



Changes to Water Charges

Supporting Document



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu
New Plymouth
District Council

Contents

Introduction	3
Why have we installed water meters?	3
Transition from yearly fixed charges to volumetric water billing	4
Mock billing	6
1. Water billing options	7
The three water billing options are:	7
Option One - Fixed charge + volumetric charge	7
Option Two: Fixed charge + volumetric charge with an allocation of water (100 litres).....	7
Option Three: Fully volumetric charge	8
Summary of estimated yearly charges for each option	8
Summary of the water billing options	10
2. Wastewater	11
There are two options we are seeking feedback on:	11
Option One – Volumetric Wastewater Billing	11
Option two: Yearly Fixed Charge (the status quo)	12
Summary of wastewater billing options	13
Other related options that affect specific communities	14
Shared water meters	14
Could I install my own individual meter?	14
The four options we are seeking feedback on are:.....	14
Option one: Shared Meter Reading	14
Option two: Fixed Yearly Charge	14
Option three: Shared Meter Reading with Remissions Policy	14
Option four: Household’s Choice	15
Summary of shared water meter properties	16
Vulnerable Users	16
Rates Remission and Postponement Policy Options for Vulnerable Users	17
Option 1: Continue with the current Rates Remission and Postponement Policy	17
Option 2: Specifically Include Water Rate Remission for Vulnerable Households.....	17

Summary of Vulnerable Users.....	17
Water leaks and repairs.....	18
Leak Remission Options.....	19
Option 1: Include Residential Users in Existing Policy	19
Option 2: Only Residential Uses Get a Remission of 50 per cent	19
Option 3: Only Residential Uses Get a Remission of 100 per cent	19
Option 4: Residential 100 per cent Commercial 50 per cent.....	19
Option 5: All Uses Get a Remission of 100 per cent	20
Summary of options for leaks remissions	20
Additional policy changes we want your feedback on	21
For non-residential / commercial customers	21
Proposed amendments to the Revenue and Financing Policy	21
Proposed amendment to fees and charges	22
What happens next?	22
How you can Have Your Say.....	23

Introduction



We are seeking your feedback on proposals for how we will charge households for water use through water meters.

In December 2020, as part of the Long-Term Plan 2021-2031, we made the decision to install water meters on residential properties across the district, along with shifting to volumetric billing (paying for how much water a household actually uses).

To date there are more than 23,000 meters in the ground with the rest to be installed by the end of this year.

Why have we installed water meters?

Water is a precious resource, something we can't live without. Being able to measure how much water we use helps to encourage better water-use habits and identify and fix leaks. This saves money by treating less water and delaying major spending on new pipes and equipment. We also need water meters to help us retain consents to take water from the environment to supply residents and businesses.

We are a high water-use district; on average we use about 300 litres per person, per day. That's 1.5 to 2 times higher than similar-size cities with water meters. We all need to ensure that we use only what we really need.

Water meters and volumetric charging, now common throughout New Zealand, have proved to be the most effective tools to encourage water-use reduction. They are seen to be a fairer system, in that you pay for what you use – low-to-medium users no longer subsidise high-users.

We've identified around 180 leaks on private properties through water meter data. Property owners have since repaired these saving a 1.73 million litres of water per day, enough to supply more than 2,700 homes.

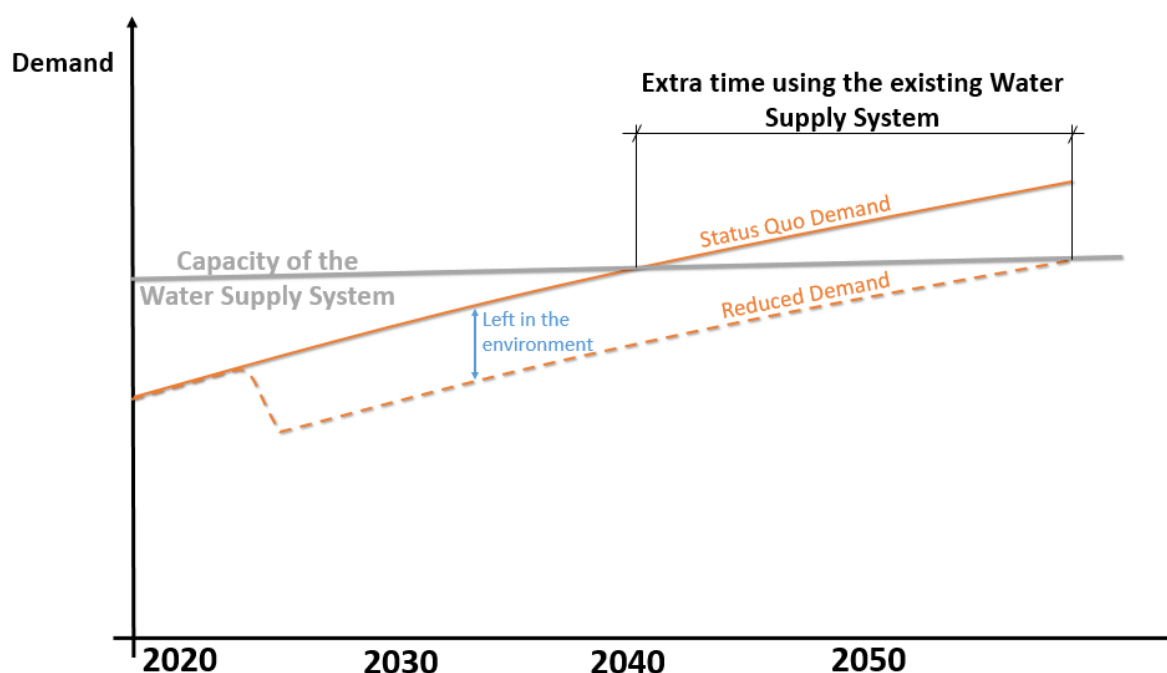
We've been able to indefinitely delay a \$4 million upgrade of a pump station and pipeline in the Urenui and Tikorangi water supply area, which we would have otherwise had to include in the current Long-Term Plan (LTP).

