

Water Charges

Bridge Housing’s water charging policy has changed and a new approach is implemented to ensure tenants water usage is charged in a fair and equitable way across our social housing portfolio.

What is a water charge?

Your water charge is the cost of the water that you use in your home. Bridge Housing can charge tenants for water usage under the [NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines](#).

What has changed?

Bridge Housing has moved to a flat rate, weekly, water charge based on the number of people living in your household from a charge based on a percentage of your rent for some tenants and based on a quarterly billing cycle for others. Bridge Housing made this change to ensure our water charging approach was equitable across our portfolio, easy to understand for our tenants and for our staff to communicate.

Were tenants consulted about this change?

Bridge Housing undertook considerable consultation with tenants before making this change. This included attending all tenant advisory group meetings including the Tenant Reference Group and providing information in our tenant newsletter about the proposed changes. Overwhelming, tenants are supportive of the change and saw the approach as fairer than the old method, easier to understand and explain to others.

How will I be charged?

Bridge Housing will charge for water usage weekly along with rent charges

The flat rate water charge is based on the number of people living in the property and charged weekly at the same time as your rent. It starts at a minimum of \$5.00 and is capped at \$10.50 per week. A cap means the maximum charge will not go higher than the cap amount.

Tenants will pay a flat rate, that has been calculated to be equal to or less than the actual water usage for that property. If a tenant has paid more than they use, following an annual review a tenant will be credited the amount they were overcharged.

What are the flat rate water charges?

The water charge per household is as follows:

Household Size	Water Charge Per Week
 1 Person	\$5.00
2 People	\$7.00
3 People	\$9.00
4 People + (MAX)	\$10.50

What if I have concerns, I’m paying more than my actual water usage?

Bridge Housing will undertake at minimum, an annual review of tenant charges in accordance with our policy and [NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines](#) to ensure you are not being overcharged.

If you are concerned you are paying more than actual water usage for your property, you may request:

- A review of your water charges against actual water usage charges for your property

If a tenant is found to have paid more than the actual water usage charge, a refund will be issued to the tenant as either credit on the rent or non-rent account.

What about charges for water used in Common Areas?

Charges for common area water usage are not included in the flat rate charges. Bridge Housing pays for the common area water usage in multi-unit properties.

When undertaking the annual review of water charges for multi-unit properties, Bridge Housing deducts 10% from the actual water usage to account for the common area water usage. Bridge Housing then pays for this cost.

What happens if there are changes to my household?

If there are changes to your household, make sure you let Bridge Housing know as soon as you can. The household water charge will be adjusted. Refer to [Bridge Housings Changes to a Household Policy](#).

How do I pay for water usage charges?

Every tenancy has a rent account and a water account. Bridge Housing recommends tenants pay their water charges fortnightly with their rent.

You can pay for water charges,

- **Using Centrepay** as an automatic deduction
- **Direct bank deposit** from your bank
Account name: Bridge Housing Limited
Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank
BSB: 062 212
Account number: 00904385
- **Using BPOINT** online at <https://www.bpoint.com.au/payments/bridgehousing/> using your **tenant number** and the word **Water** as a reference. Example: 12345Water
- Over the phone on **8324 0800** or in person at one of our offices at Level 9, 59 Goulburn St, Sydney or Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Road, Brookvale.

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 **8324 0800** and speak to your Housing Manger.

We can talk to you about repayment plans and/or recommend specialist support. Bridge Housing partners with support services who can provide you with support and assist you to better manage your money.

Water and the Environment

Bridge Housing is committed to environmental sustainability and managing water use wisely in our homes. Water usage will be monitored on a regular basis to avoid waste and excess use. Our commitment includes responding promptly to repair requests to fix leaking taps and pipes.

We encourage our tenants to be mindful of water usage and report any leaks to our repairs team. To find out more on steps you can take in your home to be water wise, visit sydneywater.com.au.

In Addition, Bridge Housing tenants are required to comply with any water restrictions put in place by the local water authority.

How can I make an Appeal or Complaint?

Appeals and complaints about water charges can be lodged over the phone, mail, in person [or via online form](#) on our website www.bridgehousing.org.au. If you have any queries about water charges or would like to appeal a charge made to your account, the first step is to contact your Housing Manager on **8324 0800**.