

Water Leakage Policy



District Council of Cooper Pedy

Policy No. 6.2024	Version No: 3.1	Date of Current Version: 26 August 2026
Resolution Number: 951		Last Reviewed: 28 August 2024
Responsible Officer/Department: Chief Executive Officer		Next Review Date: August 2030
Applicable Legislation: <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>		
Related Policies and Documents <i>Delegations Register</i>		
Supporting Procedures: N/A		

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1. 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 includes (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;

2. OBJECTIVE

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

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This Policy does not apply to Commercial properties.
- 3.2 This Policy applies to the residential property owner listed on the water account.
- 3.3 All property owners are responsible for the establishment, maintenance and repair of their internal plumbing infrastructure (defined by all infrastructure from the water meter to the dwelling), water use and payment of all water that passes through the water meter on the property.
- 3.4 Council has no obligation to approve a water leakage allowance and applications will be assessed on a case-by case basis and at Council's absolute discretion.
- 3.5 All water leak rebate forms provided to Council will be assessed by the Water Department. The Chief Executive Officer will determine suitability for a rebate and approve or refuse the application and any write-off related to a water leakage allowance if the rebate is up to and including \$5,000. If the rebate is over \$5,000 then the request is presented to Council for consideration.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

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 within the property. 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 verifiable 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 4 weeks of identifying the leak or a high-water use letter was received;
6. The leak was repaired with authorised materials by a licensed plumber, or inspected for compliance by a member of the water department;
7. An invoice copy from a licensed plumber relating to the repair work is provided to Council, and/or receipts for the repair materials used to repair the leak;
8. The property owner or their authorised agent can apply for the water leakage allowance;
9. A maximum of 1 allowance is permitted in a 5-year period for properties under the same ownership;
10. Only one claim per ownership is allowed for vacant land or non-occupied property;
11. Approved Water Leakage applications will receive a reduced water account based on a Rebate Tariff capped at the first 600kL of usage for the relevant period as set out in Section 4.2 "Leakage allowance rebate" of this Policy;
12. 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).
13. Council will not give an allowance for faulty appliances such as sink or shower taps, toilet cisterns, sprinkler systems and hot water services, rainwater tanks, pumps and/or valves;
14. Council will not give an allowance for faulty workmanship or faulty negligence, including failure to replace/repair pipework in poor condition;

15. 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;
16. Council will not approve an application for water usage due to criminal activity;
17. Council will not approve an application if the application form is not completed correctly;
18. Water leakage applications must be submitted within six (6) weeks of the date of repair.

4.2 Leakage allowance rebate

All requests for a water leakage allowance must be provided to council by completing the **Water Leak Rebate Form** available from the Council office and Council website (<https://www.cooberpedy.sa.gov.au/water/water-leak>). The form can also be requested by email or by calling Council.

A Rebate will apply to Council approved Water Leakage Applications. The effect of this Rebate will be that the customer may receive a Rebate (adjusted account) based on a Rebate Tariff on their water usage for the relevant period up to a maximum cap of 600kL.

The adjusted water usage account will be based on a Rebate Tariff which is set out in Council's [Fees and Charges Schedule](#) and is based on the cost of water production only.

Refer to Attachment A for an example of how the Rebate may be applied.

Council staff will notify you of the receipt of the form within three (3) business days. The application will be processed within fourteen (14) business days, depending on the availability of the Water Department doing the inspection when receiving the water rebate form. Council staff will notify you of any delays in processing your application.

The following conditions apply:

1. An application for a water leakage allowance will not be approved if it is found that:
 - a. the customer failed or neglected any visible or obvious defects in their private water service;
 - b. the customer ignored/did not investigate any visible signs of leakage such as soaking /dampness in walls, consistently wet grass or damp patches in the floor;
 - 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. If an application for water leakage allowance is refused, the customer will be informed in writing and granted a further 10 business days from the date of the notification to pay the account in full. The customer will have the option to enter into a suitable payment plan.

3. 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 10 business days from the date of the notification.
4. 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.
5. Meter reading needs to be taken after the repair on the day the leak has been repaired.
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;
 - b. the consumption will be calculated by averaging the last 12 months of consumption for this water account or usage data from previous water account(s) on the property.

5. TRAINING/EDUCATION

All staff who will be required to work with this Policy will undergo a training workshop regarding the Policy.

6. DELEGATIONS

The initial application is to be assessed by a person other than the Chief Executive Officer of Council (CEO) who is required to make a recommendation to the CEO on the Water Leakage Rebate Application.

The application will then be referred to the CEO who has been delegated the authority to implement this Policy and approve the writing off of any water debt in accordance with section 143(1) of the *Local Government Act 1999* and as delegated in Council's Delegations Register.