This is a good start, but we need to save more.

The following graph shows the drop in water use we expect to see in 2027 when the change to billing by meters (volumetric charging) is introduced. This will extend the existing water supply's ability to meet needs over a longer period.

This delays expensive development of new water sources and spending on new pipes and equipment. Delaying this spending removed \$42m in projects from the Long-Term Plan 2021-31. If we don't save water as planned, we will need to reintroduce this work into the next Long-Term Plan, which will lead to increased costs for everybody.

Water-use trend: with meters vs without meters



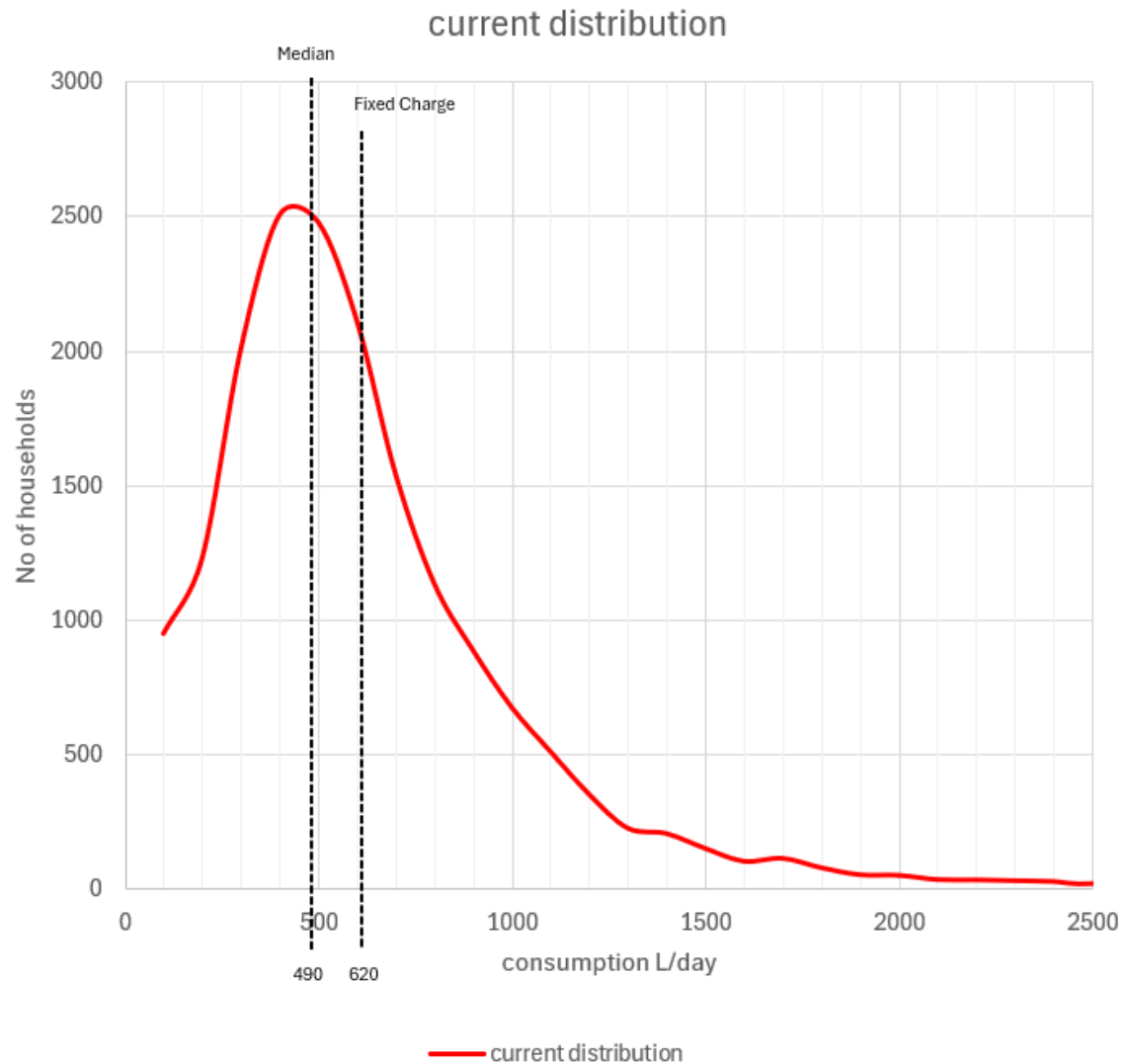
NB: 'Status Quo Demand' shows the trend-line of water use without volumetric charging, and 'Reduced Demand' show the expected trend-line of water use after volumetric charging begins.

