

Water and Wastewater Customer Commitment Statement



Water and Wastewater Customer Commitment Statement

Redland City Council delivers safe, reliable and high quality water, trade waste and wastewater services to its customers.

The commitments, responsibilities and standards you can expect from us in relation to your water supply and wastewater service, as well as your rights and obligations as a customer, are outlined in:

- this commitment statement
- the Redland City Council Customer Charter, and
- the *South East Queensland Customer Water and Wastewater Code*

Our commitments to you

Redland City Council is committed to helping you, our customers, understand our role and reducing any operational impacts.

We will actively communicate and consult by:

- being available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for emergency works or via online services for requests or applications outside working hours
- being polite, helpful and respectful in providing our services
- respecting your privacy and treating your personal information in strict confidence
- not providing your information to any other organisation or person without your consent, unless required by law
- issuing you with a water and wastewater account that includes all the necessary information to help you understand your charges
- responding to requests for service in a timely manner and always providing you with an estimated response time when you contact us
- reporting our performance against our customer service standards (outlined in appendix A)

We will strive to:

- meet or exceed the specific service standards outlined in Appendix A of this commitment statement. Annual reports detailing our performance are available on our website.
- ensure our impact on the environment is minimised by careful planning and responsible operation of our systems.
- read your meter at least once per year, and estimate your consumption where a meter reading is not available.
- help you manage your own environmental impacts by providing helpful and appropriate guidance on improving water efficiency and reducing water consumption.
- provide a continuous supply of clean drinking water at an adequate pressure and flow rate for your reasonable household and business needs
- collect, treat and dispose of your wastewater in accordance with our environmental obligations
- maintain and renew our system of pipes, to ensure you continue to receive a reliable water supply
- work with you and the wider community to minimise the inconvenience of our planned maintenance works
- minimise service interruptions, whether planned or unplanned

What you can do to help us meet our commitments

As a Redland City Council water and wastewater customer, there are responsibilities you need to fulfil to help us to maintain your water supply and ensure you are charged correctly. These include:

- using water wisely at home and work
- ensuring you provide safe access to your water meter for our meter readers
- keeping your water meter clear of vegetation
- protecting the water meter from damage
- advising us if you have special needs that will be affected if your water supply is interrupted
- maintaining the internal plumbing on your private property, including preventing tree root intrusion and regularly checking for leaks.
- keeping sewer maintenance holes clear as they act like a relief valve should the wastewater system overflow
- ensuring stormwater drainage from your property is not connected to the wastewater network (such connections are illegal)
- looking for notices of service interruptions in your letterbox, on our website and our social media pages
- promptly notifying Council of any service difficulties or faults
- keeping waste items out of the wastewater system. The following substances are not suitable for disposal into the wastewater system:
 - toxic materials,
 - chemicals,
 - oils and fats,
 - food scraps, or
 - foreign objects including wet wipes

Please dispose of these responsibly

For more information visit the Department of Resources website at resources.qld.gov.au



About your water and wastewater services

Service connections

Connections for both water and sewerage (wastewater) are required when building a new property in our connection area which is defined in the Redland Water Netserv Plan found on our website.

Existing properties should already have these connections in place unless they are not connected to town water and/or have onsite sewerage disposal.

To request a connection to a property, a form must be submitted to Council with all required plans or approvals and then a quote will be forwarded for payment.

Special needs connections

A special needs property is a property that requires continued, uninterrupted and unrestricted water supply for life support or other special medical needs.

If you or a member of your household requires continuous supply of water, you need to advise Council of this to be registered as a special needs property so we can give priority notice of any interruptions.

Water meters

A water meter measures the amount of water used on a property. Water meters are read, where possible, every three months and the amount of water consumed is charged to the owner. We consider the meter to be accurate if it is recording within the tolerance range of +/- 5% for all meter sizes.

Water meters are the property of Redland City Council. It is an offence to interfere with a water provider's infrastructure, which includes the water meter, without written consent.

If you suspect the meter is faulty and have completed your own tests to ensure there are no plumbing issues within the property, you may request a quote from Council for an independent test of the meter accuracy. Should you wish to proceed, once payment has been made the meter at the property will be replaced with a new factory-certified meter and the original meter sent to a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited laboratory.

Should the meter test outside the tolerance range, the testing fee would be refunded and an adjustment would be applied to the customer's account for the last twelve months based on their normal usage patterns.

Meters can slow down with age. If the meter stops recording we will estimate your consumption based on previous or current usage.

Trade waste

Trade waste is the liquid waste created from any business (commercial or industrial) other than domestic wastewater. Approval is required to discharge any trade waste into the wastewater system and Council may include conditions with the approval.

Water transport

Businesses that transport or deliver drinking water for sale must comply with the *Food Act 2006*. The Food Safety Standards stipulate what requirements licensable food businesses need to meet and a Food Business Licence must be obtained prior to operating.



Your water account

It is important that customers of Redland City Council settle their accounts within the required payment period. Your water meter at your property helps us to calculate your charges. Our fees and charges are published annually and are available on our website.

