

## Your responsibilities when connected to our services

### 1. Overview

#### 1.1 At a glance

You have responsibilities when connected to our services. Our policy covers:

- what pipes you are responsible for and which ones we're responsible for
- conditions for staying connected
- what you need to do if you want to disconnect from our services
- how we manage unauthorised connections
- reasons why we might contact you or enter your property.

#### 1.2 Scope

Our policy applies to all customers who are connected to our services.

#### 1.3 Objective

- Our policy aims to improve the way you manage your connection to our services. It will help us protect our assets and improve customer services.

## 2. Policy in detail

### 2.1 Our services and charges

#### Services we offer

We provide the following services:

- drinking water
- recycled water
- disposal and treatment of wastewater
- transport of stormwater.

These services may differ depending on where your property is located and whether it's for residential or business purposes. We may also give you permission to discharge trade wastewater, harvest stormwater or conduct sewer mining.

#### Your connections

You have an approved connection to our services if:

- we've given you approval to connect
- your connection was made according to our conditions of approval
- you operate and maintain your connection in line with your conditions of connection, our [Customer Contract](#) and any additional service agreements you have with us.

#### The quality of our services

Our standards of service are outlined in our [Operating Licence](#).

If there are any special conditions or levels of service that apply to your connection, we'll list these in a separate *Connection agreement* with you. You must observe all the conditions in your agreement.

We can't always guarantee an uninterrupted service but do provide rebates when our services are interrupted. These rebates are listed in our [Customer Contract](#).

#### How we charge for our services

You pay charges when you're connected to our services. Our charges fall into three main categories:

1. Service charges:

- water
- wastewater (sewerage)
- stormwater – where applicable.

2. Usage charges:

- water
- recycled water – where applicable
- wastewater (sewerage) - applies to non-residential customers only.

3. Other charges:

- Trade waste for business customers
- Rouse Hill land charge if you're in our Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area.

## How we calculate wastewater charges for businesses

We'll apply a sewerage (wastewater) usage discharge factor (SUDF) to businesses and non-residential properties. The SUDF allows us to calculate how much wastewater you discharge based on the amount of water entering your property.

Customers who are exempt from wastewater service charges still pay wastewater usage charges.

## How do we bill you?

We'll bill you at least once every three months. Property owners are legally responsible for paying for our services, even if there are tenants in the property.

## 2.2 Our requirements for drinking and recycled water services

### Our metering requirements

All water connections (except those supplying fire sprinklers, hydrants and drenches) must be metered with our meters. If your connection provides water for domestic and commercial uses as well as fire services, the domestic and commercial service must be metered.

Our [water meter installation guide](#) shows approved locations for water meters. The owner of the property is responsible for ensuring the property is metered.

If you have a property with an existing unmetered water connection, we may exempt you from our requirements to install a water meter if it's too expensive to install the right pipework or meter. You must install a water meter when you redevelop your property or replace the house plumbing. We may install a water meter when carrying out maintenance work related to the service to the property.

### Our backflow protection requirements

All drinking and recycled water connections must have backflow containment protection. This reduces the backflow hazard your property might pose to our water supply.

Property owners are responsible for ensuring their connected property has the correct backflow prevention device on their water service. There's a backflow prevention device in our 20 and 25 mm meters and this satisfies our backflow protection requirement. These are fitted to properties with a low cross-connection hazard rating such as most stand-alone homes.

Owners of commercial or industrial properties and all other properties with an on-site process must get an accredited backflow plumber to assess the cross-connection hazard rating of the property. If you don't do this, we'll classify it as 'high hazard'.

Property owners who are required to install backflow prevention devices that are not part of our water meter, must obtain and test the devices in line with *AS/NZS 3500*. We may also direct you to test, install or repair a backflow device, in addition to the requirements of *AS/NZS 3500*. This work must be done by an accredited backflow plumber. If you don't install the correct backflow prevention at your property, we may disconnect your water supply. If you don't complete the annual inspections at your property, we may organise a plumber and charge you for the service.

