the NSW Energy and Water Ombudsman (EWON) via our membership of that agency. For further information regarding EWON, See **Section 4 - Our Rights and Responsibilities**.

Reporting of Odour Complaints

Wastewater naturally produces gases that can cause some odour. Shoalhaven Water endeavours to ensure these odours do not occur and as a result takes multiple measures to reduce this occurrence. Customers are encouraged to contact Shoalhaven Water to report all unpleasant odours.



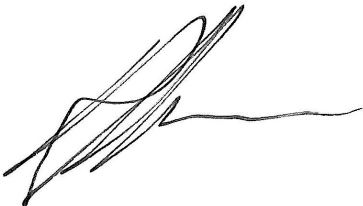
National Performance Report - C9
See Appendix 2.1

Document Control

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name

signature



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Appendix

1

Service and response times:

WATER

Standards	Description	Target	Priority*	Comments	Benchmark
Minimum drinking water pressure to boundary.	Provide between 15 metres and 90 metres head of water in the reticulation system.	95% of all residential properties during summer whilst conveying a minimum of 9 litres per minute.	2	Section 2 Our Services - Water Supply	Industry standard
Extent of unplanned drinking water interruptions (water interruptions frequency)	An unplanned water supply interruption occurs when a property is without a service due to any cause. This excludes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property service connection interruptions (unless the burst or leak requires the main to be shut down for repairs which affect multiple customers) Interruptions that cause some reduction to the service but where normal activities are still possible Planned interruptions except where the customer has not received notification. 	< the median average.	1	Section 2 Our Services - Water Supply and Section 5 Your Rights & Responsibilities	National Performance Benchmarking Report (C15 – Average Duration of unplanned interruptions water in minutes) (C10 – Water Service complaints # per 1000 properties) (A8 – Water main breaks # per 100 km of water main).
Time for restoration of water service – unplanned interruptions.	Restoration occurs where all interrupted connections are restored to normal service.	< the median average.	1	Section 2 Our Services - Water Supply and Section 5 Your Rights & Responsibilities	National Performance Benchmarking Report (A8 - Water main breaks # per 100 km of water main) (C15 – Average Duration of unplanned interruptions water in minutes).
Drinking water quality and/or complaints.**	Supply drinking water in the reticulated system which meet the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and minimise the number of water quality complaints resulting from Operational practices.	100% of the service population for which microbiological compliance is achieved. < the median average for water quality complaints.	2	Section 2 Our Services - Water Supply and Section 4 Our Rights & Responsibilities	National Performance Benchmarking Report (H1 – Water quality guidelines) (H3 - % of population where microbiological compliance was achieved. H7 – Public disclosure of drinking water performance). National Performance Benchmarking Report (C9 – Water quality complaints per 1,000 properties).

SEWER

Standards	Description	Target	Priority*	Comments	Benchmark
Wastewater overflows to customer properties.	Wastewater overflows to customer properties may occur either as a result of onsite plumbing or offsite sewerage issues. Customers are advised in the first instance to contact their plumber if their system is blocked by tree roots etc. If the plumber identifies the issue is with the sewerage system, Shoalhaven Water will re-imburse the plumber/customer for the work and undertake rectification. Most overflows occur during wet weather periods as a result of high inflow/infiltration of stormwater to the wastewater system. The system is designed to cater for limited inflows, events greater than this (ie widespread flooding) are excluded.	< the median average for sewerage main breaks and chokes.	1	Section 2 Our Services – Wastewater Collection, Treatment & Disposal and Section 5 Your Rights & Responsibilities.	National Performance Benchmarking Report (A15 – Property Connection sewer breaks and chokes per 1,000 properties)
Wastewater odour complaints.	Wastewater odour complaints can be generated as a consequence of a range of shortcomings with operational maintenance of the system. Action is taken to minimise the disruption from such occurring.	< the NSW state wide median average for odour complaints.	2	Section 2 Our Services – Wastewater Collection, Treatment & Disposal and Section 5 Your Rights & Responsibilities.	NSW Triple Bottom Line Sewerage Performance (21 – Odour Complaints per 1,000 properties)
Effluent quality from Sewage Treatment Plants.	To meet and ensure ongoing compliance with licence regulations by the EPA for the operation of the Sewage Treatment Plants (STP's).	All STP works compliant at all times.	NA	Section 2 Our Services – Wastewater Collection, Treatment & Disposal	National Performance Benchmarking Report (E5 – Number of sewage treatment works compliant at all times)