Transition from yearly fixed charges to volumetric water billing

- All residential households connected to NPDC's water supply pay a yearly fixed charge (uniform annual water charge) for the service. This is currently \$547.
- From July 2027, this charge will be removed and replaced by the new volumetric charge so that households pay based on what they actually use.
- We will do 12 months of mock billing to provide everyone with information about their water use and the expected costs before actual billing starts.

We have read almost 18,000 meters and plotted actual use of water at these properties and compared the cost of that use to the current yearly fixed rate (see graph below). This shows that 65 per cent of all properties currently use less water than what the current fixed charge pays for, so under volumetric billing, they would pay less.

Household water use in New Plymouth District



Median – this shows the middle amount of use – half the households in the district are using more than this and half are using less. If your usage is above the median, you may want to consider why your household is using more than most others.

Fixed Charge (the UAWC – Uniform Annual Water Charge) - this line shows how much water you paid for if the fixed charge in your rates this year was translated to a volumetric charge. If your household used less than this amount of water, you were effectively subsidising households that used more.

Mock billing

To help understand the changes for your household once the volumetric charging structure is confirmed there will be 12 months of mock billing. This will enable you to track your water use and expected cost. It'll also give you the chance to fix any leaks that are detected ahead of actual volumetric charging starting in July 2027.

Throughout the mock billing period you will continue to pay for your water as you do now, but you will also receive a mock bill to show how paying by volume will work. You won't pay two lots of water charges; the mock bill is only there to provide you with information.

When volumetric billing starts in July 2027, the yearly fixed charge you pay now will no longer show on your rates bill.

Most households will pay less

We expect that most households, once billed by volume, will see a decrease in what they pay for water compared to what they would pay if we kept the current fixed yearly charge system.

Some households will see an increase – tending to be those that use a lot of water outside, such as for swimming pools or regularly watering a garden or lawns with irrigation or sprinklers.

Your feedback is important

We want your feedback on what the new charging structure should look like when we change to billing by water meter. There are three options for you to consider.

There are also other issues we want your input on. For those who share a meter with a neighbour, we've proposed some options so that you can consider what you think is the fairest way for your properties to be billed.

It's important we support the vulnerable households in our community too, making sure they are not unreasonably affected by the shift to volumetric billing.

Commercial customers currently pay by volume, and the proposed options may change how they are currently charged.

We also want to know if we should take this opportunity to change how we charge for our wastewater services. Should we switch to a volumetric charge based upon the water meter readings, or stay with the status quo (the yearly fixed rate)?

And lastly, there are potential policy amendments in the future, to support vulnerable households, that we want your feedback on.

1. Water billing options



There are three options we want you to consider for when we start billing by meter (meaning you'll only pay for what you use):

Option One: **Fixed charge + volumetric charge.**

Option Two: **Fixed charge + volumetric charge with a daily allocation of water.**

Option Three: **Fully volumetric charge.**

When considering these options, it is important to note that the Council can't make a profit on water charges; we can only cover the actual costs for treating and supplying the water. The total you pay reflects only what it costs to supply safe drinking water throughout the district. This won't change with volumetric billing.

When water billing starts, meters will be regularly read, and water bills sent each quarter (every three months).

The three water billing options are:

Option One - Fixed charge + volumetric charge

Households pay a fixed yearly charge plus a volumetric charge per cubic metre of water as measured by their water meter.

Each year, a fixed charge per cubic metre would be set to cover certain fixed costs like meter replacement and administration. Like fully volumetric billing, this method still encourages water conservation since most costs are still based on water use.

Option Two: Fixed charge + volumetric charge with an allocation of water (100 litres)

Like Option One except that each property would receive a daily allocation of 100L of water per household per day. All water above this amount would be charged at the volumetric charge.

The allocation of 100L per property per day provides some water to cover basic needs of a single-person household but still allows some room to save water and costs. This allowance will be the same for all properties regardless of occupancy and use.

This is supported by experience in Auckland which shows the average daily per person water use is 147L. The allocation of 100L provides two-thirds of the water needs for a single person while the volumetric charge creates some incentive to conserve water.

If we increase the allowance, the fixed charge to cover the costs of the water would also need to rise. We also risk not making the water savings we need as people won't have the same incentive to save water. Eventually, we'd have to reintroduce those costs into future budgets, which would cancel out the benefits of installing water meters.

Option Three: Fully volumetric charge

There would be no fixed charge and no daily allocation of water. Households would be charged based only on the amount of water used.

Households that reduce their water use will lower their water bills. This option provides the greatest incentive to save water and is expected to provide the greatest savings for our residents overall.

With this option, empty houses connected to the water supply but not using water wouldn't have to pay anything – they would gain value from the service connection but wouldn't help pay for maintenance. This benefits owners of empty houses but is unfair to the wider community. A question on whether to include a minimum charge for households with zero water use is included in the submission form.

The more volumetrically based the billing system, the less that low-to-medium users would subsidise high-users.

Please note: the Council may decide to include a small service charge for Option Three at a later date.

Summary of estimated yearly charges for each option

We've estimated the yearly cost of each option to understand how the options compare cost-wise for different amounts of water use. We have shown the cheapest option for households depending on where their usage sits in green.

We have highlighted the current fixed yearly charge (in yellow) and the estimated median household use (red dotted line) – the median means half of all households will use less water than this and half will use more than this. This shows the median is less than the current fixed yearly charge, meaning most households would be paying less if charging by meter was in use now compared to this year's fixed annual charge.

