

MEDIA RELEASE

29 May, 2020

Water and wastewater price changes from 1 July 2020

Prices for water and wastewater services in Auckland will increase by 2.5 per cent from 1 July 2020.

In Auckland Council's Annual Plan, the proposed price rises for water, wastewater and infrastructure growth charges were 2.5 per cent, 3.3 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. However, last month, Watercare's board agreed to limit price rises to 2.5 per cent, aligned with Auckland Council's minimum proposed rates increase.

Watercare chief financial officer Marlon Bridge says capping the increase at 2.5 per cent is about acknowledging the widespread financial strain of Covid-19, while ensuring Watercare can continue to invest in essential water and wastewater infrastructure.

"We know that for many Aucklanders, the Covid-19 pandemic has led to a sudden change in their financial circumstances. A lot of people are struggling, and this is why we are keeping the price increase to a minimum.

"The 2.5 per cent increase reflects that we still need to make large, long-term investments to ensure our growing city has the water and wastewater infrastructure it needs."

The price increase means an average household's combined water and wastewater charges would increase by about \$2.25 a month.

Bridge says assistance is available for people who are struggling to pay their bills.

"If you are struggling to make ends meet, please talk to us about flexible payment options. We fund the Water Utility Consumer Assistance Trust (WUCAT), which supports customers suffering genuine hardship by writing off part, or all, of the amount owed.

"We are also looking to extend this hardship support programme to include small businesses."

Over the past five years, Watercare has provided \$675,000 to the trust, which has helped 700 vulnerable customers.

Watercare does not operate to make a profit nor does it receive any funding from property rates paid to the Auckland Council. It does not pay a dividend to the Auckland Council.

Over the next 10 years, Watercare will spend \$5.7 billion on water and wastewater projects.

“All the money we receive from customers goes into operating, maintaining and expanding our infrastructure,” Bridge says.

- Water prices will increase from \$1.555 to \$1.594 (including GST) per 1000 litres for all customers.
- Fixed wastewater charges for domestic customers will rise by \$225 to \$231 per year and from \$2.704 to \$2.772 per 1000 litres of wastewater discharged (including GST).
- Wastewater charges for non-domestic customers will increase by an average of 2.5 per cent.
- The infrastructure growth charge (IGC) for the metropolitan area will increase by 2.5 per cent to \$12,320 plus GST.

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For more information, contact:

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