* See Response time to system failure table under.

** Exception – Raw Water Supply customers.

Response and repair completion times:

WATER

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
Definition	A complete failure to maintain continuity of quality of supply to large number of customers or a critical user at a critical time. Traffic or safety hazard.	Partial failure to maintain continuity of supply to a small group of customers or a critical user at a non-critical time.	Failure to maintain continuity or quality of supply to a single customer.	Known fault, non-urgent minor problem or complaint which can be dealt with at a time convenient to the customer and Shoalhaven Water.
Typical cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump station failure, • Water Treatment Plant malfunction, • Valve failure, • Major Water Main or service break, • No water, • Stop cock faulty (flooding house – urgent shutdown required), and • Illness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor main break, • Major service Leak - causing no water to property, • Water Quality, • Dirty water, • Poor pressure as a result of main break, • Leak causing a safety/traffic issue, • Faulty Metercock (need to be shut off supply today), and • Asset location – plant and machinery on-site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor leak from main or service line (not causing safety/traffic issue), • Partial failure of connections, • Minor leak from a hydrant point, • Asset locations – no plant or machinery on-site, • Install temporary service, • Poor Water pressure – individual service, and • Water Quality – Taste & Odour issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faulty water meter, • Damaged meter (unable to read), • Faulty meter cock (no work being carried out), • Service disconnection or downsize, • Faulty valve or hydrant, and • Water Hammer
Typical effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major property damage, • Water Treatment Plant output diminished, • Personal risk to public health, • Significant depletion of service reservoir, • Major environmental impact, and • Reduced water supply to Critical Water Supply Customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor property damage, and • Minor environmental impact. 	No property and/or minor environmental impact.	No property impact or financial disadvantage to the customer.
Response time***	Within 90 minutes	Within 2.5 hours	Within 1 business day	Within 3 business days
Fault repair (ie asset functioning and back in service) objective.	Within 5 hours	Within 24 hours	Within 2 business days	Within 5 business days
Surface reinstatement and clean-up completion if applicable.	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days

*** Response time defined as time to have staff on site to commence rectification of problem after notification by public or own staff.

SEWER

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
Definition	A complete failure to contain sewage within the system or any problem affecting customers or a critical user at a critical time. Traffic or safety hazard.	A minor failure to contain sewage within the sewer system or any problem affecting multiple customers.	A minor failure to contain sewage affecting a single property.	A minor problem, request or complaint which can be dealt with at a time convenient to the customer and Shoalhaven Water
Typical cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manhole overflowing, Pump station failure, Broken gravity/rising main, Missing manhole lids, Break, collapse, choke overloading the system and extended wet weather, Subsidence causing immediate danger, and Sewerage Treatment Plant critical alarms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cracked pipe or partial blockage of the sewer, Pump station fault, Partial wastewater blockage, Subsidence causing danger, Asset location – plant and machinery onsite. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden extra hydraulic load which backs up but then clears itself, Partial main line choke, Partial house service choke, Broken junction connection, Minor subsidence, Wastewater odour not occurring now, Noisy or smelly manhole, Smelly or noisy pumpstation, and Asset location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pump station/manhole noisy (not causing major concern to customer's peace and quiet) Planned work, System investigation, and Adjustment to manholes.
Typical effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal injury or risk to public health, Surcharge to overflow in dry weather, Surcharge or overflow wet weather, Surcharge inside a building, Surcharge outside a building, if posing a health risk, Major property damage eg subsidence, and Major environmental impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surcharge outside a building, not posing a health risk, Minor property damage, Minor environmental impact, ie odour problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor surcharge, Slow moving toilet flush Minimal or environmental impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor inconvenience or disruption.
Response time***	Within 90 minutes	Within 2.5 hours	Within 1 working day	Within 3 working days
Fault repair (ie asset functioning and back in service) objective.	Within 5 hours	Within 24 hours	Within 2 working days	Within 5 business days
Surface reinstatement and clean-up completion if applicable.	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days	Within 5 business days