In fact, we estimate almost 78 per cent of households would be paying less if volumetric charging was in place today.

Comparing cost estimates between the volumetric charging options



The estimated values are based upon following assumptions:

1. The water allocation is 100L per property per day.
2. Dollars are annual cost including GST.
3. All costs are based upon the 2024/25 budget, i.e. to recover enough for this year's operations.
4. The median household water use shows the water use at which half of all households use less water and half of all households use more water. It is based upon actual meter readings for this year, adjusted to allow for water savings.
5. As we save water, we will need to increase the price per unit to cover costs, since most water supply costs are fixed and will need to be spread over a smaller amount of water. This increase has been incorporated in the costs presented in the table and can be seen in the reduction in the amount of water "purchased" by the Fixed Charge when compared to the graph in the introduction showing the current distribution of household use.

Households with no water use (empty house)

Option 3 is the cheapest because there is no water use and no fixed charge.

Option 2 is the most expensive as it includes a fixed cost that covers a 100L water allowance per day (you could be paying for water that you are not using).

Option 1 also has a fixed cost but it's less than Option 2, and you only pay for what you use.

Households using 100L per day (very low-use household)

At a use of 100L of water per day, the cost for Options 2 and 3 are about equal after which Option 2 becomes the cheaper option.

Option 1 is the most expensive, due to the combination of the fixed charge plus the volumetric charge for all water used from 0 to 100L.

Households using 100L-715L per day (most households)

Option 2 is the cheapest option because the charge per cubic metre of water is higher for Option 3 than Option 2.

Households using more than 715L per day (high users)

Above 715L per day, Option 1 becomes the cheapest because the charge per cubic metre of water is higher for Option 2 than Option 1.

Summary of the water billing options

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Fixed charge + volumetric charge	Cheapest option for high users of water. Balance with some fixed cost recovery but mostly volumetric to encourage water savings.	Not the cheapest for low or most medium users of water.
Option 2: Fixed charge + volumetric charge with 100L allocation of water	Cheapest option for most medium water-users. Ensures a base amount of water to cover basic indoor use for single households.	Not the cheapest for low or high users of water. By providing an allocation of water, we reduce the incentive to save water.
Option 3: Fully volumetric charge	Cheapest option for low water users. Best way to encourage people to save water.	Not the cheapest for high or most medium users of water. Owners of empty houses don't pay but get benefits of supply.

2. Wastewater



All residential properties and most commercial properties that are connected to the public wastewater service pay a fixed yearly charge.

Water meters make it possible to consider how we charge for our wastewater service, so we are asking whether we should replace the current fixed yearly charge (currently \$742) with a volumetric charge.

So, while we're asking for your feedback on water billing, we'd also like to know: should we change how we bill for our wastewater service to one based on usage, or keep the current yearly fixed charge system?

There are two options we are seeking feedback on:

Option One – Volumetric Wastewater Billing

Property owners would be charged for wastewater based on a portion of their water use, determined by a conversion factor.

The amount of water use is based upon your water meter; you don't need another meter for wastewater.

We would calculate the amount of wastewater using a conversion factor based on the estimated amount of water that goes down the drain, which becomes wastewater. In Auckland, the conversion factor is 78.5 per cent. This recognises that some water is used to water a garden, or other uses, which does not turn into wastewater.

We haven't decided on a conversion factor yet. However, if we bill wastewater by volume and use the Auckland conversion factor as an example, then for every cubic metre (1,000L) of water measured by your water meter you would be charged for 0.785 cubic metres (785L) of wastewater.

The benefit of charging this way is that it maximises the incentive to save water as both water and wastewater charges are based upon water use.

A disadvantage is that those who use more water outside the house, e.g. in the garden, will pay for outdoor use which does not turn into wastewater.

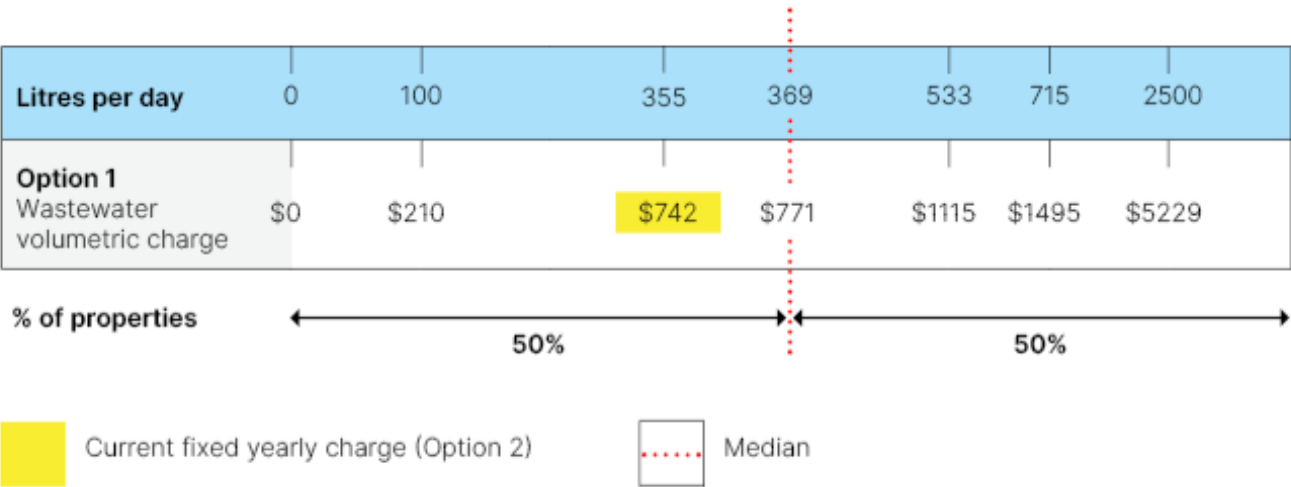
We would need to revisit how our trade waste customers are billed to ensure the overall system of cost recovery is shared equally.

