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Provide Customer Feedback

Hunter Water is proposing prices that will increase bills over time

Hunter Water's pricing proposal would lead to bill increases in each of the next five years. For typical residential customers, the total increase over five years would be around:

- 24% for a typical customer in a house receiving water, wastewater and stormwater services from Hunter Water, which is 10% above inflation (assumed at 2.5% per year). Note: not all customers receive stormwater services from Hunter Water. This increase would be 23% (including inflation) for those who don't.
- 34% for a typical customer in an apartment receiving water, wastewater and stormwater services from Hunter Water, which is 18% above assumed inflation. This increase would be 33% (including inflation) for those who don't receive stormwater services from Hunter Water (ie, they simply receive water and wastewater services).

For non-residential customers, bill increases would range from 17% to 44% over the 5-year period, which is 3% to 27% above assumed inflation. The variation is driven by differences in meter size and trade waste output.

The table below shows the impact on bills for some 'typical' residential customers, or you can [use our bill calculator to estimate your bill under Hunter Water's proposed prices](#) for your household or business.

Indicative bill impacts for typical residential customers (\$ per year)

		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
House	Using 185kL/yr, excl. stormwater charge	1,236	1,252	1,312	1,377	1,444	1,515
	Annual increase		1.3%	4.8%	5.0%	4.9%	4.9%
	Using 100kL/yr, receiving pensioner discount, excl. Stormwater charge	672	707	744	784	824	868
	Annual increase		5.2%	5.2%	5.4%	5.1%	5.3%
	Stormwater charge (some customers only)	80	88	94	102	111	120
Annual increase		8.4%	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%	
Apartment	Using 115kL/yr, excl. stormwater charge	955	976	1,041	1,114	1,190	1,272
	Annual increase		2.2%	6.7%	7.0%	6.8%	6.9%
	Stormwater charge (some customers only)	30	31	33	35	37	39
	Annual increase		5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%

Note: The bills include assumed inflation of 2.5% annually.

These bills are based on the following proposed prices for water, wastewater and stormwater services.

[Prices for residential customers](#)

The charge for **water usage** currently makes up around 36% of a typical water and wastewater bill. Hunter Water is proposing that the water usage price increases, and the fixed water charge decreases. The water usage price plays an important role in balancing the amount of water used by the community with the desire to conserve water. Hunter Water's proposed water usage price is informed by its estimate of the long-term costs of supplying water, including the costs of potential supply augmentation projects and customer feedback that suggested the majority of customers preferred higher usage prices and lower fixed (or service) prices.

Hunter Water is also proposing that the fixed wastewater charges increase, to recover its proposed increased expenditure on its wastewater network.

Hunter Water's proposed prices for residential customers are set out in the table below.

Proposed prices for residential customers excluding inflation (\$2019-20)

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Usage \$/kL	2.39	2.41	2.44	2.46	2.49	2.51
Fixed water charge (per year)	101	100	99	99	97	97
Fixed wastewater charge houses (per year)	652	676	700	725	751	777
Fixed wastewater charge apartments (per year)	538	574	612	652	694	738

Key Issue 1: Are Hunter Water's proposed prices for residential customers reasonable? Does its proposed water usage price send appropriate signals to customers?

We want to hear from you - please leave any comments on residential prices and bill impacts in the comment box below.

Prices for non-residential customers

Hunter Water's proposed prices for non-residential customers are set out in the table below

Proposed prices for non-residential customers excluding inflation (\$2019-20)

NON-RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Water usage \$/kL (up to 50,000 kL)	2.39	2.41	2.44	2.46	2.49	2.51
Water usage \$/kL (above 50,000 kL)	Varies based on location, but prices to increase over 5 years. See more below.					
Wastewater usage \$/kL	0.67	0.65	0.64	0.62	0.61	0.59
Fixed water charge (per year)						
20mm meter	101	100	99	99	97	97
50mm meter	631	628	616	618	606	608
100mm meter	2,522	2,510	2,463	2,470	2,425	2,431
200mm meter	10,088	10,042	9,853	9,881	9,700	9,724
Fixed wastewater charge (per year)						
20mm meter	762	797	831	867	903	942
50mm meter	4,763	4,980	5,191	5,421	5,645	5,887
100mm meter	19,053	19,920	20,766	21,683	22,579	23,547
200mm meter	76,210	79,679	83,064	86,731	90,318	94,189
Stormwater charge (per year)						
Small (<1,000m ²) or assessed as low impact	80	85	90	95	100	106
Medium (1,001 to 10,000m ²)	261	276	292	310	328	347
Large (10,001 to 45,000m ²)	1,662	1,758	1,860	1,969	2,083	2,205
Very large (>45,000m ²)	5,280	5,585	5,911	6,255	6,619	7,005

Note: this table only shows a sample of meter sizes available. For the full list, see our Issues Paper or the Hunter Water proposal, Technical Paper 8. Further, use our [bill calculator](#) to estimate the impact for your business.