*** Response time defined as time to have staff on site to commence rectification of problem after notification by public or own staff.

Appendix

2

Target & Benchmarking of Services




Customers – Everything we do and measure, in all manner of ways, is to ensure that Shoalhaven Water can stay focused on the core services that we provide. It is important that as many of those services are benchmarked to ensure that areas for improvement are identified early.

It is also important that customers get a realistic, accurate and comprehensive suite of results by which they can measure the performance of their water utility. Shoalhaven Water does this through three main reporting mechanisms with targets and results outlined within this Appendix.

- National Performance Reporting,
- NSW Office of Water Benchmarking Reporting, and
- Shoalhaven Water, Customer and Business Services Section Reporting.

The results are updated annually and are published in the Customer Service Plan, as the data becomes available.

Benchmarking is undertaken against broad targets across the three reporting means. How Shoalhaven Water is performing in respect of State and National Performance compared to the average result for utilities our size, these results are shown via traffic light system:

-  performing better than average
-  no benchmark
-  performing less than average

Appendix

2.1

National Performance Reporting Large Utility Group 50,000 to 100,000 properties

The National Performance Reporting is a comprehensive, comparative performance report, unique for Australia in scale and scope. Shoalhaven Water is benchmarked against similar sized Water Utilities across Australia. The National Performance Reporting requires that data results are independently audited every four years and only Utilities that achieve full compliance with the audit are contained within the benchmarking results. Shoalhaven Water is fully compliant and is able to report on all the NPR Indicators.

There is always a time lag in publication of the data with the annual results promulgated in late April of each year. The results are shown for the previous financial year and Shoalhaven Water aims to achieve an outcome which surpasses the median average.

The results below are related to the Customer Service Plan and include a range of indicators with strong links to customer responsiveness, and are the latest available at the time of release of the Customer Service Plan version. The full reporting suite of Indicators can be found through the Bureau of Meteorology website.

Note – The Indicators highlighted and shown within the following table are linked by a prefix (A = Assets, W = Water Resources, C = Customers, E = Environment, P = Pricing, F = Finance and H = Public Health) to reflect the 7 Indicators across a suite of approximately 150 water industry benchmark performance measures.

Indicators are Independently Audited and have passed the comprehensive audit requirements of the National Performance Framework 2011-12 Auditing Requirements and Audit Report Template.

National Performance Report

2020-21: Urban Water Utilities

Indicator	Description	Shoalhaven Water Result	Average Result (Large Utility)
Water Resources (Partial Indicator of Customer Responsiveness to Demand Management Initiatives)			
W12	Average annual residential water supplied (kL/property)	155	215
W26	Total recycled water supplied (Megalitres)	1642	2007

Assets (Partial Indicator of Customer Service through the condition of the sewerage network)			
A8	Water Main Breaks (number per 100km of water main)	6.5	13.1
A10	Real losses of Water (Litres per service connection per day)	52	81.8
A14	Sewerage Main Breaks & Chokes (number per 100km of main)	3	15.3
A15	Property Connection Sewer Breaks & Chokes (number per 1,000 properties)	2.2	2.9

