

2024 Pricing Proposal - at a glance

Snapshot: your prices are changing

The costs to provide our water, wastewater and stormwater services are recovered through the prices we charge to our customers. Our prices are reviewed every five years by an independent regulator to make sure our costs remain efficient, and our prices are fair.

We are experiencing similar rising costs to our customers. This means our prices will need to rise substantially, even for us to deliver the same quality of service that we currently do.

It's a challenging time:

- ◆ Our community is growing
- ◆ Increasing climate variability and change
- ◆ Changing expectations from customers, community and stakeholders
- ◆ Our region faces water security challenges. To reduce the chance that we run out of water, we are building a desalination plant at Belmont and investing in water conservation
- ◆ We understand many of our customers are struggling with cost-of-living pressures.

We've had to balance the need to address today's issues, while keeping bills affordable, and ensuring equity for future bill-payers and generations.

To keep bills as low as possible, we have:

- ◆ Prioritised investments so that we spend only what is essential to ensure we comply with regulations that are in place to protect public health, safety, customers and the environment, and to make the targeted improvements our community told us are important to them
- ◆ Taken on more risk as a business in areas where we can monitor and adapt during the pricing period
- ◆ Included an ambitious cost-efficiency target to put downward pressure on prices

We plan to spend around \$2.5 billion over the next five years.

A typical household bill for a customer with water, wastewater and stormwater service will increase by 5.7% per year, on average, before inflation.

We would increase prices in five small steps, rather than one big step, to give customers time to adjust to changes.

Your prices won't change until 1 July 2025.

You can see our full pricing proposal and a customer summary on our website. We encourage everyone to have their say through the independent regulator's transparent review process.

What do you get for what you pay?

We will improve our performance in three of these six outcomes: high quality water services, water security and environmentally sustainable. This reflects the specific improvements our community recommended, and their desire for us to keep bill increases as low as possible and focus on improvements in targeted areas.

We heard....

High quality water services



I expect my water to be safe and clean. My water and wastewater services should be reliable so that I can depend on them year-round.

Value for money, and affordable



I expect Hunter Water to keep bills as low as possible by being efficient and looking for ways to save money. I want Hunter Water to deliver valued services.
I expect Hunter Water to treat consumers experiencing vulnerability with dignity and make it easy for them to get assistance.

Water security



I expect Hunter Water to plan ahead and ensure water resources are used wisely so that we have enough water to support the health and prosperity of our region, now and in the future, no matter the weather.

Great customer service



I expect to be able to use Hunter Water's services and interact with Hunter Water easily, in the channel I choose. I want to be treated with respect, kept informed with clear and timely communication, and I trust Hunter Water will always try to resolve my issue first time, and in a timely manner.

Us being Environmentally sustainable



I expect Hunter Water to care for the environment: protecting it during our operations, 'treading lightly on the planet' and being fair to future generations by acting on big challenges like climate change.

Us being Community-focused



I expect Hunter Water to listen and use community feedback in its decision-making, support the community through grants and partnerships, deliver educational activities and participate in community events.




All of our prices need to increase, some more than others

Water prices

Water bills for households and businesses are made up of both fixed and variable charges.

Our proposed increase in water prices is partly in the fixed charge and mostly in the variable charge. We heard this was a balanced, fair and equitable approach providing customers the best opportunity to reduce the impact on their bills.



Typical household
2029-30
using **146kL** per year
will save

- ◆ **\$32** if they use 5% less water
- ◆ **\$64** if they use 10% less water

Proposed water prices (without inflation)	IPART 2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Water usage (non-drought) - \$ per kL	2.89	3.19	3.49	3.80	4.10	4.40
Water service (houses and apartments) - \$ per year	27.58	42.52	57.47	72.41	87.36	102.30

Wastewater prices

The total wastewater charge for a household is all fixed, but the fixed amount is based on an assumed amount of water discharged into the wastewater system. We propose that customers in apartments continue to pay less than customers in houses, because they discharge a smaller volume of wastewater.

We only propose a small change to the way we charge households for wastewater; that is to assume ('deem') that customers in apartments discharge less wastewater than customers in houses.