The table below provides an estimate of the annual costs for wastewater for a household based upon different amounts of water use. We’ve based these estimated costs on the Auckland conversion factor, the current trade waste charges and this year’s cost of providing the wastewater service.

We’ve estimated the yearly cost of each option to understand how Option 1 Volumetric Wastewater billing compares cost-wise to Option 2 the Fixed Yearly Charge. We used the same levels of water as used in the table above comparing volumetric billing options for water.

We have highlighted the current fixed yearly charge (in yellow) and the estimated median household use (red dotted line). This shows the median at \$771 is higher than the current fixed yearly charge of \$742.

Estimated yearly wastewater charges if billing by meter were used



The estimated values are based upon following assumptions:

- 1. We have used the Auckland conversion factor.
- 2. Dollars are annual cost including GST.
- 3. All costs are based upon the 2024/25 budget, i.e. to recover enough for this year’s wastewater operations.
- 4. The current trade waste charges.

Option two: Yearly Fixed Charge (the status quo)

Under this option, we would continue to charge residential and some commercial (not trade waste customers) properties a fixed yearly charge as we do now. This year the fixed annual charge is \$742.

Please note: the Council may decide to include a small service charge for option one at later date.

Summary of wastewater billing options

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Volumetric wastewater billing	Maximises the incentive to save water.	Large increases for those people at the higher end of the water use. If you use a lot of water outside, you're paying for wastewater that you aren't generating. This is likely to require an amendment to Trade Waste Bylaw.
Option 2: Fixed yearly charge	Familiar to users. No effect on trade waste or commercial charges.	Reduces the opportunity to incentivise water conservation.



Other related options that affect specific communities

Shared water meters

Shared water meter properties have a single meter at the property boundary because only one connection serves multiple dwellings. Typically, these are in cross-lease properties or apartments.

Under volumetric charging, each property that shares a water meter would still get their own bill.

Could I install my own individual meter?

You may decide it is worthwhile to get your own meter. The Council will accommodate this if it is possible, but each situation will have to be considered on its own merits. The cost of any changes to your pipework and plumbing inside your property boundary will be at your own cost. This cost will vary depending on factors such as distance between the home and the boundary and the ease of undergrounding and connecting.

Currently, once the private work has been completed, NPDC would pay for the meter and the pipework outside of the property to the new pipe at the boundary. We are asking if this should continue.

Mock billing will show you the potential costs while on a shared meter, so it might be worth reviewing those figures before deciding to install your own meter.

The four options we are seeking feedback on are:

Option one: Shared Meter Reading

The water meter reading and cost is split equally between each property sharing the meter. Each property will pay an equal amount.

Option two: Fixed Yearly Charge

All properties connected to a shared meter continue to pay a fixed yearly charge. Each property pays the same amount, and this would be set by the Council for each year. This is the same as how you pay now. Council will retain the ability to charge very high users additional fees.

Option three: Shared Meter Reading with Remissions Policy

The water meter reading is split equally between each property sharing the meter. In a situation where a household is experiencing financial hardship due to splitting the bill - for example, a neighbour clearly has high water use compared to them - we could consider a rate remission. See the proposed amendment to the Rates and Remission Policy.