Customers (Direct Indicator of Customer Service Performance across a range of core functions of a utility)			
C9	Water Quality Complaints (number per 1,000 properties)	0	1.6
C10	Water Service Complaints (number per 1,000 properties)	0.2	4.6
C11	Sewerage Service Complaints (number per 1,000 properties)	0.1	0.5
C12	Billing and Account Complaints - water & sewerage (number per 1,000 properties)	0.1	1.3
C13	Total Water & Sewerage Complaints (number per 1,000 properties)	0.06	8.5
C14	Percentage of call answered by an operator within 30 seconds (%)	98	75.3
C15	Average duration of an unplanned interruption - water (minutes)	74	94.4
C17	Average frequency of unplanned interruptions - water (minutes)	38	81.5
C18	Customers to which restrictions applied for non-payment of water bill (number per 1,000 properties)	0	1.1
C19	Customers to which legal actions applied for non-payment of water bill (number per 1,000 properties)	0	0.7

Indicator	Description	Shoalhaven Water Result	Average Result (Medium Utility)
Environment (Partial Indicator of Customer Service as environmental performance is an important cost driver for the water utility with respect to both capital and operating costs. These costs translate to the charges levied for the utility services)			
E8	Percentage of biosolids reused (%)	100	76.1
E12	Total net greenhouse gas emissions (net tonnes CO2 - equivalents per 1,000 properties)	763	446.1

Pricing (Tariff structures and pricing are a direct indicator of customer service as it relates to the affordability of the services supplied by a Water Utility and the effect of demand management initiatives)			
P2	Annual bill based on 200kL /a - Water (\$)	433.00	688.60
P5	Annual bill based on 200kL /a - Sewer (\$)	876.00	690.70
P7	Annual bill based on 200kL /a - Water & Sewer (\$)	1,309.00	1,379.20
P8	Typical Residential Bill - Water & Sewer (\$)	1,231.00	1,370.90

Finance (The financial performance of a utility is an important indicator of customer service ensuring the long term sustainability of the business with adequate capital expenditure and low operating costs)			
F11	Operating Cost - Water (\$/property)	416.00	538.28
F12	Operating Cost - Sewer (\$/property)	580.00	464.58
F13	Combined Operating Cost - Water & Sewer (\$/property)	995.92	970.80
F16	Total Capital Expenditure - Water & Sewer (\$000s)	24,944	36,565.92
F28	Capital Expenditure - Water Supply (\$/property)	216.00	249.12
F29	Capital Expenditure - Sewer (\$/property)	328.00	312.68
F25	Community Service Obligations (\$000s)	992.00	2,617.49

Public Health (Direct Indicator of customer service)			
H3	% of population where microbiological compliance was achieved	100	99.87
H7	Public disclosure of drinking water performance (yes/no)	Yes	

Appendix

2.2

NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment - Water

Local Water Utility Performance Monitoring

The NSW Government promotes continued productivity and performance improvement by urban local water utilities to improve the quality and efficiency of services to all NSW residents.

Commencing in 2018, NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment – Water (DPIE) launched an online performance monitoring database, which enables regional local water utilities to annually report their water supply and sewerage data. This data is then shared with the Bureau of Meteorology, who publishes the [National Performance Report](#).

Up until 2018, a NSW Water Supply and Sewerage Benchmarking Report was published by the NSW Office of Water. This published report has been replaced by an interactive performance monitoring data dashboard, which provides a comparison of all local water utilities (LWUs) in regional NSW. The dashboard is located at <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/water-utilities/lwu-performance-monitoring-data>

Previous Benchmarking Reports can be viewed online at <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/water-utilities/lwu-performance-monitoring-data/performance-monitoring>

Appendix

2.3

Shoalhaven Water Business Services Section Report

The Business Services Section of Shoalhaven Water provides a comprehensive report to the Management Team of Shoalhaven Water every six months in January and July. This report encompasses the activities of the Section and include:

- Finance,
- Billing,
- Accounts and Customer Services,
- Marketing, and
- Supporting Services

The report contains a number of benchmarking results across a range of core activities which are not otherwise contained within legislative reporting requirements. Whilst the performance cannot necessarily be benchmarked against other Utilities, they are provided in the Customer Service Plan in order that customers can clearly identify the level of service provided against the target.