Water billing and charges

Property owners pay for water consumed, as well as a water access/service charge for ongoing connection or availability to connect to the city's water distribution network and a wastewater service/service charge for ongoing connection to the city's wastewater network.

Some businesses which discharge into sewer also pay trade waste charges.

Redland City Council water charges are issued through Council's quarterly rates notices. For water and wastewater charges:

- Water consumption is charged by kilolitre and the charge is split into State Bulk Water charges and Retail Water charges
- Water access is charged according to meter size or lot
- Wastewater access charges are set by allocating sewer units for each lot or pedestal
- Trade waste has a fixed charge, a volume charge and may have an additional load charge. The volume charge is generally based on Council water meters.

Increased water usage

Increased water usage can sometimes be from a concealed leak. We consider a concealed leak to be a burst pipe where you could not be expected to know of its existence (underground, within concrete, or underneath a building).

If you discover a concealed leak and have it repaired by a licensed plumber, you may be eligible for some remission on the Retail Water charge for the water loss under our concealed leak policy.

If the property is charged for trade waste, there may also be a remission available on the trade waste volume charge.

Concessions

Queensland Government offer concessions on water for eligible pensioners. Eligibility is determined by the State Government and current information is found on the Queensland Government website.

Financial hardship

A financial hardship policy is in place so that customers suffering genuine financial hardship can work with Council to work out a solution for payments. If you are experiencing payment difficulties, please contact us as early as possible to discuss suitable options.

Who is responsible when something goes wrong?

Redland City Council is responsible for:

- repairing leaking or damaged meters and the meter fitting on the water main side of the water meter.
- maintaining and clearing blockages in the sewer wastewater mains and wastewater pipes up to the inspection opening.

Our customers, as property owners, are responsible for:

- leaks on the property side of the water meter, including all property plumbing.
- maintaining all wastewater pipes within their property to the inspection opening (which is just prior to the connection to Redland City Council's wastewater mains).
- costs if a blockage or overflow is caused by a covered maintenance hole, a defective connection or fitting, or placement of inappropriate items into the wastewater system.

Damage to infrastructure

If Council's infrastructure is damaged it should be reported to Council's Customer Service Centre.

Council may recover from the owner of the property the amount of the loss or the reasonable cost of repairing the damage to Council's infrastructure, which includes water meters.

It is an offence to damage or interfere with Council's infrastructure and this is provided for in the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.

Water and wastewater standards and regulations

Redland City Council meets the standards set by our Department of Environment and Science (DES) licence for treated effluent and its disposal.

Water distributed by Redland City Council is supplied and quality tested by Seqwater daily. Redland City Council also conducts regular verification monitoring to confirm that the supplied water meets the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) and is safe to drink.

In addition to Redland City Council's commitments, a Customer Water and Wastewater Code was released by the Queensland Government and came into effect on 1 January 2011.

This code provides additional safeguards around the standard and conditions of service and supply for residential and small business customers, as well as outlining the Energy and Water Ombudsman's dispute resolution role.

Feedback and complaints

Council is committed to effective complaints management and has established a complaints process in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

To report a service issue, please contact:

Phone 07 3829 8999
Email rcc@redland.qld.gov.au
Fax 07 3829 8765
Mail PO Box 21, Cleveland QLD 4101
Website www.redland.qld.gov.au

Complaint resolution

If customers remain dissatisfied with Redland City Council's water service standards after attempted resolution, the matter may be referred to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) who may be able to assist further.

EWOQ can be contacted on:

Phone 1800 662 837 (Freecall)
Email complaints@ewoq.com.au or info@ewoq.com.au
Website www.ewoq.com.au
Fax 07 3087 9477
Mail PO Box 3640, South Brisbane QLD 4101



Appendix A – Customer Service Standards

The service standards detailed here are targets which Redland City Council strives to achieve or exceed under normal conditions. Public consultation is required for significant changes to the targets. They are not a contract or intended to create any contractual obligation or rights.

Annual reports detailing our performance are available on our website.

SERVICE STANDARD	TARGET
Water supply	
Provision of safe and clean drinking water	Compliance with Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) >98% of water samples comply with ADWG
Minimum drinking water pressure customers can expect at their water meter under normal service conditions	>98% of water service connections have a minimum pressure >22 metres static head and, >30 litres a minute flow at the meter
Planned interruptions	At least (2) two business days' notice for planned works or, (4) four business days' notice for registered special needs properties and advise when we expect the supply to be restored
Unplanned interruptions	Respond to loss of supply <60 minutes on the mainland*
Restoration of water supply following unplanned interruption	Restore 97% of interruptions <5 hours
Total water supply main breaks per reporting year	<8 breaks / 100 km of water main
Total number of properties affected by unplanned water interruptions per reporting year	<100 per 1000 properties
Total number of water quality complaints resulting from the distribution network	<4 per 1000 properties
Wastewater services	
Average response time to attend wastewater incidents	90% incidents <60 minutes on the mainland*
Total number of sewerage main breaks per reporting year	<12 blockages /chokes per 100 km wastewater main
Restoration of wastewater supply following an incident	Restore 97% <5 hours

*We aim to meet our response times however, for island services it is reasonable to expect longer times

