

WATER CHARGES FACT SHEET



SGCH calculates our 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 Communities and Justice. You can read our Water Charges Policy for more information.

HOW MUCH DO I NEED TO PAY FOR WATER?

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

Some properties are on a shared water meter even though there seems to be an internal meter in their unit. This is for the resident's information but is not checked by meter readers and doesn't have a separate bill. We will charge tenants of these properties the same way as shared water meter properties.

Properties with a Separate Water Meter

We bill these properties for their actual water use. Sydney Water sends the bill for water rates plus use to SGCH. We pay the bill in full and then invoice the tenant for their water use only. We send a copy of the Sydney Water bill as proof we have charged you the correct amount, but you only need to pay the amount of your invoice from us.

IMPORTANT: A lot of people accidentally pay the full Sydney Water bill by taking their copy to the post office. This can be difficult to fix. You only need to pay SGCH for the amount on the invoice, using the payment methods in the 'How do I pay for water charges?' section.

Properties with a Shared Water Meter

For customers living in a property with a shared water meter, we will charge you 4.5% of your total household rent (which is already based on your income) because the water meter in these properties does not show how much water each individual unit has used. We have capped this at \$8.50 a week for each household.

So, for example:

Alex Tenant 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.

We will regularly reconcile the total amount paid by all tenants in a building. If this is more than the actual water charges for the building, we will provide a credit to the tenants.

HOW DO I PAY FOR WATER USE CHARGES?

Every tenant has a rent account and a water account. Tenants 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.
- **Using a bank deposit book:** We give one to each tenant when you sign your lease. When it is about to run out, just call us and we will order a replacement.
- **Note: DO NOT** try to pay your water use at the post office. They cannot transfer your money to SGCH and may incorrectly send it to Sydney Water instead.

For more details on all of these methods of payment, visit our website sgch.com.au or use the QR code at the bottom of the page.

You have 21 days to pay a water charge from the date it was charged to your 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.



Great places for everyone 

WHAT IF I AM HAVING TROUBLE PAYING MY WATER CHARGES?

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?

Tenants cannot appeal 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 use, 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 SGCH, if:

1. 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.)
2. You disagree with our decision about your application for a Water Allowance.

MORE INFORMATION

You can get more information by visiting our website www.sgch.com.au or calling our office on 1800 573 370.

