

Policy Document

**COMMUNITY WASTE WATER MANAGEMENT
CUSTOMER CHARTER POLICY**

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| References and related Policies & Procedures: | | |
| Rating Policy FM 07.01 Hardship Policy Complaints Policy CWMS Pricing Policy Statement FM 07.15 Local Government Act, 1999 Water Industry Act 2012 SA Public Health Act (2011) and associated Regulations LGA Code for Established and Applying Property Units as a Factor for the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems (2006) ESCOSA Model Customer Charter (2015) Water Retail Code | | |

Keywords: Private Works, Reimbursement, Quote

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The District Council of Streaky Bay provides and maintains a Community Wastewater Management Scheme (CWMS) in the township of Streaky Bay. In all other areas responsibility for sewerage and wastewater service management rests with the landowner.

The Water Industry Act 2012 requires Councils that operate a Wastewater Management Scheme to develop a customer charter that fulfils the requirements of the Water Retail Code.

The Water Retail Code-Minor and Intermediate Retailers, developed by the Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA), contains a detailed description of your rights and our responsibilities in providing you with sewerage services can be found at www.escosa.sa.gov.au

2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are:

- To provide Council's Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) customers with a clear understanding of the standards of service they can expect and their rights and responsibilities.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Council – Council means the “District Council of Streaky Bay”.

CWMS – Community Wastewater Management Scheme.

CWMS Infrastructure – all facilities owned by the Council and used for the purposes of collecting, treating and re-use of septic wastewater.

CWMS Service Charge – an annual service charge imposed by the Council pursuant to Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999 to recover the costs of providing the CWMS.

CWMS Augmentation Charge – a charge raised by Council pursuant to Section 188 (1)(a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 1999.

CWMS Connection Point – the infrastructure that joins the CWMS to a property boundary *“the extent of a connection point runs from the CWMS main to the property boundary, and does not include any mains line extensions. An excess length may constitute both a line extension and connection point”*.

CWMS Main – any drainage line or pipe associated with the CWMS excluding the connection point.

Access to CWMS – the ability for an allotment to be physically connected to the scheme (via the installation of a CWMS connection point).

Vacant Allotment – an allotment upon which no dwelling, structure commercial or industrial premises (or any other habitable structure) is located or encroaches.

4.0 SERVICE PROVISION

The Council is responsible for the provision of the service from the point where your wastewater system connects to the CWMS. The indoor plumbing, the maintenance of the septic tank and pipe work leading up to the CWMS connection point is the responsibility of the property owner.

5.0 SEWERAGE REMOVAL (QUALITY)

The Council will;

- Remove sewage and wastewater from your property in accordance with all relevant health and environmental regulatory requirements.
- Use our best endeavours to minimise the frequency and duration of interruptions or limitations to your sewerage service.
- Provide you with information on any planned interruptions to your sewerage service at least 4 business days prior to us undertaking any works or maintenance.
- Provide an emergency contact number on our website for you to call in the event of an emergency or interruption to the supply of your sewerage service.

The Customer will:

- Report any spills, leaks or incursions to us as soon as possible by calling the emergency contact number displayed on our website.
- Not discharge restricted wastes, pollutants or unauthorised trade waste or wastewater into Council's sewerage infrastructure

Where the scheme is not in place or where connection is not possible then;

The Customer will;

- Manage removal of sewage and wastewater from the property in accordance with all health and environmental regulatory requirements

Where a scheme is either not in place or where connection is not possible then the land owner will manage the removal of sewage and wastewater from the property in accordance with all relevant health and environmental regulatory requirements.

6.0 FEES AND CHARGES

Council will:

- Publish our Price List, which sets out all of the fees and charges associated with the sale and supply of your ritual service each year by the 31st August. These fees and charges will be reviewed each year as part of the Annual Business Plan. This list will be available on Council's website www.streakybay.sa.gov.au. We will also make this available at our office at 29 Alfred Terrace, Streaky Bay.
- Publish our pricing policy Statement, which outlines how our fees and charges are compliant with the ESCOSA's pricing principles set out in its Price Determination each year by 31 July on our website at www.streakybay.sa.gov.au. We will also make this available at our office at 29 Alfred Terrace, Ceduna.
- In the case that any fees and charges set out in the Price List change, Council will publish these on our website 3 days prior to these fees and charges taking effect, and make these available at our office.