Proposed wastewater prices (without inflation)	IPART 2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Houses - \$ per year	789.18	804.84	816.51	828.22	840.00	851.83
Apartments - \$ per year	730.00	768.25	780.80	793.39	806.02	818.68

Stormwater prices

Some customers only pay for stormwater services through their local Council rates. Others pay both Hunter Water and their local Council because there are shared responsibilities (parts of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Cessnock). That's around one quarter of our customers.

Stormwater bills are made of fixed charges only. We are not proposing to change anything about the way we charge for stormwater services, but we do need to increase prices. Because we don't have many stormwater customers, even small investments or cost increases lead to higher prices.

Proposed stormwater prices (without inflation)	IPART 2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Houses - \$ per year	97.04	111.79	126.55	141.30	156.05	170.81
Apartments (multi-premise) and low impact* - \$ per year	35.91	41.37	46.83	52.29	57.75	63.21

Note: The low impact stormwater charge is for customers who go above and beyond to manage the stormwater on their property to ensure any runoff has a low impact on our stormwater infrastructure. Apply online: <https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/managing-your-account/low-impact-stormwater-charge>

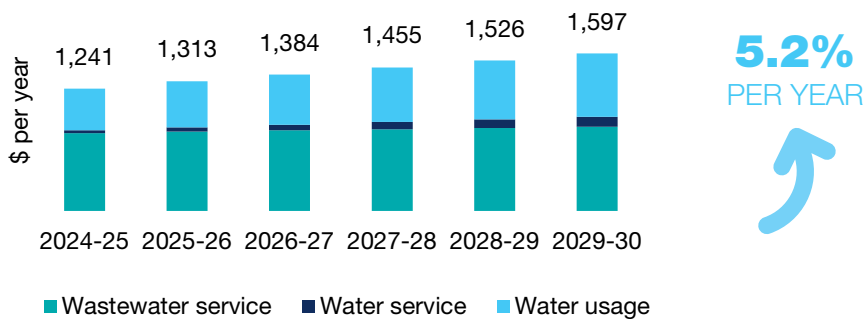
What this means for customer bills

Customers' bills depend on factors such as concession status, whether they are a residential or business customer, owning (or buying) their home or renting, and also how much water they use. Below is an indicative sample of customer bills to show the impacts of our proposed price changes. The examples are shown in this year's dollars (\$2024-25), before inflation, unless otherwise stated.

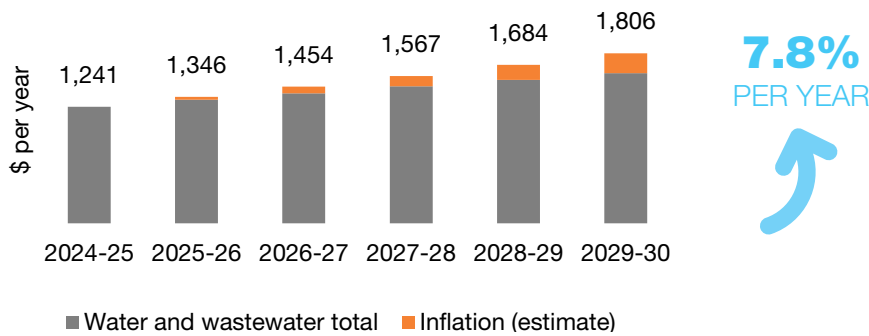
Typical Household

Household of three or four people who own their home, live in a house and have mid-range water use (146kL per year).

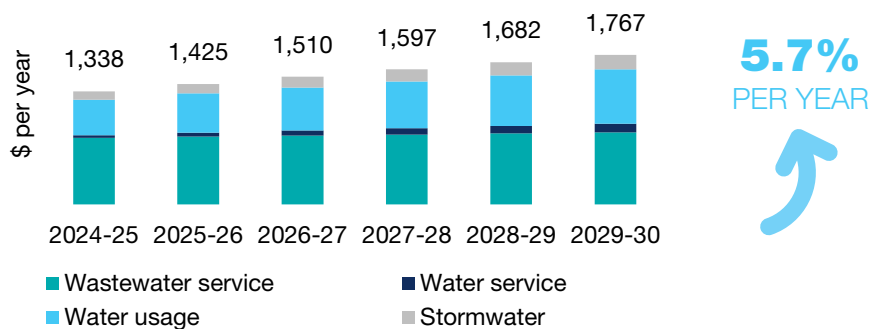
Water and wastewater (without inflation)



