

Concealed Leak Policy

1. PURPOSE

Queensland Urban Utilities recognises that the cost associated with a Concealed Leak is unexpected. This policy outlines the Financial Assistance that may be offered to a Customer that has experienced a Concealed Leak on his/her property.

2. APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

This is an operational policy which is for internal and external use, effective for applications received by Queensland Urban Utilities from 1 May 2019.

This Policy will be made available on our external website.

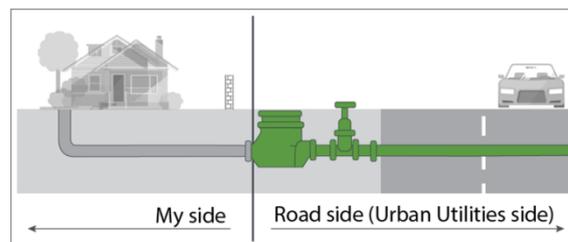
3. SCOPE

A Concealed Leak is an underground water leak in the Private Plumbing pipework servicing your property. These leaks occur on your side of the water meter, up to and including where your pipes connect to the meter. These leaks are usually underground and hidden from view, such as within concrete or under lawns and driveways. There are often no visible signs of dampness or soaking where an occupant could reasonably be expected to know of the leak's existence.

High consumption of water at a property may mean that there is a Concealed Leak at your property. If our quarterly reading of your meter identifies that water consumption at the property is higher than usual, wherever possible, we will notify you of the higher consumption, most commonly via a letter.

For information on how to check for Concealed Leaks, please visit our website:

www.urbanutilities.com.au/faults-and-interruptions/plumbing-problems/leak-on-your-property



4. RELATED LEGISLATION

- *South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 (Qld)*
- *South East Queensland Customer Water and Wastewater Code (2017)*

5. POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 Eligibility Criteria and Application for Financial Assistance

A Customer **who may be eligible** for Financial Assistance under this policy includes the following property owners:

- a Residential Owner-Occupier;
- a Residential Owner-Occupier who is an Eligible Pensioner;
- a Residential Non-Owner occupier of a privately-owned property;
- a Trade Waste Customer (subject to the exclusions in this Policy);
- a Not for Profit Organisation or Registered Charity; and
- a Sporting Club or Association.

A Non-Residential Property Owner (other than a Trade Waste Customer) is not eligible to apply for Financial Assistance.

To be eligible for Financial Assistance, a Customer must meet the following criteria:

1. The Concealed Leak must be fixed/repaired by a licensed plumber within one (1) month of:
 - the Customer finding/identifying a Concealed Leak at the property; or
 - being notified by Queensland Urban Utilities of higher than usual water usage at the property; or
 - being notified by Queensland Urban Utilities (or a representative) of the possibility of leak at the property.
2. The Customer must not have received Financial Assistance for a Concealed Leak for the same property within a period of (3) years, from the date that an adjustment was applied to the property owner's billing account.
3. The Customer must make an application via the online [Concealed Leak Application Form](#) or in writing to Queensland Urban Utilities within six (6) months of:
 - finding a Concealed Leak at the property; or
 - being notified by Queensland Urban Utilities (or a representative) of higher than usual water usage at the property; or
 - being notified of the possibility of a leak being present.
4. The Customer must provide Queensland Urban Utilities with documented evidence showing that a licensed plumber has repaired the leak (i.e. a licensed plumber's invoice); or a report from a suitably qualified plumber from a charitable organisation (e.g. Home Assist or ACRO).

Note: An Authorised Representative may make an application for Financial Assistance on behalf of a Customer.

5.2 Financial Assistance Assessment and Calculation

When assessing a Customer's application made under Section 5.1 of this policy and calculating the relevant Financial Assistance, Queensland Urban Utilities will:

- assess each application against the Eligibility Criteria and Specific Exclusions;
- consider up to two (2) consecutive billing periods, being the period in which the Concealed Leak was repaired and the previous billing period;
- compare the increased water consumption with how much water is normally used at the property (by assessing usage against a comparable billing period, average daily usage or other reasonable methodology as determined by us);
- apply the applicable Financial Assistance to your water and sewerage account; and
- offer an interest-free payment plan for any remaining charges on your account not covered by this policy.

