



# **PORT OF BRISBANE**

## **CONCEALED LEAK POLICY**

### **WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES**

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**MARCH 2022**

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# Concealed Leak Policy

## Purpose

Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL) understand the costs resulting from a concealed leak are unforeseen. This policy details the assistance PBPL may offer to customers that have experienced a concealed leak within their property.

## Applicability of the policy

This is an operational policy which is for internal and external use and is effective for applications received by PBPL from 21 March 2022 for leaks detected after 1 January 2022.

For leaks detected between 1 October 2021 and 31 December 2021, all criteria apply except customers will have until 31 May 2022 to make an application.

This policy is available on PBPL's website.

## Scope

A concealed leak is a leak that occurs within the private plumbing of a property, downstream of the property's water meter. These leaks are often underground and hidden from view, for example under concrete, and as such provide basically no indication of water accumulation where an occupant could reasonably be expected to be aware of the leak.

A main indication of a concealed leak might be an unexplained spike in water usage. If we notice an above-average consumption on a meter reading, where possible, we will notify you via a letter.

For information on how to check for concealed leaks, please seek advice from a licensed plumber.

## Related legislation

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



## Policy Statement

### Eligibility criteria and application for financial assistance

PBPL water and wastewater customers **may be eligible** for financial assistance towards the cost of water lost due to a concealed leak under this policy, as well as the associated increased sewage disposal charges.

**To be eligible** for financial assistance, a customer must meet the following criteria.

1. The concealed leak must be fixed/repaired by a customer's licensed plumber within 25 days of:
  - a) the customer finding/identifying a concealed leak at the property; or
  - b) being notified by PBPL of higher than usual water usage at the property; or
  - c) being notified by PBPL (or a representative of PBPL) of the possibility of leak at the property.
2. The Customer must not have received financial assistance for a concealed leak for water and sewage disposal charges for the same property within a period of (2) years from the date that an adjustment was applied to the Customer's billing account due to a previous concealed leak.
3. The customer must make an application in writing to PBPL within five (5) months of:
  - a) finding a concealed leak at the property; or
  - b) being notified by PBPL of higher than usual water usage at the property; or
  - c) being notified by PBPL (or a representative of PBPL) of the possibility of a leak being present.
4. The customer must provide PBPL with documented evidence showing that a licensed plumber has repaired the leak (i.e. a licensed plumber's invoice).

*Note: An authorised representative may make an application for financial assistance on behalf of a customer.*

**For leaks detected between 1 October 2021 and 31 December 2021, customers will have until 31 May 2022 to make an application.**

### Financial assistance assessment and calculation

When assessing a customer's application made under this policy and calculating the relevant financial assistance, PBPL will:

- a) assess each application against the eligibility criteria and specific exclusions;
- b) consider up to two (2) consecutive billing periods, being the period in which the concealed leak was repaired and the previous billing period;
- c) 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 PBPL);
- d) apply the applicable financial assistance to your water and sewerage account; and
- e) offer an interest-free payment plan for any remaining charges on your account not covered by this policy.

## Financial assistance review

Approved customers that PBPL determine meet the eligibility criteria will receive the relevant financial assistance outlined below for up to two consecutive billing periods only. If you are unsure whether you are an approved customer, or which category of approved customer you are, please contact us on the details provided at the end of this document.

Approved Customer	Covered under policy	Financial assistance provided by PBPL		
		Retail-distributor water charges	State bulk water charges	Sewage disposal charges
Registered charities and not-for-profit community organisations	✓	100%	100%	✓
PBPL tenants with a current lease or Permit to Occupy, where the responsibility for internal plumbing at the property is the responsibility of the Customer	✓	x	x	✓ (if applicable)
PBPL tenants with a current lease or Permit to Occupy, where the responsibility for internal plumbing at the property remains the responsibility of PBPL	✓	100%	100%	✓

*Note: Water service charges and fixed price sewerage service charges are not impacted by a concealed leak therefore no financial assistance is applicable towards these charges.*

## Sewage disposal charges

PBPL may also provide financial assistance by adjusting sewage disposal charges where:

- the sewage disposal charge is calculated based on a percentage of water measured through the property's water meter; and
- sewage disposal charges increased as a result of increased water usage as a result of a 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 sewage producing facilities).