## 2.3 Using our wastewater services

If you're connected to our wastewater system you may use it to discharge domestic quality wastewater from your home or business. Domestic quality wastewater generally includes wastewater from toilets, basins, showers, and non-commercial kitchen and laundries.

You can also apply to take water from our wastewater system and re-use it. Refer to our [Sewer mining](#) policy. If we agree to your proposal, we'll have a *Connection agreement* with you.

## 2.4 Using our trade wastewater services

You'll need our written permission before discharging trade wastewater into our wastewater system. Trade wastewater is wastewater produced in the course of non-residential activity and contains pollutants at a concentration greater than seen in domestic use.

We might ask you to install pre-treatment equipment and prove your wastewater quality meets the standard we set in your *Connection agreement*. We must approve any pre-treatment equipment, before you install it. If you generate greasy wastewater you must participate in our greasy waste management program (WasteID).

You must let us know immediately, if your wastewater will:

- exceed the discharge limits for any substance included in your agreement
- affect the quality of wastewater or stormwater entering our system
- harm our staff, services or assets
- harm the environment.

If you have an existing business with a trade waste agreement, you must apply for a new agreement if your wastewater will:

- exceed the discharge limits for any substance included in your agreement
- affect the quality of wastewater or stormwater entering our system
- harm our staff, services or assets
- harm the environment.

If you don't comply with all the trade wastewater conditions in your *Connection agreement*, we may:

- require you to develop and follow an effluent improvement program
- review your agreement and risk rating
- charge you more
- suspend your agreement
- issue non-compliance notice, fine or prosecute you
- restrict or disconnect your water or wastewater connection.

If you have an existing trade waste agreement, you must tell us if your property becomes vacant or is no longer used for the purpose specified in the trade waste agreement.

## 2.5 Using our stormwater services

You're our stormwater customer if your property is in our stormwater catchment areas or has a direct connection to our stormwater system.

You can't discharge wastewater from homes or businesses into any stormwater pipe or structure. You must ensure that all stormwater that drains to our stormwater catchment system area is free from pollutants such as oil, grease, paint, soil and sediment, detergent or wastewater.

If anything happens that may harm the quality of stormwater in our stormwater system, you must let us know immediately.

You can apply to take water from our stormwater systems and re-use it. Refer to our [stormwater harvesting](#) information. If we agree to your proposal you'll have a *Connection agreement* with us.

You must not discharge stormwater or roof water to our wastewater system.

## 2.6 Responsibilities for maintenance

### What do we maintain?

We maintain our pipes and structures.

We'll make free repairs on leaks on your water pipes located between the point of connection to our main and one metre along the pipe inside your property boundary if:

- your connection is authorised
- it's not a fire service, and extended private service, a private joint service or a combined service
- we can access your pipe
- the damage is not negligent
- it's not connected to a privately-owned water main such a community title
- the pipework is installed according to the appropriate codes, regulations and standards.

If we make repairs to your pipes and we find that any of these conditions aren't met, we'll bill you for the repairs.

We own the water meter and will replace it periodically to keep it accurate. We'll make free repairs to collapsed private wastewater pipes where the collapse is located within a footpath or roadway. A licensed plumber must confirm that the fault cannot be repaired without excavation and replacement of the collapsed wastewater pipes.

However, if the problem is assessed by us as able to be repaired without excavation, you're responsible for the cost of repair. We won't reimburse any plumbing costs. We won't provide this service for unauthorised wastewater systems installed contrary to appropriate codes, regulations and standards.

We own the junction where your wastewater pipe connects to our main, unless your *Connection agreement* says otherwise.

### Who is responsible for private pipes and equipment?

A property owner is responsible for all their private service except the water meter. A property owner's private water and wastewater service starts at the point of connection to our main. Property owners are responsible for:

- ensuring water services are used according to any applicable laws
- maintaining private water and wastewater services from the point where they connect to our system, this includes any joint or encroaching services you benefit from
- paying for damage caused if private services fail
- keeping the water meter free from damage and maintaining access to it
- maintaining backflow prevention devices that aren't part of the water meter
- maintaining private equipment we require as a condition of connection
- paying our charges.

