



Paying water charges

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In NSW, your landlord can only ask you to pay water usage charges if the minimum criteria have been met.

Minimum criteria

The minimum criteria for passing on water usage charges are:

- the rental premises must be individually metered (or water is delivered by vehicle), and
- the charges must not exceed the amount billed for water usage by the water supplier, and
- the rental premises must meet required 'water efficiency' standards.

Water efficiency standards

A rental property is only considered water efficient if it meets these standards.

Water efficiency devices	Minimum standard required
Internal cold water taps and single mixer taps for kitchen sinks and bathroom hand basins	A maximum flow rate of nine litres per minute
Showerheads	A maximum flow rate of nine litres per minute
No leaking taps	No leaking taps anywhere on the premises at the start of the tenancy or when the other water efficiency measures are installed

This flow rate does not apply to other taps in the premises including bathtub taps, laundry taps, outside taps for the garden, or taps for washing machines and dishwashers.

Proving water efficiency

Water efficiency measure should appear on the condition report. If you're not sure, ask the landlord or agent to provide some evidence. If you'd like to test it yourself, turn the tap on completely and the flow rate should be less than nine litres in a minute.

Water consumption charges

You are only responsible to pay water usage charges. A water usage charge is based on the volume of water supplied to the residential premise.

Water can be supplied to the premise in different ways depending on which services are available.

Time to pay

When it is time to pay the water bill, the landlord or agent will provide you with a copy of the bill or evidence of how the usage was calculated, within three months.

You have 21 days to pay the amount owing.

Important things to know:

- If you remove or tamper with the water efficiency devices you still have to pay for water usage and you may have to pay to replace them.
- If you think your water bill is too high, you can contact your local water provider about average water usage.
- Water billing periods are unlikely to align with tenancy agreements. It is important that the water meter reading be noted on the condition report at the start and end of each tenancy to make sure you're not paying for another tenant's water usage.
- Social housing tenants should contact Housing NSW for water usage payments.
- These provisions apply to all tenancies, regardless of the terms of any existing leases.
- Water usage must be paid separate to rent.

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