PBPL will review applications on a case-by-case basis.

## Financial assistance exclusions

PBPL will **not** provide financial assistance to a customer in the following situations:

- If a leak (including a concealed leak) occurs at a property that does not meet the eligibility criteria of a customer as defined in this policy
- If a leak (including a concealed leak) occurs within a building on the property, including leaks from internal water fittings and appliances such as taps, toilets and other water fixtures **unless** under the lease agreement between the customer and PBPL, PBPL are responsible for these assets
- Leaks (including concealed 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 **unless** under the lease agreement between the customer and PBPL, PBPL are responsible for these assets
- Leaks in water tanks that are plumbed to the drinking water supply
- Where the customer receives financial assistance for the cost of water lost due to the concealed leak under an insurance policy or other benefit
- If the water lost is due to vandalism, theft or carelessness (e.g. leaving a hose running)
- If the leak (including a concealed leak) is caused by or could reasonably have been caused by the construction, excavation, building, landscaping, concreting, development, renovation or other similar activity on the property within the previous six (6) months **unless** these activities were carried out by PBPL
- Where sewage disposal charges have increased due to a water leak that has discharged to the sewer, such as from a running toilet or leaking sink tap **unless** under the lease agreement the fixtures are PBPL's responsibility

## How to submit a Concealed Leak Application

Please send details and relevant documentation (i.e. plumber invoices) to:

Email: [water.enquiry@portbris.com.au](mailto:water.enquiry@portbris.com.au)

### Mail

PBPL Water and Wastewater Enquiry

Locked Bag 1818

Port of Brisbane QLD 4178

## Definitions

<b>Approved customer</b>	means a customer that PBPL has determined has met the eligibility criteria for receiving financial assistance.
<b>Authorised representative</b>	<p>a. is a person for whom PBPL has received an authority to act on behalf of the customer; or</p> <p>b. is a solicitor or property manager who has been engaged to act on behalf of a customer.</p>
<b>Concealed leak</b>	has the meaning identified under the “Scope” section of this policy.
<b>Customer</b>	is a customer of PBPL identified in this policy (or their Authorised Representative) who is entitled to make an application for financial assistance.
<b>Discharge Factor</b>	is the percentage value identifying the proportion of water used at a property that is considered to be discharged back to the sewer network. This differs across property types and industry types based on the land use.
<b>Eligibility criteria</b>	is the criteria identified in the section of this policy titled “Eligibility criteria and application for financial assistance”.
<b>Financial assistance</b>	is the financial assistance identified in this policy which is provided to an approved customer (the assistance may or may not include the state bulk water charges).
<b>Not-for-profit organisation or registered charity</b>	<p>means an organisation or charity that does not earn profits for its owners or members and is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. an incorporated or unincorporated not-for-profit organisation or charity; or</li><li>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</li><li>c. an organisation registered on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Register as a charity and solely operating for a charitable purpose which:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. does not earn money from a commercial activity or source;</li><li>ii. must be directly for public benefit.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Private plumbing</b>	means privately owned water infrastructure (not owned or maintained by PBPL) connecting a property to PBPL’s network and includes the pipework leading up to the water meter and the connection to the meter but does not include the water meter itself.
<b>Sewage disposal charges</b>	means the amount billed for discharge to PBPL’s sewer based on the amount of potable water registered on the water meter multiplied by the applicable discharge factor for the activity performed at the property.
<b>Specific exclusions</b>	means the exclusions identified in this policy.
<b>State bulk water charge</b>	means the charge that covers the cost of the treated water that PBPL buys from the Queensland government to supply a customer’s property charged per kilolitre (1kL = 1000 litres) of water used is identified on an account as the “State bulk water charge”.
<b>Water charges</b>	means PBPL’s charge that is billed to a customer per kilolitre (1kL = 1000 litres) of water usage which is identified on an account as the “Distributor-retailer charges”.

**Review Date**

This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years.

**Authorising body**

PBPL Chief Executive Officer