You can engage a private plumber at your cost to repair any part of your private water service, even if it's between our main and a water meter inside your property boundary. Other maintenance responsibilities are set out in the [Customer Contract](#).

## 2.7 Changing existing connections

### What should you do to change an existing connection?

You must apply to us for written permission before you:

- make new connections to our pipes or structures
- disconnect from our pipes
- alter existing connections
- move or change the size of the water meter
- change the quality, nature or timing of your wastewater discharge
- build near our pipes or structures.

## 2.8 Dealing with problems and complaints

### What should you do if you have a problem or complaint?

If you have a problem or complaint about our products, services or staff, call us on 13 20 92 during business hours or use our [Contact us](#) form. Contact your Business Customer Representative if we've allocated one to your business. Refer to our [Customer complaints policy](#) for more information on how we handle complaints.

### How will we respond to unauthorised connections?

If we think there's an unauthorised connection at your property, we'll send you a letter, asking you to fix the unauthorised connection and any damage to our assets within 21 days.

If you don't comply with instructions in any notice we give you, we may restrict your water supply or disconnect the unauthorised connection.

If you bypass a water or wastewater service restriction or disconnection made by us, we may:

- disconnect you
- fine you for an unauthorised connection
- fine you for water theft
- recover any costs we incur disconnecting your service or doing work to ensure it complies with our policy, connection requirements, *Connection agreement* and *Customer Contract*.

## 2.9 Reasons we will contact you or enter your property

### When will Sydney Water contact you?

Common reasons we'll contact you about your connection are to:

- change your *Connection agreement*
- alter your sewerage usage discharge factor
- remind you to test your backflow containment device or send the test result to us.

### When does Sydney Water need access to your property?

Common reasons why you must give us access to your property include to:

- repair your water service between your connection and one metre along the pipe inside your property
- maintain our pipes, equipment or assets
- read or replace water meters
- inspect equipment that's a condition of your connection, such as backflow prevention containment devices, wastewater tanks, pumps, treatment devices or discharge points monitoring wastewater quality.

### 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Area of operation</b>	The area of operations defined in section 10(1) of the <i>Sydney Water Act 1994</i> .
<b>IPART</b>	The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW constituted by the <i>Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992</i> . The independent body that oversees regulation in the water, gas, electricity and public transport industries in NSW.
<b>Minor service extension</b>	The construction of pipes and structures that add to the existing water and wastewater systems. They are not extensions constructed under either our Section 73 compliance certificate (or 'developer') or Priority Sewerage Program (PSP) processes.
<b>Operating Licence</b>	A licence issued under the <i>Sydney Water Act 1994</i> that explains how Sydney Water should do its work.
<b>Priority Sewerage Program (PSP)</b>	Sydney Water's program for improving wastewater services to unsewered urban areas identified as environmentally sensitive. Many PSP services are provided by pressure sewer systems.
<b>Major infrastructure</b>	Works associated with the construction of permanent storage reservoirs, treatment plants, pumping stations and trunk mains.
<b>Minimum reticulation</b>	The minimum size main required under the Codes for the height and zoning of the development only. This applies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for water and recycled water mains - to the section of water main providing frontage for each lot in the development. (Frontage to each lot is generally from boundary to boundary but may include the lead-in or lead-out main where the developer is the only beneficiary).</li> <li>• for wastewater - to the section of wastewater main from one metre inside the first lot in the development to one metre past the last lot in the development but may include the lead-in or lead-out main where the developer is the only beneficiary.</li> </ul>

#### 3.1 References

Document type	Title
Legislation	<i>Sydney Water Act 1994</i>
Policies and procedures	<i>Minor Service Extension Procedure</i> <i>Property Development Connection Applications Policy</i> <i>Property Development Connection Applications Guidelines</i>
Forms and checklists	Minor service extension application form Minor service extension fact sheet