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every four (4) years, with changes in legislation or at the direction of Council.

8. ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The Water Leakage Policy is available for public inspection at the Council offices located at Hutchison Street, Coober Pedy South Australia and on the Council's website www.cooberpedy.sa.gov.au

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this Policy, please contact:

Title: Office of the Chief Executive Officer
Telephone: 08 8672 4600
Email: dccp@cpccouncil.sa.gov.au

10. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Control

Version #	Date Adopted	Resolution #	File # Record #	Description of Change
1	18 June 2013	C43-13		New Policy
2	26 June 2024	608		Reviewed by Staff with minor changes
3	28 August 2024	645	18.63.1/1 NPO20243	4.2 amended 4.1 item 11, 4.2 and 6 Delegations Register in accordance with Council's resolution 4.2 Excess water calculation updated
3.1	26 August 2026	951	18.63.1/1 NPO20243	Minor adjustments to link in section 4.2, dccp@cpccouncil.sa.gov.au added for contact email, link to Fees and charges on Page 4 added. Reviewed by Manager Corporate and Community 26/8/2026 Clause 6 – Delegations amended per Council direction to refer to delegations under section 143(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>

11.Attachment A – Example of a Rebate

An example of how the Rebate will be applied based on an example of an 800kL water usage account and the water tariffs used is set out below:

Note: this example and costs relate to the 2024-25 financial year and is provided as a guide only.

Example Only

Step 1: Determine the volume of the leaked water in kL, this is usually based on the water bill issued or may be based on a reading taken for this purpose. In our example, we are assuming the water volume is 800kL including the water leaked amount.

Step 2: Estimate the normal usage for the customer based on the prior 12 months of water usage.

In our example, we will assume the normal usage for the customer was 100kL.

	Usage kL	Tariff Rate	Cost \$
Tier 1 – Less than 35kL per quarter	35.00	\$8.78	\$307.30
Tier 2 – 35kL to 130kL per quarter	65.00	\$12.29	\$798.85
Tier 3 – Above 130kL per quarter	0.00	\$14.01	\$0.00
Total	100.00		\$1,106.15

Council will use the reading over a 12-month period prior to the leak to get an average consumption per day.

Council will then use that average consumption per day multiplied by the number of days in the leak billing period.

This will then determine an estimate of the volume of water leaked.

Step 3: Calculate the variable cost of water excluding the rebated volume of 600kL. In our example, this is as follows:

	Usage kL	Tariff Rate	Cost \$
Tier 1 – Less than 35kL per quarter	35.00	\$8.78	\$307.30
Tier 2 – 35kL to 130kL per quarter	65.00	\$12.29	\$798.85
Tier 3 – Above 130kL per quarter	0.00	\$14.01	\$0.00
Total	100.00		\$1,106.15

The total leak was 800kL less the normal usage of 100kL and the rebate volume of 600kL leaves a variable volume of 100kL. *Coincidentally in this example the amounts in Steps 2 and 3 just happen to be the same.*

Step 4: Work out the total amount attributed to the water leak.

In our example, this is as follows:

	Usage kL	Tariff Rate	Cost \$
Tier 1 – Less than 35kL per quarter	35.00	\$8.78	\$307.30
Tier 2 – 35kL to 130kL per quarter	95.00	\$12.29	\$1,167.55
Tier 3 – Above 130kL per quarter	670.00	\$14.01	\$9,386.70
Total	800.00		\$10,861.55

	Amount
Total Bill	\$10,861.55
Less: Normal Usage	\$1,106.15
Amount attributed to Water Leak	\$9,755.40

Step 5: Work out the customer's rebate amount.

In our example, this is as follows:

	Amount
Amount attributed to water leak	\$9,755.40
Less: rebate amount on 600kL	(\$1,260.00)
Less: variable cost of water	(\$1,106.15)
Total customer Rebate	\$7,389.25

Step 6: Work out the customer's new invoice amount.

In our example, this is as follows:

	Amount
Normal Usage	\$1,106.15
Rebate amount on 600kL @ \$2.10 (water rebate tariff)	\$1,260.00
Variable cost of water (excess above 600kL)	\$1,106.15
Total Customer Invoice Amount	\$3,472.30

The amount that would have been otherwise charged based on 2024/25 Water Tariffs post September 2024, would have been - \$10,861.55. After an estimate of the normal usage and the rebate rates are applied, the amount to be paid by the customer is \$3,472.30.

It is noted that the above example the 800kL usage is very unlikely to occur in reality due to its excessiveness but is used in this example to show the full effect of the Rebate Tariffs being applied.