

UNDETECTED LEAK REBATE POLICY – RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY POLICY



1 Scope

This policy applies to residential properties in the Rockhampton Regional Council Region that are connected to Fitzroy River Water's water reticulation network and have registered a water meter reading higher than usual water consumption due to an undetected leak or other exceptional water loss within the property.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and concise guidelines on seeking consideration of a rebate in respect of a water account received, due to an undetected leak or other exceptional water loss on a residential property.

3 Related Documents

3.1 Primary

Nil

3.2 Secondary

Undetected Leak Rebate Application Form

Residential Water Meters Fact Sheet

4 Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Billing period	In accordance with Council's adopted budget.
Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Customer	An individual, business, organisation or a member of the public.
FRW	Fitzroy River Water is a commercialised business unit of Council.
Region	Rockhampton Regional Area defined by the Local Government Areas of Queensland.
Residential	Land used as the owner's principal place of residence, or vacant land where the intended use is for residential purposes.
Undetected Leak	Where a leak has occurred in the property's plumbing (for example, the water service line from the water meter to property).

5 Policy Statement

FRW receives regular requests for water accounts to be waived or rebated due to undetected water leaks on the customer's side of the water meter. These requests result from unexpected increases in the water consumption amount payable by the customer.

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5.1 Applying for a Rebate

To apply for a rebate, an Undetected Leak Rebate Application Form must be completed and submitted to Council with all other required documentation (as per paragraph 5.2).

5.2 Criteria

The following criteria must be met prior to consideration of a rebate application:

- (a) The application must be for a residential property;
- (b) All requests must be in writing;
- (c) A request for a rebate must be received by Council within a reasonable timeframe from the date the leak was discovered or within 30 days of receipt of the water consumption account;
- (d) The customer must provide a statement signed by a licensed plumber who repaired the leak certifying that an undetected leak had occurred and was undetectable by the customer;
- (e) The leak must have been associated with either underground or internal plumbing that is not normally visible to the customer. Such a leak does not include leaking taps, or plumbing fixtures or fittings that have not been maintained adequately;
- (f) Requests must include a receipted invoice from a licensed plumber, as confirmation that a suitable repair has been carried out. All leaks must be repaired by a licensed plumber at the property owner's cost;
- (g) The leak must be repaired within a reasonable timeframe from the date the leak was discovered.

An exceptional water loss due to unauthorised use or activity (for example break and enter, water theft), during a period where the property is unattended for a period of greater than two weeks may be considered for a rebate subject to the provision of satisfactory evidence and demonstrated financial hardship. Evidence must include a Police report, demonstrated absence from the property for greater than two weeks, the inability to claim insurance cover, and genuine circumstances of financial hardship. Criteria (a) to (c) above must also be met.

5.3 Conditions

Applications are considered on the following conditions:

- (a) Rebates for water consumption charges are granted on a 'one off' basis per residential property and are not eligible, if previously approved.
- (b) If the customer is not eligible for a rebate due to previously receiving a rebate under this policy, however the criteria in paragraph 5.2 are satisfied, the Manager FRW may approve:
 - (i) Payment of the rebate if the customer can demonstrate genuine circumstances of financial hardship; or
 - (ii) If genuine circumstances of financial hardship does not exist, the customer will only be charged at the lowest tier for the volume of water that is calculated to be above the typical usage for similar previous billing periods.
- (c) Rebates can be applied over two billing periods where there is evidence that the leak or exceptional water loss may affect the consumption charges over more than one reading cycle.
- (d) Where a rebate is granted, the following will apply:
 - (i) Customers will be charged based on their average consumption for the period that the leak or exceptional water loss occurred;
 - (ii) The average consumption is calculated by averaging the previous three billing periods or previous three equivalent seasonal billing periods depending upon the usage pattern that is evident. The most consistent record is used to calculate the average use; and
 - (iii) Rebates are applied to the billing period in which the leak or exceptional water loss occurred up to a maximum of two billing periods.

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The Manager FRW is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and will determine all rebates.

6 Review Timelines

This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

- (a) The related information is amended or replaced; or
- (b) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council.

7 Document Management

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Regional Services
Policy Owner	Manager Fitzroy River Water
Policy Quality Control	Legal and Governance

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