For more information visit
www.urbanutilities.com.au
or call 13 26 57

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5.3 Financial Assistance Overview

Approved Customers that QUU determine meet the Eligibility Criteria will receive the relevant Financial Assistance (for up to two consecutive billing periods only) outlined below.

Approved Customer	Covered under Policy	Financial Assistance provided by QUU	
		QUU Tiered Charges	State Bulk Water Charges
Eligible Pensioner (owner-occupied residential property)	✓	100% ✓	80% ✓
Residential owner-occupied properties	✓	100% ✓	✗ No Financial Assistance
Residential non-owner occupied properties	✓		
Registered charities and not-for-profit community organisations	✓		
Sporting clubs	✓		
Non-residential and commercial properties	✗	✗ No Financial Assistance for water charges; ✓ Excess Trade Waste Charges only [^]	

[^] Trade Waste Customers may be eligible for an adjustment of Trade Waste Charges where the eligibility criteria have been met under section 5.4 of this Policy.

The Financial Assistance provided to an Approved Customer represents 100% of the QUU Tiered Water Consumption Charges (billed as Distributor-Retailer charges) for the estimated cost of the Concealed Leak as determined by us.

The Financial Assistance provided to an Approved Customer (other than an Eligible Pensioner) will not include the State Bulk Water Charge component of the Concealed Leak cost.

Note - Access or service charges are not impacted by a Concealed Leak, so no financial assistance is applicable towards these charges.

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5.4 Trade Waste Customers

We may also provide Financial Assistance by adjusting Trade Waste Charges where:

- the Trade Waste Charge is calculated based on a percentage of water measured through the property's water meter; and
- Trade Waste Charges increased because water consumption volumes used to calculate the Trade Waste Charge increased as a result of the Concealed Leak; and
- the water lost due to the Concealed Leak has not been discharged to the sewer (such as a leak that has occurred in the pipework between the water meter and the Trade Waste producing premises).

Queensland Urban Utilities will review Trade Waste applications on a case-by-case basis.

5.5 Specific Exclusions

Queensland Urban Utilities will not provide Financial Assistance to a Customer in the following situations:

Situations where Financial Assistance is not provided	
✘	If a leak (including a Concealed Leak) occurs at a property that does not meet the eligibility criteria of an Approved Customer as defined in section 5.1.
✘	If a leak occurs within a dwelling or building on the property, including leaks from internal water fittings and appliances such as taps, toilets and other water appliances.
✘	Leaks from external water fittings including hoses, hose pipes, external taps and fittings, hot water systems, sprinklers or irrigation systems.
✘	Leaking solar panels or the pipework supplying them.
✘	Leaks in water tanks that are plumbed to the drinking water supply.
✘	Swimming pools, spas and other water features and the fittings or pipework supplying them.
✘	When the Customer receives Financial Assistance for the cost of water lost due to the Concealed Leak under an Insurance Policy or any other benefit.
✘	If the water lost is due to vandalism, theft or carelessness (e.g. hose left running).
✘	If the leak (including a Concealed Leak) is caused by or could reasonably have been caused by, construction, excavation, building, landscaping, concreting, development, renovation or other similar activity on the property within the previous six (6) months.
✘	Leaks (including a Concealed Leak) in a Private Drinking Water Main (Off-Line Main or OLM).

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6. DEFINITIONS

Approved Customer means a Customer that Queensland Urban Utilities has determined has met the Eligibility Criteria for receiving Financial Assistance.

Authorised Representative is a person for whom Queensland Urban Utilities has received an Authority to Act on behalf of the property owner; or a solicitor or property manager who has been engaged to act on behalf of a property owner.

Concealed Leak has the meaning identified in section 3 of this policy.