Water and wastewater (with inflation estimate)



Water, wastewater and stormwater (without inflation)



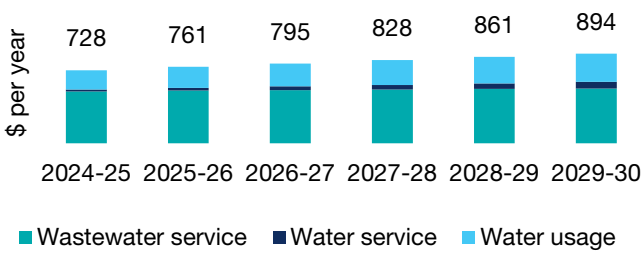
Here's what your bill may look like out to 2030, before inflation if you receive stormwater from us.

Different circumstances mean that your bills might not be typical. Here's the impact on three other household types. With the shift to more variable pricing, bills for low users will increase more slowly, while bills for higher users will rise more quickly. These charts do not account for any potential reduction in water usage that could result from the shift to more variable billing.

Pensioner Household

Household of one or two people who own their home, live in a house, have relatively low water use (100kL per year), and receive a concession in the form of a pensioner rebate.

Water and wastewater (without inflation)



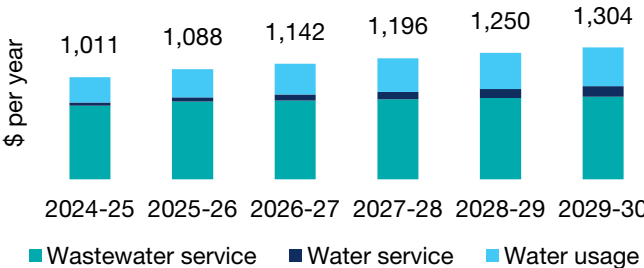
4.2%
PER YEAR



Small Household

Household of one or two people who own their home, live in an apartment and have relatively low water use (87kL per year).

Water and wastewater (without inflation)



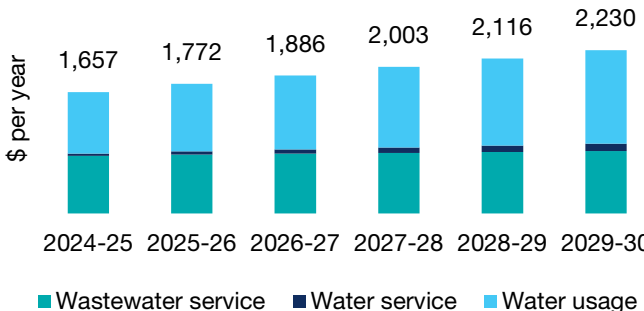
5.2%
PER YEAR



Large Household

Household of five or more who live in a house with a big garden and/or pool, who own their home and have high water use (290kL per year).

Water and wastewater (without inflation)



6.1%
PER YEAR



How can you have your say about prices?

An independent regulator sets our prices

We don't set our own prices. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) reviews our proposal, and seeks customer, community and stakeholder views before setting the prices we can charge. That's because our customers mostly have no choice in who they buy essential water, wastewater and stormwater services from.

We encourage everyone to have their say.

IPART will advertise opportunities for you to have your say directly to them – in writing or at a workshop called a 'public hearing'.

All the details will be advertised in the media and on IPART's website: <https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/>

We have put our customers, and community at the heart of our pricing proposal.



Almost 9,000 people helped to shape our activities, services, expenditure and prices over two years of engagement.

Finding it hard to pay your bill?


Many Australians are already feeling the pressure of rising costs and affordability challenges. Hearing about price increases can be concerning, especially if you're already struggling to pay your bills.

Our local, understanding team is here to support you when you need it most.


Get in touch


We're here for you when you need us.




 1300 657 657
(8am - 5pm)

1300 657 000
(Emergency 24/7)

 <https://www.hunterwater.com.au/haveyoursay/2025-2030-price-proposal>

 Website live chat
(8am - 5pm, Mon-Fri)

 pricing.engagement@hunterwater.com.au