Option four: Household's Choice

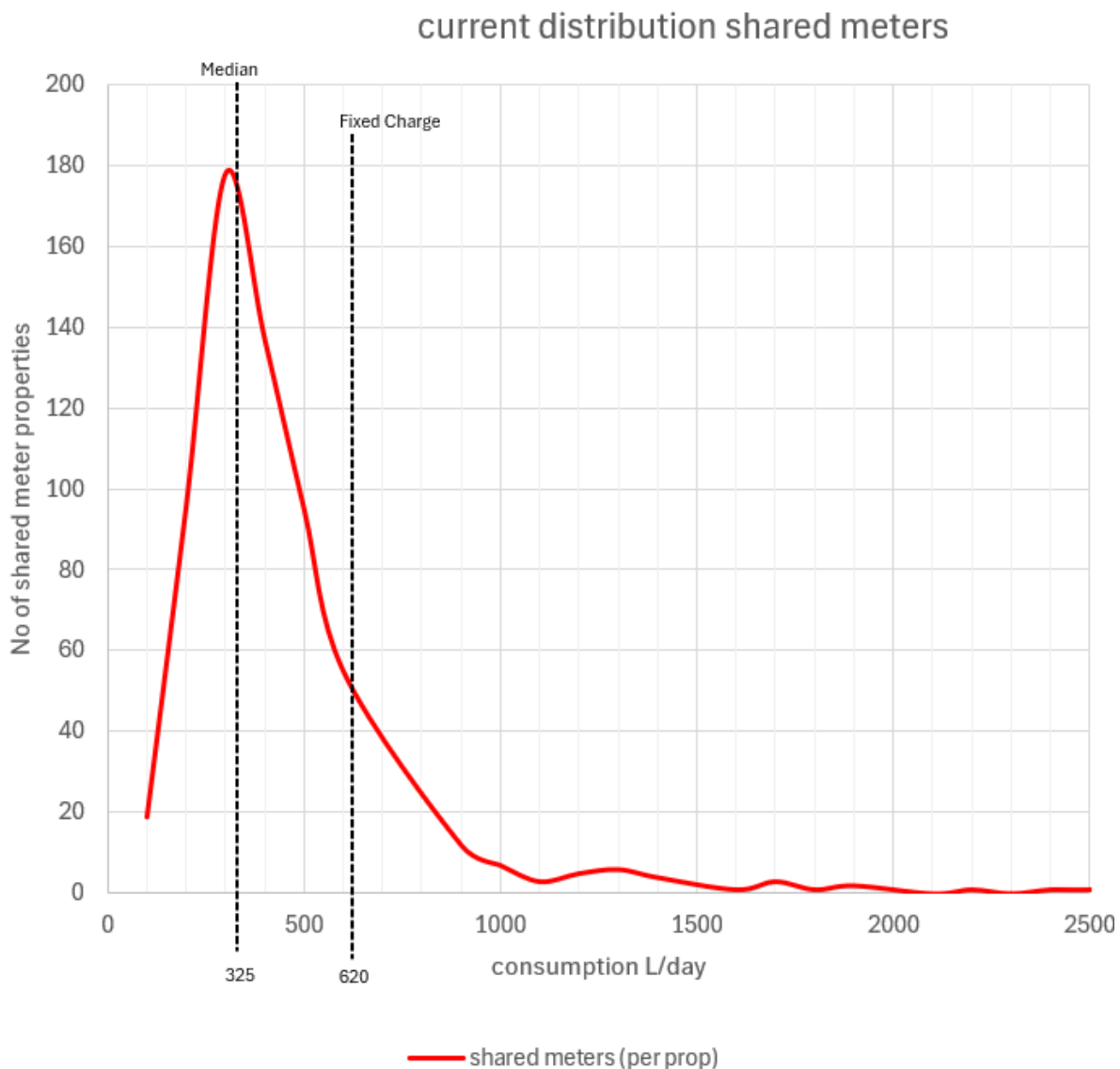
If options 1 or 3 are chosen by the Council, should we give property owners with a shared meter the choice to remain on the yearly fixed charge?

The graph below shows how water use is shared among properties on shared meters, assuming the water is split evenly. This is based on actual meter readings of 679 meters.

The fixed charge line marks the amount of water covered by the current fixed yearly charge.

The median line shows the middle point – half the properties use less water than this and half use more.

This shows that most properties sharing a meter would pay less than the current fixed charge if we were charging by meter now.



Summary of shared water meter properties

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Shared Meter Reading.	Encourages reduction in water use.	Could be unfair if the water consumption in the households differ greatly.
Option 2: Fixed Yearly Charge	No change to how people pay now.	Does not encourage reduction in water use.
Option 3: Shared Meter Reading with Remissions Policy	Encourages reduction in water use. Provides protection for vulnerable customers.	New or amended remissions policy will be required.
Option 4: Household's Choice	Property owners have ability to choose shared meter reading or fixed yearly charge.	If users select the fixed charge option, this does not encourage reduction in water use.

Vulnerable Users

These are households that could include those with low incomes, renters, elderly residents or people with medical conditions where billing by meter may cause financial hardship.

We are proposing amendments to the Council's Rates Remission and Postponement Policy to include support for financial hardship.

Other policies will be amended to accommodate this, including updating the Leakage Remission Policy (see separate options for this), the Revenue and Financing Policy and the schedule of Fees and Charges.

We want your feedback on these policy amendments.

Rates Remission and Postponement Policy Options for Vulnerable Users

There are two options we are seeking feedback on.

Option 1: Continue with the current Rates Remission and Postponement Policy

We would continue to apply the rate remissions as per the current policy for general rates (we won't include any changes to specifically include remissions for water related hardship).

Under this option anyone experiencing hardship due to their water bill would be assessed as per the current policy. This might mean those who experience hardship due to their water bill might "fall through the cracks" and not get the support they need.

Option 2: Specifically Include Water Rate Remission for Vulnerable Households

Amend the Rates Remission and Postponement Policy to specifically include a new Water Rate Remission for Vulnerable Households relating to high water usage (with or without option for tenants to apply).

This would ensure that hardship due to water bills is specifically included along with appropriate conditions.

Summary of Vulnerable Users

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Continue with the current Rates Remission and Postponement Policy	No change to current processes. Some policies will need to be updated.	May mean water related hardship "falls through the cracks".
Option 2: Specifically Include Water Rate Remission for Vulnerable Households	Ensures water related hardship is specifically covered.	Requires changes to policies.

