

WATER BILLING POLICY



Responsible Department: Corporate Services
Responsible Section: Financial Services
Responsible Officer: Financial Services Manager

Objective

To establish a debt collection program for unpaid water billing accounts and to provide guidelines for the General Manager and staff to efficiently control and manage outstanding water billing debts at a minimal cost to the Council and the ratepayers.

Definitions

For debt recovery purposes, debts are considered to be overdue immediately after the due date of the account.

Policy

- The Water usage, Sewer Discharge apportionment usage and Liquid Trade Waste usage account is issued to each consumer quarterly following the reading of water meters. The actual usage account provides relevant information including the past and present readings, the date the readings took place, the total consumption for the billing period, the number of days between readings, the consumption charge and the total due and date due.
- Accounts for water consumption must be paid within thirty days of the date of issue. For debt recovery purposes, debts are to be considered to be overdue immediately after the due date of the account.
- Where the customer does not pay the account by the due date and no payment arrangement has been made with Narrabri Shire Council, a reminder notice will be issued requesting payment within seven to fourteen days to avoid future legal action.
- Where an account remains unpaid after the reminder notice due date, a Final Notice will be issued. This notice will advise the customer that disconnection/restriction of the water service will be made if the account is not settled within seven days of the Final Notice date. All services disconnected/restricted for non-payment of the account may be subject to a payment restriction fee, as set annually in Councils Fees and Charges, before services are reinstated. This fee will be charged by order of the General Manager or delegated staff.
- All disconnection/reconnection fees as well as the outstanding account must be paid in full before reconnection of the service.

- If Council is unable to restrict the supply to the premises, or payment has not been forthcoming following restriction, a letter of demand will be issued advising that failure to pay will result in legal action being initiated to recover the debt together with interest charges and legal costs accrued on the account. Failure to pay the outstanding balance will result in normal legal processes.

References

- Narrabri Shire Council Debt Recovery Policy
- Section 564 of the Local Government Act, 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005- Reg 144 "Cutting off or Restricting Water Supply"

Measure of Success

- Measure by the adherence to the Policy and Procedure outlined in the Policy.

History

MINUTE NUMBER	MEETING DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE
752/2009	20 October 2009	Adopted
26/2012	21 February 2012	Reviewed
75/2013	19 February 2013	Reviewed