Customer is a customer of Queensland Urban Utilities identified in section 5.1 of this policy (or his or her Authorised Representative) who is entitled to make an application for Financial Assistance.

Eligibility Criteria is the criteria identified in section 5.1 of this policy.

Eligible Pensioner is a Residential Owner-Occupied Property Owner registered and approved (by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran's Affairs) to receive the Queensland Government Pensioner Water Subsidy on a Queensland Urban Utilities account for the property at the time the Concealed Leak occurred.

Financial Assistance is the financial assistance provided to an Approved Customer which is identified in sections 5.3 of this policy (the assistance may or may not include the State Bulk Water Charges).

Non-Residential means the non-residential and commercial rating and billing categories for properties where it has been determined by Queensland Urban Utilities that the land use is intended for use other than residential purposes.

Non-Residential Property Owner means a Property Owner of a property which is used for Non-Residential purposes.

Not-for-Profit Organisation or Registered Charity means an organisation or association that does not earn profits for its owners or members and is:

- a. an incorporated or unincorporated 'not-for-profit' organisation or association; or
- b. a company limited by guarantee that has been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a charity, tax-exempt fund or deductible gift recipient; or
- c. an organisation registered on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Register as a charity and solely operating for a charitable purpose which:
 - i. does not earn money from a commercial activity or source;
 - ii. must be directly for public benefit.

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Private Drinking Water Main (Off Line Mains or OLM) means a privately-owned water main (not owned or maintained by Queensland Urban Utilities) that is constructed, owned and maintained by the owners of the properties that they service; and may be located on another property or road to supply water to a property.

Private Plumbing means privately owned water infrastructure (not owned or maintained by Queensland Urban Utilities) connecting a property to our network and includes the pipework leading up to the water meter and the connection to the meter, but not the water meter itself.

Property Owner means the registered owner of a property where a Concealed Leak occurred.

Queensland Government Pensioner Water Subsidy means where an eligible pensioner has made application to Queensland Urban Utilities and has been approved by the State Government to receive a subsidy for water access and usage charges at their residential owner-occupied property. Further information can be found on our website.

QUU Tiered Water Consumption Charges means Queensland Urban Utilities' tiered charge that is billed to a customer per kilolitre (kL) of water usage (by example 1 kL = 1000 litres) which is identified on an account as the "*Distributor-Retailer charges*".

Residential means the property has a residential rating and billing category; and where it has been determined by Queensland Urban Utilities that the intended land use is for a residential purpose.

Residential Owner-Occupier is a Property Owner who occupies a Residential property where the Concealed Leak occurs, and who is billed residential water charges by Queensland Urban Utilities.

Residential Non-Owner Occupier is a Property Owner of a privately-owned property who does not occupy a Residential property where the Concealed Leak occurs (including untenanted properties and vacant Residential land).

Specific Exclusions means the exclusions identified in section 5.5 of this policy.

Sporting Club or Association means a community organisation that is incorporated or unincorporated as a not-for-profit organisation, club or association that exists for the purpose of providing sporting facilities and/or activities for its members.

State Bulk Water Charge means the charge that covers the cost of the treated water that Queensland Urban Utilities buys from the Queensland State Government to supply a customer's property charged per kilolitre (kL) of water used (1kL = 1000 litres) which is identified on an account as the "*State Bulk Water Price*".

Trade Waste means water-borne waste from a trade, business or manufacturing activity at a property, other than waste that is a prohibited substance (for example petrol, pesticide), domestic sewage (human waste) or stormwater.

Trade Waste Charge means the charge that is billed to customers who hold a trade waste permit where there is a discharge of Trade Waste to Queensland Urban Utilities sewer.

Trade Waste Customer means a Property Owner or his/or her tenant (who has the responsibility to pay for water usage) that has a permit to discharge Trade Waste into the Queensland Urban Utilities sewerage system.

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7. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or in accordance with changes to relevant legislation or business objectives.

8. AUTHORISING OFFICER

The Queensland Urban Utilities Board.

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