



Landlords Fact Sheet on WATER USAGE



The biggest and time consuming issue we have in Queensland rental properties is Water Usage. It is probably the most hotly debated and misunderstood topic there is.

Where we are governed with strict clear guidelines under the RTA Act - property owners now have the authority to charge tenants for water usage.

The STRICT GUIDELINES in the legislation can make it very hard to enforce and chasing tenants for water payments is one of our full time jobs. So to clarify it a bit better these facts will help you to determine if, how and when you can charge your tenants for water usage and how much.

Fact 1 - Billing Policy

In Queensland Unity water bills the owner of the property. The bills are sent directly to the property owner. You must pay the bill in full, irrespective of whether you will be on-charging the tenant.

Fact 2 - Water Usage Only

You can only pass on charges that incur for WATER USAGE. You cannot charge the tenants for the sewerage or water access charges.

Fact 3 - Must be Water Compliant

If you wish to charge the tenants for the water usage your property must be water compliant - you can find more details visit <http://www.waterrating.gov.au/>. This compliance certificate can be obtained through us by our qualified plumbers. They will check all taps, sinks, showers & baths to make sure they meet the "WELS Scheme" and are water compliant, approximate call out costs start from \$88.00 incl GST plus then parts required to make your property compliant.

Fact 4 - Repayments

Once your property is water compliant, to claim the reimbursement from your tenants for water usage you will have to provide us with a copy of your water bill once you have paid the bill. We then calculate the amount we have to invoice the tenants for. Legislation states that they have 30 days to pay. If they do not pay the invoice they are in breach of their tenancy agreement.



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Faulty plumbing can void your Claim

In the event of worn out washers, toilet flush system becoming faulty or other routine incidents we may pick up for our inspections these faulty items can void your claim for re-imburement and on-charging the tenant. The tenant can put forward an argument to avoid paying the water usage bill. So make sure that if we report something is not working correctly that you get it fixed asap to keep your property running on track.

Leaks and your Tenants Rights

One of our most re-occurring water bill complaints is when there is a noticeable kilolitre change from one quarter to the next. For example 123 Real Estate St, Caboolture their first quarter in the property was 10 kilolitres of water use. The following quarter without any changes to the number of occupants to the property their next bill was for 46 kilolitres. This is an indicator to us that there may be a problem with leaks at your property.

We will then give you a call and organise for our plumber to attend the property and have a look at the toilets, taps and connections from the water meter to the house. If the leak is deemed to be from the water meter on the council side of the property we will then call the council and have them attend.

Buying Compliant Appliances

When upgrading your appliances always look for the Star rating. This will ensure the maximum savings long term for you, the tenants and the environment.