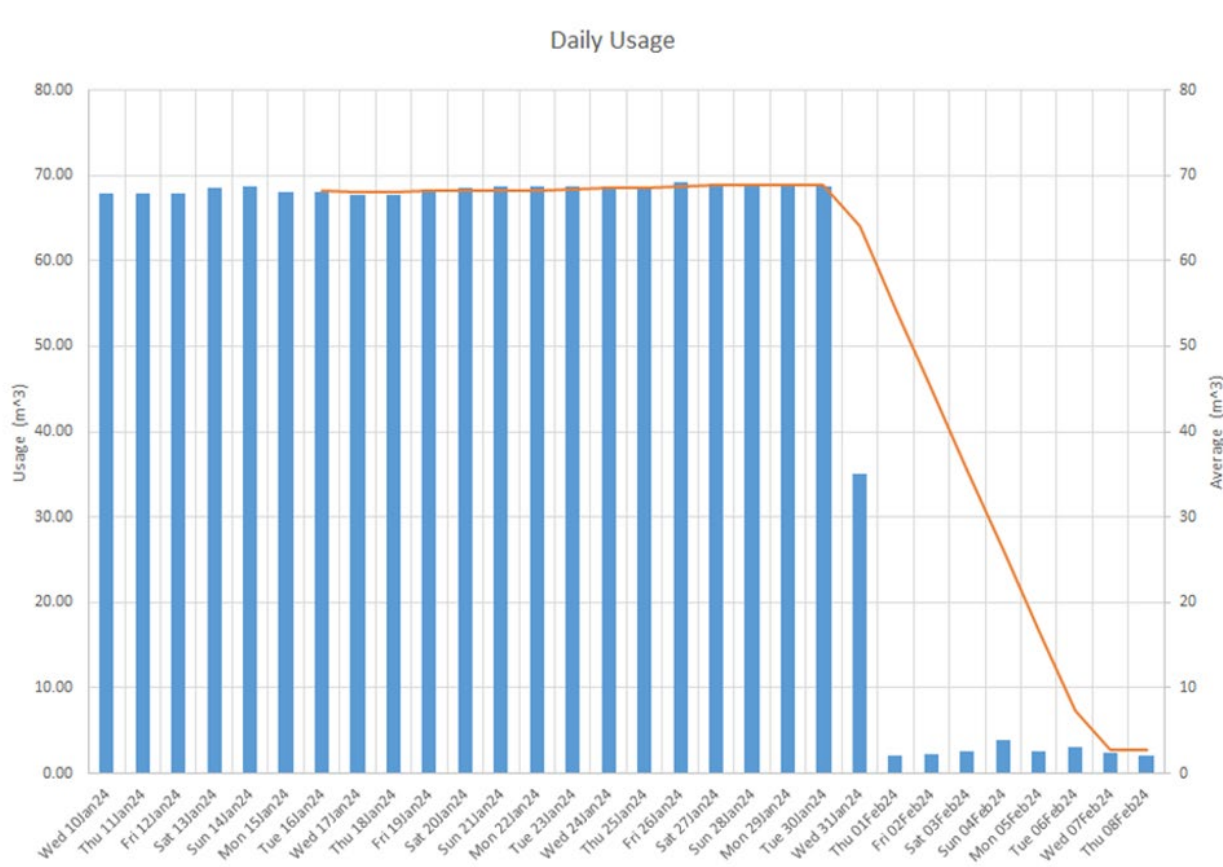
Water leaks and repairs

Water leaks can account for a lot of wasted water. Water meters are a great tool to identify and fix leaks to minimise potential damage to your property and avoid high water bills and waste when volumetric charging starts.

The graph below shows the results of finding and fixing an actual water leak at a private property. This connection served six apartments. Before the leak was fixed the average daily use was **68,200L** per day; this dropped to **2,700L** per day once fixed – about 450L per apartment.

This leak was under a concreted area in sandy soils so had been leaking unnoticed for an unknown length of time. It was only discovered when a water meter was installed.

A water leak found by a water meter



If you find that you're suddenly paying excess water charges due to finding a leak, there is support we can offer through the Leakage Remission Policy.

Our existing leakage policy states: "The Council will waive half of any debt attributable to a leak provided that the customer shows a diligent and timely attitude to locating and fixing the leakage (i.e. Within the same billing period as identified or within two weeks of notification of the same)."

As this has been targeted at commercial users, we propose amending the policy to help us support you when you have fixed the leak at your private property. For all options, the cost of fixing the leak on private property is the responsibility of the property owner. However, the Council would refund some, or all of the cost of the water lost due to the leak depending upon the policy adopted.

The remission is also subject to the leak being repaired within the specified timeframe from the time the property owner has been notified, otherwise the property owner will be responsible for the cost of the lost water.

For residential properties, the Council is considering changing the specified timeframe to 30 calendar days.

We are asking your feedback on the amendments we need to make to that policy to help us support you.

Leak Remission Options

There are five options we are seeking feedback on:

Option 1: Include Residential Users in Existing Policy

The only change under this option would be to include residential users under the current policy. The current policy provides a 50 per cent remission on water bills due to leaks to commercial users.

This option means both residential and commercial users receive equal support in mitigating the financial impact of water leaks but there is some incentive to get the leak repaired as quickly as possible, as the user is responsible for 50 per cent of the price.

Option 2: Only Residential Uses Get a Remission of 50 per cent

Change the policy to exclude commercial customers, making residential users eligible for the 50 per cent leak remission.

This option focuses on providing financial relief solely to residential users who experience water leaks. By excluding commercial users, the policy aims to prioritise households, recognising that residential users may have less capacity to absorb the financial burden of unexpected high-water bills due to leaks.

Option 3: Only Residential Uses Get a Remission of 100 per cent

Implement a 100 per cent leak remission policy but exclude business users.