6.1 CWMS PRICING

Council must cover the full cost of operating and maintaining the service and this includes interest payments on loans raised to upgrade the CWMS schemes. Council must also allow for the future capital replacement of the system.

Council has committed to sustainable charging for CWMS which has been determined by the LGA and other external sources.

6.2 ANNUAL SERVICE CHARGE

6.2.1 CWMS Service Charge Formula

Property enjoying continued / existing CWMS services, or lying within the defined scheme boundary,

OR

Property which are being provided with new/expanded CWMS services, or will be lying within the completed scheme boundary – from the first full financial year (1 July) post commissioning.

This fee is levied on all Property Owners (per property unit) whether connected or otherwise, developed land or vacant land.

Property unit is determined by the “Code for Establishing and Applying Property Units as a Factor of the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems” published by the Local Government Association of South Australia, April 2006.

The specific formula is:

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|---|
| Operational Expenditure per scheme (i.e; repairs, maintenance, staff, vehicles, etc) |
| + |
| Depreciation per scheme |
| + |
| Interest on Loans per scheme |
| = |
| Gross Expenditure |
| <i>DIVIDED BY</i> |
| The sum of all CWMS Units per scheme |
| = |
| <i>Service Charge per Connection Unit</i> |
| <i>Noting that we do not recover capital in the year of expenditure – it is adjusted in the following year in an increased depreciation charge for that particular scheme that had the Capital Expenditure Undertaken</i> |

6.2.2 CWMS Service Charge Property Units

Pursuant to Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999 and in accordance with Regulation 12(4)(b) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2013, the Council imposes annual service charges for the CWMS.

Council will require the property owner to pay the CWMS Service Charge per allocated *Property Unit(s)* as defined in the LGA Code for Establishing and Applying Property Units as a factor for the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems (LGA 2006).

6.3 CONNECTION FEE

There shall be no charge for an *application to connect*

7.0 CONCESSIONS, REBATES AND EXEMPTIONS

7.1 SEWERAGE CONCESSIONS

Sewerage concessions are administered by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. To check your eligibility for current sewerage concessions, assistance or advice visit www.dcsi.gov.au/concessions, phone the Concessions Hotline on 1800 307 758 or email concessions@dcsl.sa.gov.au

8.0 CONNECTIONS/MAINS LINE EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS

8.1 Connection Register/Plans

Council will maintain a register of all connections

Usually, all existing allotments within the CWMS service areas have been provided with connection points installed at the time of the schemes installation. A series of Plans for the existing CWMS collection networks are available at www.streakybay.sa.gov.au.

8.2 New Connections to Existing, Unserviced Allotments

Some allotments may have been established without existing connection points or have existing onsite systems which are required to be connected to CWMS as the scheme expands or becomes available in new areas.

Where new connections are provided by Council to existing allotments:

Council will:

- Install the appropriate connection to the property boundary
- Invoice the property owner following installation the advised connection fee (if applicable)
- Apply the CWMS Service Charge, effective from 1 July following installation of infrastructure, unless otherwise determined by Council at the time of application.
- Upon approval of the wastewater system application, permit development to be connected by a Council approved plumber to your allotments existing connection point
- Install new connection points with costs payable by the land owner. CWMS connection works are charged as per Council's Private Works Policy
- Where the connection point has been installed in a new scheme or a major scheme extension, Council will manage the connection process with their nominated contractor. The cost for this connection will be to the landowner's account. Council may determine to make payment options available for land-owners.

Property Owner will:

- Connect to the Scheme within 12 months of the infrastructure being installed
- Ensure that an existing septic is desludged prior to the new connection being made
- Where the connection point has been replaced in an existing scheme, engage a Council compliant contractor to finalise the connection between your existing infrastructure and the CWMS connection. A certificate of Compliance will be required to be sent to Council upon completion.
- Pay the appropriate individual cost of connection where the connection point has been installed in a new scheme or a major scheme extension and physical connection to this point has been managed by Council. The certificate of Compliance will be held by Council on completion.

