

# Water Charges



St George  
Community  
Housing

## Fact sheet



### **SGCH calculates tenants' water charges differently, depending on whether you have an individual or shared water meter.**

SGCH works out our customers' water charges according to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and Guidelines approved by the Minister for Homes NSW. You can read our Water Charges Policy on our website at [sgch.com.au](http://sgch.com.au) for more information.

#### **How much do I need to pay for water?**

This depends on whether you live in a property that has its own individual water meter, like a house, or a property with a shared water meter, like a block of units.

We will charge customers who live in properties with individual water meters for their water use as per the water meter reading that SGCH is billed for from Sydney Water.

For properties where water usage is read off a shared meter for more than one property (e.g. a block of units), the SGCH customer will be charged as per the shared water meter method. SGCH receives one total charge from Sydney Water for the whole complex.

#### **Properties with an individual water meter**

We bill these properties for their actual water use. Sydney Water sends the bill for water rates plus the individual water usage to SGCH. We

pay the bill in full and then invoice you for your water use only. If you would like a copy of the original bill from Sydney Water, please contact us on **1800 573 370**.

**IMPORTANT:** You only need to pay SGCH for the amount on your invoice, using the payment methods in the 'How do I pay for water charges?' section. Please do not pay Sydney Water for your water use.

#### **Properties with a shared water meter**

For customers living in a property with a shared water meter (where we only receive the total water usage charge for all properties combined) we will charge you a percentage of your rent amount for water use. We do this because the water meter in these properties does not show how much water each individual unit has used.

For our customers, excluding those in the Northern region; we currently charge 4.5% of your total household rent (including Commonwealth Rent Assistance) for your water usage charges. We have capped this at \$8.50 a week for each household.

**For example:** Alex pays \$250 rent a week. SGCH calculates their water use as 4.5% of \$250, which turns out to be \$11.25 a week. However, SGCH will only charge them \$8.50 a week because of the cap.

For our customers living in the Northern Region of Sydney, we currently charge 5.2% of your

total household rent (excluding Commonwealth Rent Assistance) for water charges. We have capped this at \$9.40 a week for each household.

**For example:** Jodie pays \$250 rent a week. SGCH calculates their water use as 5.2% of \$250, which turns out to be \$13.00. However, SGCH will only charge them \$9.40 a week because of the cap.

Charges for shared water are placed on your account weekly. We will review the total amount paid by all customers in a building from time to time to make sure they have not paid more than the amount that SGCH has been charged for by Sydney Water.

If a customer has paid more, we will credit their water account with the difference. If we have undercharged a customer, we will not request they pay the difference.

### Common area water usage

Customers are not charged for water usage in common areas.

### How do I pay for water-use charges?

Every customer has a rent account and a water account, and in some cases, an other account (if they have tenant charges). Customers must pay rent and water separately. You can pay a lump sum toward your future water charges, but it is usually easiest to pay an amount fortnightly like your rent. You can pay for water:

**Using Centrepay:** You can arrange for Centrelink to transfer money to us directly from your pension or benefit payment.

**Using BPOINT:** You can make an

instant payment directly to us any time through our BPOINT page using a MasterCard or VISA credit or debit card.

**Using EFT:** You can ask your bank to regularly send a set amount of money to us electronically.

**At our offices:** You can make a payment at our offices using a money order or our EFTPOS facility. Please note, we do not accept cash.

**IMPORTANT:** DO NOT try to pay your water charges at the post office. They cannot transfer your money to SGCH and may incorrectly send it to Sydney Water instead.

For more details on these methods of payment, visit our website at [sgch.com.au](http://sgch.com.au).

Customers have 21 days to pay their water charges from the date it was charged to their account.

### Are there any exceptions?

In some situations, we may consider giving allowances to tenants who need a lot more water than usual, for serious medical reasons (for example, home-based dialysis).

Customers in this situation can fill out a Water Allowance Application form and submit the request together with documents supporting their claim. This only applies for customers with individual water meters.

### What if I am having trouble paying my water charges?

Under your lease agreement you are required to pay for water usage. Though if you are concerned about your rent or water charges, or are struggling to make payments, please call us on 1800 573 370. We can talk to you about repayment plans and/

or recommend specialist support. We can also help arrange for you to receive appropriate financial assistance and advice.

### What if I am not happy with the policy?

Customers cannot appeal against the law allowing us to charge tenants for water use, but if you have any questions or concerns about how we have calculated your water usage, please contact your Tenancy Manager. We can explain how the calculations are made or check whether there has been a mistake.

If you are still not happy after speaking with your Tenancy Manager, you can lodge an official appeal to the Feedback Manager at SGCH, if:

- You think that we made a mistake when we assessed your water charges, and in accordance with our Water Charges Policy. (This only applies to properties with shared water meters.)
- You disagree with our decision about your application for a Water Allowance.



**CONTACT US**  
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