This option offers full financial relief for water leaks to residential users while excluding commercial users. This prioritises households, ensuring that they are fully protected from the financial impact of water leaks. By excluding business users, the policy acknowledges that commercial entities may have greater financial resilience and resources to manage such situations.

Option 4: Residential 100 per cent Commercial 50 per cent

Introduce a 100 per cent leak remission policy for residential users and retain the existing 50 per cent remission for commercial users.

This aims to provide full financial relief to residential users while maintaining the current level of support for commercial users. By offering 100 per cent remission to households, the policy ensures that residential users are protected from the financial impact of water leaks. At the same time, retaining the 50 per cent remission for commercial users acknowledges their needs while balancing the financial implications for the Council.

Option 5: All Uses Get a Remission of 100 per cent

Increase the remissions to 100 per cent of the cost of the leak water for all users.

This option proposes offering full financial relief to both residential and commercial users for larger water bills resulting from leaks. By covering the entire cost of the leaked water, this policy aims to eliminate the financial burden on all users. However, it does mean that there is less incentive for a user to get a leak repaired in a timely manner.

Summary of options for leaks remissions

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Include residential users in existing policy both get 50% remission	Accommodates residential users with no change for commercial users. Incentive to fix leak promptly.	Lower level of remissions for residential users who may be less able to pay.
Option 2: Only residential users get a remission of 50%	Helps residential users. Incentive to fix leak promptly.	Lower level of remissions for residential users who may be less able to pay. Commercial users get a change to how they have been treated to date.
Option 3: Only residential users get a remission of 100%	Maximum help for residential users who may be less able to pay. Incentive to fix leak promptly for commercial users.	Commercial users get a change to how they have been treated to date. Less incentive to fix leaks promptly for residential users.

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 4: Residential 100% Commercial 50%	No change for commercial users. Incentive to fix leak promptly for commercial users. Maximum help for residential users who may be less able to pay.	Less incentive to fix leaks promptly for residential users.
Option 5: All Uses Get a Remission of 100%	Maximum help for residential users who may be less able to pay.	Less incentive to fix leaks promptly for both residential and commercial users.

Additional policy changes we want your feedback on

For non-residential / commercial customers

Option one: Introduce a new rates remission policy for commercial customers who experience an increase (if any) in water billing costs due to the introduction of residential water billing. This aims to help the business for a set period of time.

Option two: Introduce a rates postponement policy for commercial customers who experience an increase in water billing costs due to the introduction of residential water billing to smooth the effect of this over a few years.

Which option do you prefer?

Proposed amendments to the Revenue and Financing Policy

Should a minimum charge be applied to very low users?

This recognises that there is a benefit of having a water connection and a cost to providing it.

Even if some households use very little or no water, they still benefit from being connected to the water network. A fixed yearly charge helps cover the cost of maintaining this infrastructure. In some cases, depending on the billing option, these households may end up paying nothing.

The Council is asking whether a minimum charge should still apply to these low users, to ensure all connected properties contribute fairly to the cost of the water network.

Should a part-charge continue to be applied to properties within 100 metres of a serviceable pipeline that are not connected?

Similarly to the situation above, currently a part-charge is applied to properties within 100 metres of a serviceable pipeline. Again, the availability of the water network adds value to these properties. Council is asking if this charge be continued.

Proposed amendment to fees and charges

Should NPDC continue to pay for water meter installations at existing properties with shared meters?

The Council will accommodate the installation of separate meters if it is possible.

Homeowners would still need to pay for any plumbing work on their private property to bring a separate pipe to the boundary.

If the new pipe is close to the existing meter, the Council can install a separate meter relatively easily.

Since the Council would have installed a separate meter during the water meter project if a separate pipe had already been in place, it may be fair to offer this option to households who choose to install a separate pipe now. This could be available for a limited time (e.g. one year after billing begins).

After this time any new meters would be at the property owners' expense, as is currently the case for new homes.

This approach would mean some ongoing Council costs beyond the main water meter project, which would need to be included in future budgets.

What happens next?

After the consultation period closes and submissions are heard, all feedback will be collated into a report to Council, who will then make decisions for mock billing at its meeting on 12 August 2025.

All final details and any changes to the policies will be determined before the end of the mock billing period.

Over the 12 months of mock billing, if you have concerns you can raise them with us. It's important to note that every single home connected to the water supply network and those on restricted flow will see their own household data on usage and the cost on your mock bill. This gives you time to fix any leaks and make changes to reduce water use ahead of actual billing in 2027.

Submissions on policy change matters will inform future decisions prior to the implementation of actual charging from 1 July 2027. Changes to policies will then be done as part of the Long-Term Plan 2027-2037.

Final tariff structure

The final tariff structure will be subject to:

- The Long-Term Plan 2027-2037.
- Applicable policy changes.
- Outcomes of the Local Waters Done Well process (establishment of new water service delivery entity).

For further reading on the policies and reports mentioned above, see the document library on the Have Your Say page

Timeline



Community Consultation
02 June – 20 June 2025

Public Hearings: **Dates TBC**

Report to Council: **10 July 2025**

Council decision on Water Charges for Mock Billing: **12 August 2025**

12-month Mock Billing period
01 July 2026 – 30 June 2027

Go Live Billing From **01 July 2027**

How you can Have Your Say

Complete our online submission form at npdc.govt.nz/HaveYourSay, or download a form from the website and return to submissions@npdc.govt.nz



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