The results below as related to the Customer Service Plan are the latest available at the time of release of the Customer Service Plan.

Shoalhaven Water Business Services

Section Report 2020-21

Target	Indicator	Shoalhaven Water Result	Benchmark (if applicable)
Metering			
< 15 days	Average number of days to connect a 20mm water meter	25	
Meter Reading and Billing			
> 95%	Percentage of meters read and water accounts issued within 14 days of the scheduled reading.	100%	
Undetected Water Leaks			
NA	Number and value of undetected leak reductions assistance given	104 / \$59,530.21	
EWON and Complaints			
NA	Number of cases opened with EWON (complaints)	2	
Hardship Arrangements			
NA	Number of Payment Assistance Vouchers issued	296	
NA	Number of Customers Assisted	40	
Water Supply and Backflow Prevention			
NA	Number of testable backflow devices overdue for test >90 days	8	
Customer Consultation and Water Education			
3	Number of drinking bottle water filling stations installed	1	3
NA	Number of educational engagements and visitations by the Tapstar Waterwise Education Program	4 (note: COVID-19 restrictions enforced March - June 2020)	
NA	Number of Customer & Community Engagement Sessions	0	

Appendix

2.4

NSW Energy & Water Ombudsman Report

As a member of the NSW Energy & Water Ombudsman (EWON), Shoalhaven Water receives statistics on the utilisation of the service by our customers. To maintain privacy, the detail provided by EWON does not include customer details. However it provides Shoalhaven Water limited information on designated complaint or enquiry categories and this enables Shoalhaven Water to consider strategies to improve communication or other means to facilitate our service interaction. In addition to the information provided at Appendix 2.3, the table below provides a further benchmark as it relates to the full EWON membership of large utility providers including gas, electricity and water.

		Shoalhaven Water Result	Benchmark (if applicable)
< Total average for large EWON members	The rate of enquiry, referral and investigations per 10,000 customers for large EWON members	2	2

Definitions & Meanings

Term	Definition
ADWG	Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011) published by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Version 3.5 updated in August 2018.
Backflow	A reverse flow condition created by a difference in water pressures that causes water to flow back into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source other than the intended one.
Consumption	Water that is consumed by humans or livestock via water meters.
Demand Management	Strategies to reduce water consumption by residential, commercial and industrial sectors. These strategies can include using existing resources more efficiently as a cost-effective alternative to building additional infrastructure.
Kilolitre	One thousand litres.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Leakage	Water that is lost in transit from a pipe.
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council.
NPR	National Performance Report.
Potable Water	Drinkable water. Usually treated freshwater that meets Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.
Rainwater Tank	On-site storages to collect roof water for beneficial use.
Sewage	See Wastewater.
Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)	See Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Trade Waste	Toxic and other potentially harmful substances discharged to the wastewater system.
Wastewater System	The system of pipes and pump stations for collecting and transporting wastewater from each property to the wastewater treatment plant.
Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)	A facility for the treatment of wastewater to remove pollutants (solid matter and pathogens) producing treated recycled water and bio-solids.
Water Conservation	Preventing and reducing wasteful, uneconomical, impractical or unreasonable use of water resources.
Water Demand	Total water use requirements of an area for drinking, agriculture, industry, recreation and gardening. This demand is seasonal and highly influenced by the weather.
Water Quality	Physical, chemical and biological measures of water.
Water Treatment Plant (WTP)	A facility that treats freshwater piped from reservoirs into potable water for supply to the community.
Yard Gully	A drain-like fitting located outside the home, designed to release any wastewater overflow outside of the home in the event of a blockage in the wastewater main.



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