

# Water Leakage Allowance Policy



District Council  
of Coober Pedy

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<b>Related Procedures:</b> N/A		
<b>Approved by:</b>  A/ Chief Executive Officer		
<i>01/08/22</i>		

## 1. OBJECTIVE

The District Council of Coober Pedy (Council) acknowledges that the cost of a water leak can have a detrimental and unforeseeable impact on customers' finances. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all applications for a monetary rebate to a water account due to a water leak are processed in a consistent, fair and impartial manner.

## 2. SCOPE

1. This policy does not apply to Commercial properties.
2. This policy applies to the property owner listed on the water account.
3. All property owners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of their internal plumbing, use and payment of all water that passes through the water meter on the property.
4. Council has no obligation to approve a water leakage allowance and applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
5. All water leak rebate forms provided to Council will be assessed by the water department. The Chief Executive Officer (or a manager delegated by the CEO) will determine suitability for a rebate and approve or refuse a write-off related to a water leakage allowance.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Council	District Council of Coober Pedy
Water customer	A person who owns land in relation to which a retail service is provided and included  (a) where the context requires, a person seeking the provision of a retail service; and  (b) in prescribed circumstances—a person supplied with retail services as a consumer or user of those services (without limiting the application of this definition to owners of land); and  (c) a person of a class declared by the regulations to be customers;

## 4. POLICY

### 4.1 Conditions for leakage allowance

Council has no obligation to provide a rebate to customers for water accounts when a water leak has occurred. Council will provide customers with the option to lodge a 'water leak rebate form' to allow a reduction on the amount charged for water lost due to an identifiable and evidential water leak. Applications will be considered in the following circumstances:

1. The water leak was concealed, not visible or reasonably undetectable (underground, under a concrete slab, in a wall cavity etc.);
2. The water leak was due to normal deterioration or accidental damage and not wilful damage;
3. The customer must prove that a water leak was the cause of the additional water usage;
4. The water leak was repaired in a timely and effective manner to minimise water loss;
5. The leak was repaired within 2 weeks of identifying the leak or a high-water use letter was received;
6. The leak was repaired with authorised materials;
7. A maximum of 1 allowance is permitted in a 5-year period for properties in the same ownership;
8. Only one claim per ownership is allowed for vacant land or non-occupied properties;
9. Rebates will be capped at 600KL. Excess leaked water will be charged at the regular applicable rate.
10. Council will apply, if approved, a rebate for water leaked from regular pipework on a customer's property (customer mains, internal poly/PVC/copper piping).
11. Council will not give an allowance for faulty appliances such as toilet cisterns, sprinkler systems, hot water services, etc. (faulty water tap, shower taps);
12. Council will not give an allowance for faulty workmanship or negligence;
13. Council will not approve an application for a rebate if the leaked water has been captured or stored for future use either on the property or on another property;
14. Council will not approve an application for water usage due to criminal activity.

### 4.2 Leakage allowance rebate

All requests for a water leakage allowance must be done by completing the **Water Leak Rebate Form**, available from the Council office. The form can also be requested by email or by calling Council. Council staff will notify you of the reception of the form within 3 business days. The application will be processed within 14 business days of receiving the application.

The following conditions apply:

1. An application for a water leakage allowance won't be approved if it is found that:
  - a. the customer failed to or neglected to repair any visible or obvious defects in their private water service;
  - b. the customer ignored or did not investigate any visible signs of leakage such as soaking / dampness in walls, consistently wet grass or damp patches on the ground;
  - c. the customer failed to repair and / or renew the faulty pipework, fittings and fixtures for which they are responsible;
  - d. any documentation or statements received are willingly misleading or false;
2. Applications must be made within six months of the disputed bills due payment date.
3. If an application for water leakage allowance is refused, the customer will be informed in writing and granted a further 21 days from the date of the notification to pay the account in full. The customer may have the opportunity to enter a suitable payment plan.
4. If an application for a water leakage allowance is approved, the customer will be informed in writing of the decision and that payment of the reduced amount is due 21 days from the date of notification.
5. The allowance can be applied to a maximum of two consecutive billing periods where evidence is given that the water leak has impacted the consumption charges over more than one billing cycle.
6. If a leakage allowance is approved, the following will apply:
  - a. the water account will be adjusted based on the average consumption for the billing period that the undetected leakage occurred; and
  - b. the consumption will be calculated by averaging the last 12 months of consumption for the water account.

## **5. POLICY MATTERS**

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

### **Availability**

This Policy can be found on the District Council of Coober Pedy website at:  
<https://www.cooberpedy.sa.gov.au/council-information/council-documents/policies>