

POLICY FIN005

Concealed Water Leak Policy



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1. Purpose

To establish guidelines for the General Manager, staff and the public regarding the responsibilities of water consumption and necessity of early detection of water leaks.

2. Definitions

Concealed Leak - water escaping from a private water service that is hidden from view and defined as occurring within pipeline breaks or connections in the ground, under slabs or within walls and is not clearly visible to the owner. (It does not involve leakage from an appliance, fixture, water pump, hot water system or the like). Lush grass or damp soil does not constitute being concealed from view.

Private Water Service - relates to all water service pipes, including recycled water service pipes, fixtures and fittings on the customer's side of the meter (outlet side), or 1 metre inside the property boundary for unmetered properties (excluding separate fire services).

Customer – the owner/ratepayer of the property or an applicant on behalf of the owner who has previously given proof to Council of their agency agreement or power of attorney, etc.

3. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a leak allowance, the following criteria must be met:

3.1 The leak must be hidden beneath a concrete slab or in a cavity wall or otherwise underground where its effects are not readily visible;

3.2 Leaks must be identified and repaired within 30 days of the bill issue date, the ratepayer is responsible for any repairs;

3.3 The allowance is a concession and applies to all customer types and will be property based. Only one application will be accepted as a result of a concealed leak at the same property and by the same owner regardless of whether it is a related event or separate concealed leak within a 5 year period. If a customer moves to another property or owns more than one property, the allowance will be given once on each property within a 5 year period.

3.4 In order to be eligible for the allowance towards the cost of water that was wasted as a result of the leak, a ratepayer must engage the services of a licensed plumber to repair the concealed leak and the necessary certificate/s completed.

3.5 This policy applies to all customer types as an allowance for each property that the customer owns with a limit of one allowance within a 5 year period at the same property. The maximum adjustment allowed will be 50% of the difference between the usage on the affected account and the average consumption for the corresponding period for the past two years, or from change of ownership if that occurred in the past year. The adjustment will only be made if all other water and sewerage charges have been paid in full or up to date on their arrangement at the time the determination is made.

3.6 A sewer usage charge is levied on Commercial/Industrial properties that have a water meter and are liable for a percentage discharge factor of water discharged into the sewerage system. The allowance given for sewer usage is in addition to any allowance given for water usage.

Where a non-residential sewer usage charge is involved, we will cover 100% of the increase in wastewater above the statutory minimum access charge per quarter if these apply. Council will cover each event for wastewater. There will be no five year limit on this as long as Council receives the appropriate paperwork from a licenced plumber.

3.7 A property served by a common meter i.e. strata block will attract the one allowance for the strata of a maximum 50% of the increase in water use only within a 5 year period.

4. Application Process

4.1 Claims for concealed water leak allowance must be submitted in writing. The customer is required to advise:

- how they became aware of the leak,
- the date they became aware of the leak and
- the details of the repair via a plumber's statement (as detailed below).

4.2 Before the allowance is granted, the leak must be repaired by a licensed plumber who must also provide a written report on the leak stating:

- the date the leak was detected,
- where the leak was situated,
- where the water was escaping,
- the date the leak was repaired,
- the meter reading at the time the leak was repaired (if available),
- possible cause and
- copy of plumber's invoice.

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If the repair of the leak has not been undertaken by a licenced plumber a statutory declaration from the owner stating:

- who has repaired the leak,
- the address the work was carried out,
- the date, nature and location of the repairs,
- a statement that the defect was not readily visible or apparent.

4.3 A reply to the customer must be confirmed in writing to ensure the customer is aware of their responsibility to cover further costs associated with leaks to their property. Where an allowance is granted the applicant will be advised that the amended account is required to be paid within 30days from the date of the advice.

4.4 Customers not considered eligible for a concealed or hidden leak allowance will be liable for all consumption of water that has passed through the meter.

4.5 The Concealed Leak Policy does not apply to leaks from private water pipelines that occur outside the property boundary.

Authority

Council Resolution no.044/2024 dated 28 March 2024.

Policy Owner / Further Assistance

Director Finance & Corporate Services

Review Date

- March 2026

Revision History

Date	Description of Change	Sections Affected
23/02/2017	Policy adopted	All
23/05/2019	Policy adopted	All
24/02/2022	Policy adopted	All
28/04/2024	Policy adopted	All



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CONCEALED WATER LEAK ALLOWANCE APPLICATION FORM

PROPERTY OWNER & DETAILS:

Lot/Portion: _____ Section: _____ DP: _____

House NO: _____ Street: _____ Town: _____

Owner/Liable Person's Name: _____

Address: _____ Telephone No: _____

Email Address: _____ Mobile No: _____

LEAKAGE DETAILS:

1. Where did the leakage occur?

Underground: Other (specify):

2. What caused the leakage? (for example corrosion, faulty installation, tree roots, ground movement etc).....
.....

3. Date leakage detected/...../..... Approximate age of piping

REPAIR DETAILS:

Date repair completed/...../.....

Did a registered plumber carry out repairs? No Yes

Name of Plumber:.....Licence No:.....

Statement attached stating that defect was not readily visible or apparent. Yes No

DECLARATION:

I declare that the above information is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct. I also understand that this application will not be processed until ALL sections are completed.

Signature:

Date: