



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	CONCEALED WATER LEAK CONCESSION
Policy Number	P-2018-20
Business Unit/s	FINANCE GOVERNANCE AND RISK
Date of Adoption	19 JUNE 2018
Resolution Number	G/18/3436
Review Date	19 JUNE 2021
Date Repealed	

1.0 PURPOSE:

To set out Council guidelines for the assessment of requests for concession due to financial hardship arising as a result of increased Water Consumption charges attributed to a Concealed Leak on Residential Property.

2.0 SCOPE:

This policy applies to property owners connected to a Council operated water reticulation scheme where high water consumption charges have been incurred on a residential property that are attributed to a Concealed Leak defined under section 6.2 of this policy.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

- *Local Government Act 2009;*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012;*
- *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008;* and
- *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002.*

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Application for Concession of Water Consumption Charges due to a Concealed Leak
- Plumber's Report on Repair of Concealed Leak
- Water Meter Concealed Leak Identification and Concessions Procedure
- Water Meter Maintenance Sheet
- High Consumption Letter.

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation of this policy the following definitions apply:

- **Average Daily Water Consumption** means the average amount of water consumed on a daily basis during a Billing Cycle.

- **Billing Cycle** means the time between water meter readings. (Note that this term does not refer to the time when a water notice was sent, nor does it refer to the time by which the payment of the water notice was to have been made).
- **Concealed Leak** means a leak that has occurred in the internal water reticulation pipe from the Property Water Meter to structures on the property, where a resident on the property could not reasonably be expected to be aware of the existence of the water leak (e.g. because the water leak occurred underground, under or within concrete paving, or underneath a structure).
- **Council** means Gladstone Regional Council.
- **Estimated Water Consumption** means the average amount of water consumed during a Billing Cycle at the Property, calculated by the average daily water consumption over a period of the three Billing Cycles previous to the Billing Cycle in which the Concealed Leak was detected.
- **High Water Consumption** means a level of Average Daily Water Consumption that is 40% or more in the current Billing Cycle compared to the level of Average Daily Water Consumption in the previous Billing Cycle.
- **Property Owner** means the 'owner of the land' as defined under the *Local Government Act 2009*.
- **Property Water Meter** means the metering device used by Council to record water that has passed through the meter on the property.
- **Residential Property** means property that has as its primary use, use for residential purposes¹.
- **Revised Water Consumption** means the water consumption estimated by Council, at its absolute discretion that would have occurred had there been no Concealed Water Leak on the property.
- **Water Consumption** means the water that has passed through the Property Water Meter as recorded by that meter or the Estimated Water Consumption that has been determined by Council in the event of a Property Water Meter being found to be faulty or to have been interfered with so as to not properly record water supplied to the property by Council.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

6.1 Principles

The property owner has primary responsibility for water leaks on the property side of the water meter and any charges for Water Consumption that arise from water passing through the Property Water Meter. Responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the internal water reticulation pipes (i.e. pipes on the property owner's side of the water meter) rests solely with the Property Owner.

¹ This is shown by the land use codes applied by the Valuer General when valuing the property for rating purposes.

Council has responsibility for water leaks in its water supply network, on the water supply network side of the Property Water Meter, including for any Water Leaks attributable to the Property Water Meter itself.

Council will provide support to Property Owners that may be experiencing High Water Consumption on their property by providing a proactive program for the identification of High Water Consumption. Where High Water Consumption is identified by Council, Council will seek to advise property owners of any such significant increase in Water Consumption to allow the Property Owner to undertake investigations and corrective actions if the High Water Consumption is as a result of a Concealed Leak or some other cause.

Property owners should not solely rely on Council to advise them of High Water Consumption (which may be as a result of a Concealed Leak). Council actively encourages property owners to monitor their Water Consumption and regularly read the Property Water Meter as significantly increased Water Consumption, and/or Water Consumption at night or Water Consumption when the property is unoccupied are primary indicators of the potential for a Concealed Water Leak.

Under section 120(1)(c) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council may grant a concession if it is satisfied that "the payment of rates or charges will cause hardship to the land owner". Council has determined that it will grant such a concession for Water Consumption charges for High Water Consumption arising out of a Concealed Leak as set out in section 6.2 of this policy.

6.2 When Concessions will be applied

Council will only consider a request for concession of Water Consumption charges on a property due to a water leak where:

- the property's primary use is for residential purposes;
- the property has experienced an instance of High Water Consumption;
- the High Water Consumption is attributable to a Concealed Leak on the property as defined in this Policy;
- the Property Owner took reasonable steps to ensure that the leak was repaired as soon as possible, but not exceeding 7 days from the date the leak was detected;
- the leak was repaired by a licenced plumber;
- the additional Water Consumption charges arising from the Concealed Leak will cause the Property Owner undue financial hardship; and
- upon application being made to Council for the concession by the Property Owner.

6.3 When Concessions will not be applied

Leaks in any other area of the Property Owners property (including but not limited to: tap leaks; pool leaks; hot water system leaks; leaks in showers, bathrooms, toilets, any walls in the building, irrigation systems, solar systems; as a result of building or demolition works; etc) are not covered under this policy.

