

# Shoalhaven Water - Undetected Leak Rebate Policy

For more information contact  
Shoalhaven Water

**City Administration Centre**

Bridge Road (PO Box 42)  
Nowra NSW Australia 2541  
1300 293 111

[water@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:water@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shoalwater.nsw.gov.au)

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## 1 PURPOSE

To make available assistance to customers by providing some relief for significantly higher Water Accounts emanating from undetected water leaks.

## 2 STATEMENT

Council provides potable water to the boundary of a property; water that has subsequently passed through a metered service connection becomes the responsibility of that property owner. This policy is not intended to provide full compensation to customers for water and sewer usage charges as a consequence of an undetected water leak on their property. However, as an act of good faith and in the interest of good public relations, Council provides a means by which some assistance for higher usage charges can be obtained, subject to the provisions of this policy being met.

## 3 PROVISIONS

In order to be eligible for an Undetected Leak Rebate, applications must meet and address all the criteria. An Undetected Leak is where there is no visible sign of water loss. Both the fault and/or the water loss could not have been reasonably detected by visible inspection prior to Shoalhaven Water issuing an account.

### **Applications must comply with the following criteria:**

- Involve a significant leakage on the property. A leakage is so determined to be significant if the water usage on the Water Account issued immediately prior to the repairs being completed is more than \$200 and 1.5 times greater than the previous five (5) period's daily average consumption.
- Involve a leakage in pipelines, which are undetected. Undetected leakage is defined as occurring within pipeline breaks or connections in the ground, under slabs or within walls etc and is clearly not visible to the owner.
- Include a declaration indicating that the abnormally high water usage was applicable for an undetected water leakage and acknowledgement that subsequent claims under this policy will not be accepted,
- Contain supporting documentation that the water leakage was repaired immediately (within 30 days of an account being issued or after the customer learnt of its existence),
- Include a statement or invoice from a licensed plumber indicating the cause and location of the water leak and that it has been repaired or in the case where a plumber was not employed, a declaration by the owner with the equivalent details.

Council will not waive interest charges accrued on unpaid Water Accounts that are subject to a claim under this policy.

### **Claims will not be accepted which:**

- Could have been reasonably detected by visible inspection
- Is the result of a second occurrence at the same property and by the same owner regardless of whether it is a related event or separate undetected leakage.

- Involve faulty plumbing fixtures (e.g., appliances, pumps, hot water systems, pressure release or float valves, cattle troughs, solar panels or pool heaters, pool or pond lines, taps, toilet cisterns, sprinkler or irrigation systems)
- Involve a leakage caused directly by way of accidental or wilful damage.
- Do not contain the documentation or meet the terms of a complying claim.

**Methodology:**

The following outlines the process for calculating the rebate for complying applications, noting that only one rebate will be offered per customer, per property, over the lifetime of ownership of the property.

**The Rebate:**

- Applies to one billing period only (i.e., the billing period for which the undetected leak commenced).
- Provides a reduction in the volume of water use charged to the customer equal to 50% of the estimated volume of water lost.
- Will be capped at \$2,000.
- If a volumetric sewage or waste disposal charge is applicable, providing a 100% reduction in these charges associated with the full estimated volume of water lost.

**Calculation:**

The estimated volume (in kilolitres) of water lost is calculated as follows:

**H** = high volume water use measured over the high usage period and

**A** = estimated average water use (calculated using the average daily usage from the last 5 billing periods)

then

**Volume of Water Lost (VWL) = H - A**

The Undetected Leak Rebate will be calculated as follows:

**Undetected Leak Rebate = VWL/2**

As a result, the remaining 50% of the estimated high water usage will remain payable.

**Further Assistance:**

Where applications do not meet all eligibility criteria: i.e.,

- water usage charges are less than \$200,
- water usage is less than 1.5 times the average daily consumption of the previous five periods,
- is a second occurrence as property owner,
- leak impacts more than one billing period,
- or any other eligibility criteria

and financial hardship is being experienced customers could seek relief under the Payment Assistance Scheme.

## 4 IMPLEMENTATION

The Water Business Services Section of Shoalhaven Water is responsible for the implementation and management of claims within this policy. The Executive Manager Shoalhaven Water (Water Business Services Manager) is authorised to determine applications for assistance and payment under the terms of this policy.

## 5 REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed within one year of the election of every new Council.

## 6 APPLICATION OF ESD PRINCIPLES

None Applicable