Key Issue 2: Are Hunter Water's proposed prices for non-residential customers reasonable?

We want to hear from you – please leave any comments on non-residential prices and bill impacts in the comment box below.

Hunter Water is proposing increasing its expenditure on delivering services

Hunter Water manages dams and bore fields, and a network of pipes, pumps and treatment plants to deliver safe drinking water, and treat and safely discharge wastewater. Hunter Water's activities and services are subject to various conditions such as drinking water quality guidelines, regulatory targets and environmental standards.

Hunter Water proposes increasing both its operating costs and capital expenditure compared to its costs over the past four years. It states this expenditure will help manage emerging challenges and risks such as non-compliance with environmental and service standards, and the risk of failure of critical assets, to maintain service delivery. Hunter Water states that its level of expenditure in recent years has led to increases in risks based on a recent review of its risk framework.

In broad terms, the proposed expenditure aims to:

- Meet existing and new mandatory standards, including to ensure its environmental impacts are suitably managed and mitigated
- Address deteriorating assets, moving to a more proactive asset maintenance program, and continuing renewals of critical infrastructure.
- Upgrade digital technology, to improve cyber security, efficiency and the customer experience (eg, by adding digital billing).
- Service population growth: by building new infrastructure and increasing the capacity of treatment plants.

We will review all aspects of Hunter Water's proposal, particularly its proposed expenditure plans and prices. We have engaged expert consultants to review Hunter Water's key assumptions and proposed expenditure.

Discretionary expenditure

Hunter Water used a number of methods to engage with its customers in developing its proposal. In addition to paying for mandated service levels, over 70% of the customers surveyed indicated that they were willing to pay more for projects to improve the amenity of stormwater channels and to increase the use of recycled water in the community. Hunter Water has proposed spending \$22.8 million on these projects, which would add around \$4 to \$5 per year to residential customer bills.

Read more in our [Issues Paper](#) or [Hunter Water's pricing proposal](#)

Key Issue 3: Are there any aspects of Hunter Water's proposed expenditure that we should review? Is Hunter Water spending appropriate amounts on protecting the environment and ensuring secure, reliable and sustainable water supplies?

We want to hear from you – please leave any comments on Hunter Water's expenditure and service levels in the comment box below.

Hunter Water is proposing changes to the way it charges trade waste customers

For businesses that discharge high strength wastewater (trade waste) into the sewer network, Hunter Water is proposing changing the structure of its trade waste disposal fees – increasing administration costs and changing the basis for charging for its treatment costs. The proposed trade waste bills would increase significantly for some customers depending on the type of waste discharged. [Click here to see the changes in prices.](#)

Key Issue 4: Are the proposed changes to trade waste prices reasonable?

We want to hear from you - please leave any comments on Hunter Water's proposed trade waste prices in the comment box below.

Hunter Water is proposing removing discounts for some large customers

Hunter Water proposes to phase out price discounts to some non-residential customers with water use above 50,000 kL per year. Around 19 customers currently receive various discounts depending on their location in Hunter Water's network. Hunter Water is proposing removing this discount, so all customers would pay the same usage price for water. The removal of the discount to large customers would mean Hunter Water could decrease prices by around \$10 per year for each residential customer. The bill impact on these large customers would vary based on customer location and water use. [Click here to see the changes in prices.](#)

Key Issue 5: Are the proposed changes to location-based prices for large customers reasonable?

We want to hear from you - please leave any comments on Hunter Water's proposal to remove discounts for some large customers in the comment box below.

Other comments and feedback

We want to hear from you. If you have any comments in addition to those we have outlined above, please leave them in the comment box below.

In addition to the feedback that you have provided above, you can lodge a submission in response to Hunter Water's Pricing Proposal and our Issues Paper. This can address one or more of the questions in our Issues Paper (see pages 14-17), or raise other issues.

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