8.3 Development, Re-development and Extensions to CWMS Collection Networks

8.3.1 Approvals and Applications

Approvals for all connections to CWMS and on-site systems are required under the SA Public Health Act 2011 including connections of grease arrestors, property pumps and any other alteration or inclusion to be installed as a requirement of connection to CWMS.

All applications/requests for the installation of all new CWMS Connection Points and CWMS line extension and/or modification must be received by Council.

All connections and infrastructure associated with and required as part of a land division or land use Development Application, will be attached and form part of the Decision Notification Form outlining the physical works required and engineered plans for the new CWMS infrastructure demonstrating compliant design, layout and connection to the existing scheme must be provided for approval.

All applicants must provide Council with all the relevant information about your supply address (as outlined on the Application to Connect Form)

8.3.2 Single Dwellings (Vacant Allotment)

Where an existing CWMS connection services a vacant allotment, Council must receive the Augmentation Charge applicable as outlined in this Policy, prior to Council approving the installation of any new waste control system(s) that will be connected to the existing CWMS.

Where CWMS connection point(s) are required to be installed to service a vacant allotment, the Council must receive the CWMS Augmentation Charge applicable as outlined in this policy and the CWMS infrastructure must be installed in accordance with this Policy prior to Council approving the connection of any new waste control system(s) connected to the existing CWMS.

8.3.3 Multiple Dwellings

Where an existing CWMS connection services an allotment for multiple dwellings, Council must receive the Augmentation Charge applicable as outlined in this Policy, prior to Council approving the installation of any new waste control system(s) that will be connected to the existing CWMS.

Where CWMS connection point(s) are required to be installed to service an allotment for multiple dwellings, the Council must receive the CWMS Augmentation Charge applicable as outlined in this policy and the CWMS infrastructure must be installed in accordance with this Policy prior to Council approving the connection of any new waste control system(s) connected to the existing CWMS.

9.0 APPLICATION OF AUGMENTATION AND CONNECTIONS

- 9.1** Application of these clauses will apply to all development.
- 9.2** Large scale developments may also, if necessary, be required to contribute (in addition to the Augmentation Charge) to the upgrading of infrastructure where anticipated loadings exceed the capability of the existing scheme.
- 9.3** Council is not responsible for the provision of the physical Connection Point to any allotment or pipe work extensions from allotments to existing main CWMS lines, or extensions to existing main CWMS lines. All works are to be undertaken in accordance with SA Water guidelines and the relevant Australian Standards and any other requirements requested by Council.
- 9.4**

10.0 DISCONNECTIONS

Subject to any applicable regulatory requirements that prohibit disconnection, we will only disconnect your sewerage service if:

- you request the connection
- there is a public health, environment or safety risk to our services from your connection point (e.g. backflow risk or unauthorised industrial waste discharge)
- you are found to be using the services illegally or have refused entry to person authorised to read your meter or undertake maintenance or repairs in accordance with relevant regulatory instruments

In the event that Council receives a Development Application for the demolition of your structure serviced by a CWMS, Council may impose certain conditions to engage the services of a suitably qualified tradesperson, to isolate the property at its point of connection to the CWMS, from the CWMS to ensure that the CWMS is protected from inappropriate inflows. Any such activity would be required to be easily reversible, should your property require re-connection at some time in the future.

Where you request a disconnection (and it is not prohibited), we will use our best endeavours to issue you with a final account in accordance with your request. We will inform you if you are still required to pay our "service availability charge" when you request the disconnection.

11.0 TERMINATION OF CONTRACT FOR CWMS

Council will:

- confer on you the right to terminate your contract with us for the supply of sewerage services
- to inform you of any relevant fees or charges payable as a result of your termination

You will:

- Provide at least 10 business days' notice of your intention to terminate your contract with us for the supply of sewerage services
- Pay any relevant fees or charges

12.0 ENTRY TO YOUR PROPERTY

Council will:

- provide you with at least 24 hours' notice if we need to enter your supply address for the purposes of connecting, disconnecting, restricting, inspecting, repairing or testing your sewerage service unless deemed urgent and negotiated accordingly.