6.4 Amount of Concession available

Council will provide a concession to the following amount:

- the maximum concession per property will not exceed an amount equivalent to 600 kilolitres for the Council operated water reticulation scheme to which the property is connected;
- the maximum concession will be calculated on 50% of the difference between the levied Water Consumption and the Estimated Water Consumption, where the difference is greater than 40% of the Average Daily Water Consumption of the previous Billing Cycle;
- the Estimated Water Consumption will be calculated by Council up to the date of repair of the Concealed Water Leak - not just the Property Water Meter reading date. (Note: this is necessary so that all Water Consumption recorded on the Property Water Meter, as a result of the Concealed Water Leak but not yet levied, is considered in the one request for concession);
- If concession has previously been granted for a property, no further consideration will be given to additional requests for concession, unless satisfactory evidence is provided to establish that the internal water reticulation pipes had been repaired following a previous leak;
- No concession or reimbursement will be given for any repairs associated with the Concealed Leak; and
- No concession will be given in the event excavations or building works at the property have occurred within six months prior to the Concealed Water Leak being detected.

6.5 Lodging a Request for Concession

Requests for concession must be received in writing and must be accompanied by:

- Application for Concession of Water Consumption Charges due to a Concealed Leak (attachment 1); and
- Plumber's Report on Repair of Concealed Leak (attachment 2) detailing:
 - the Concealed Water Leak was repaired by the licenced plumber;
 - the date the Concealed Water Leak was repaired;
 - that the Concealed Water Leak was in the internal water reticulation pipes from the Property Water Meter to the structure on the property; and
 - that the leak was in a location and/or of a nature which contributed to it not being evident.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application for Concession of Water Consumption Charges due to a Concealed Leak; and

2. Plumbers Report on Repair of Concealed Leak.

8.0 REVIEW MECHANISM:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council or the CEO; or
3. Annually in conjunction with budget adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS			
Document History	Date	Council Resolution No.	Notes (including the prior Policy No, precise of change/s, etc)
Originally Approved	21 June 2016	G/16/2824	
Amendment 1	20 December 2016	G/16/2959	
Amendment 2	6 June 2017	G/17/3065	
Amendment 3	19 June 2018	G/18/3436	Formerly Policy P-2017-18
Amendment 4			

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ROSLYN BAKER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ATTACHMENT 1



Application for Concession of Water Consumption Charges due to a Concealed Leak

PHONE: 07 4970 0700
PO Box 29, GLADSTONE QLD 4680
EMAIL: info@gladstonerc.qld.gov.au

PROPERTY OWNER DETAILS	
SURNAME:	GIVEN NAMES:
POSTAL ADDRESS:	
SUBURB:	POST CODE:
TELEPHONE:	MOBILE:
PROPERTY ADDRESS DETAILS FOR WHICH CONCEALED LEAK HAS OCCURRED	
STREET ADDRESS:	
SUBURB:	POST CODE:
ASSESSMENT No:	OTHER:

GROUNDS FOR REQUEST (attach additional page if necessary)	
Was a licensed plumber engaged to make repairs:	Yes No

LICENSED PLUMBER'S DETAILS	
COMPANY:	NAME:
ADDRESS:	
SUBURB:	POST CODE:
TELEPHONE:	DATE REPAIRED: / /

Please circle:

Was the concealed leak the sole cause of the high water consumption for the billing period in question?

Yes No

Plumber's Report on Repair of Concealed Leak attached?

Yes No

Copy of Plumber's Invoice attached?

Yes No

I hereby confirm that the payment of the full Water Consumption Notice issued to me by Council will result in undue financial hardship to myself/my family.

PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE:	DATE:
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PRIVACY DISCLAIMER:

Gladstone Regional Council is collecting this information in order to process your application. This information may be disclosed to your nominated licensed plumber, but will not be disclosed to any other third party without your written or verbal authorisation or except as required by law.

ATTACHMENT 2



Plumber's Report on Repair of Concealed Leak

PHONE: 07 4970 0700
 PO Box 29, GLADSTONE QLD 4680
 EMAIL: info@gladstonerc.qld.gov.au

PROPERTY ADDRESS DETAILS FOR WHICH CONCEALED LEAK HAS OCCURRED	
STREET ADDRESS:	
SUBURB:	POST CODE:
ASSESSMENT No:	OTHER:

LOCATION OF CONCEALED LEAK AND DESCRIPTION OF WORK (attach page if necessary)

I confirm that the leak was:

- in the internal water reticulation pipe, from the property water meter to a structure on the property;
- in a location and/or of a nature which contributed to it not being evident;
- repaired by me on / / ;
- repaired in conformity with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* and the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*.

I also confirm that the information in this form is a true and accurate record of the work carried out.

LICENSED PLUMBER'S DETAILS	
COMPANY NAME:	
PLUMBER'S NAME:	LICENCE NUMBER:
PHONE:	MOBILE:
ADDRESS:	
SUBURB:	POST CODE:
TELEPHONE:	DATE REPAIRED: / /

PLUMBER'S SIGNATURE:	DATE:
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PRIVACY DISCLAIMER:

Gladstone Regional Council is collecting this information in order to process your Client's application. This information may be disclosed to the owner of the property, but will not be disclosed to any other third party without your written or verbal authorisation or except as required by law.