You will:

- ensure safe access for Council (and/or its contractors) to the property, including but not limited to the property area reasonably required to be accessed to perform the required actions, this will be taken to mean the portion of your property where the infrastructure is to be established for Councils CWMS services

13.0 BILLING AND PAYMENTS

Council will:

- include your sewerage charges on your rates notice, (separately identified), issued quarterly, unless otherwise agreed
- give you 30 days to pay your bill

- offer you the ability to pay your bills in accordance with the provisions contained on your rate notice

You will:

- pay your bill by the payment due date unless we have an agreed written and authorised payment arrangement (DCSB-07-78 Application for Payment Arrangement)
- pay any fee you incur if any of your payment methods are dishonoured

14.0 PAYMENT ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Council will:

- provide you with the ability to pay your bills by instalments or enter into a flexible payment arrangement
- offer you the ability to make payments towards future bills, grant payment extensions and agree to have your bill redirected to another person (where that person agrees)
- inform you about, and assess your eligibility for our Hardship Policy if requested

You will:

- inform Council if you are having difficulty paying your bills prior to the due date

Further details on our Hardship Policy are available on our website at www.streakybay.sa.gov.au or by visiting our office at 29 Alfred Terrace, Streaky Bay. We will provide you with a copy of our Hardship Policy upon request.

15.0 REVIEWING YOUR BILL/BILLING DISPUTES

Council will:

- not commence our debt collection processes where a bill (or part of a bill) is in dispute
- review your bill and inform you of the outcome of our review within 30 business days of your request
- inform you about our independent external dispute resolution body when or if you remain dissatisfied following our review

You will:

- pay any portion of your bill while your bill is being reviewed or any future bills that become due

Overcharging

Council will:

- inform you within 30 business days of becoming aware of you being overcharged as a result of an act or omission by us and credit the overcharged amount to your next bill
- in the event of sale of a property, advise conveyancers of payments made in advance, to be taken into account on transfer and settlement of the property

Undercharging

Council will:

- limit the amount we recover from you to the amount undercharged in the 12 months prior to the error being advised to you in writing
- list the undercharged amount as a separate item in a special bill or in your next bill with an explanation of that amount and, if requested, offer you an extended time to pay the amount

- not charge you interest on the undercharged amount

16.0 DEBT RECOVERY

Council will:

- only commence debt collection/recovery action where you have failed to pay your bill(s) by the due date and you have not contacted us to discuss a payment extension or other payment arrangements (including eligibility for our Hardship Policy).

You will:

- contact us if you are having difficulty paying your bills prior to the due date

17.0 COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Council will:

- respond or acknowledge your complaint or enquiry within 10 business days
- refer you to our Manager Corporate Services if you are not satisfied with our initial response or resolution or, if required, escalate your complaint to the Chief Executive Officer
- advise you of your option to escalate your complaint to our nominated independent dispute resolution body and provide you with the details of that organisation

Further details on our complaints policy and procedure are available on our website at www.streakybay.sa.gov.au or by visiting our office at 29 Alfred Terrace, Streaky Bay.

18.0 CONTACTING US

If you need to know more about us or the content of this Policy, please contact Council on the details below:

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| General Enquiries | 08 86261001 |
| Faults & Emergencies | 0428 318 887 |
| Website | www.streakybay.sa.gov.au |
| Email | dcstreaky@streakybay.sa.gov.au |
| Address | 29 Alfred Terrace, Streaky Bay |
| Business Hours | 9am – 5pm, Monday –Friday (closed Public Holidays) |

19.0 DELEGATIONS

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Connection Register | Manager, Regulatory Services | Maintenance and accuracy of |
| New Connections | Manager, District Services | Approval |
| Mains Extensions | Manager, District Services | Approval |
| Augmentation Fee | Manager, Regulatory Services | Application, Payment, Exemption, Rebate |
| Policy Review | Manager, District Services | |
| Septic Tank Desludging | Manager, District Services | Contract and Desludging |
| Septic Tank Maintenance | Manager, Regulatory Services | Compliance |
| Grease Trap Arrestors | Manager, Regulatory Services | Register and Desludging |

20.0 AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council's principal office during ordinary business hours at no charge. This policy will also be available on Council's website www.streakybay.sa.gov.au

21.0 REFERENCES

DCSB-Form-05-24 – Application to connect to Community Waste Water Management Scheme
DCSB-Form-07-78 – Application for Payment Arrangement
DCSB-FM-07.16 – CWMS Pricing Policy Statement