

# Water and Sewer Customer Charter

2023

We are dedicated to meeting  
your expectations and  
improving your water and  
sewer services.

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# Administrator's message

Welcome to your first Water and Sewer Customer Charter. This Charter is our commitment to our community and ensures that you, our customer, continue to be at the centre of everything we do.

Your Customer Charter will help Central Coast Council Water and Sewer to deliver on today's water and sewer needs while ensuring we are prepared for the future.

A special thank you to the community members who helped inform this charter through participation in our community consultations. Your input directly impacted the Customer Charter we have committed to delivering.

I encourage you to continue to have your say about water and sewer services and keep in touch to receive our updates on how we are delivering our water and sewer service commitments.

**Rik Hart**  
Administrator





# Acknowledgement of Country

**We acknowledge  
the Traditional  
Custodians of the land  
on which we live, work and  
play. We pay our respects to  
Elders, past, present and emerging  
and recognise their continued  
connection to these lands and  
waterways. We acknowledge  
our shared responsibility to  
care for and protect our  
place and people.**



# Central Coast Council Water and Sewer

Central Coast Council Water and Sewer is the third largest water utility in NSW, and serves as the Water Supply Authority to a thriving population of more than 345,000 people.

We deliver safe and reliable water and sewerage services to more than 139,000 homes and businesses. Approximately 83ML/day of drinking water is accessed by homes and businesses every day. Sewage is collected through 2,660 km of sewage mains and 324 pumping stations with treatment undertaken at one of eight sewage treatment plants.

Council's drinking water is regulated by NSW Health. The NSW Government has adopted the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011 (published by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council).

Council's sewer services complies with environmental protection licensing as set by the Environment Protection Authority.

We have a continued focus on planning for our future water supply to ensure we have a resilient and sustainable water supply, now and for future generations.



# Our vision, purpose and values

## Our Vision

To be a trusted service provider for the Central Coast community and place our customers at the centre of everything we do.

## Our Purpose

To provide water and sewer services that preserve our environment and maintain the live ability and health of the Central Coast community.

## Your water and sewer values

Through our community consultations you told us what you value most about your water and sewer services:

- Good quality drinking water and quality treatment.
- Reliable service.
- Affordability.
- Effective planning.
- Environmental focus.
- Transparency and education.



# Customer charter and service commitments

## What is a customer charter?

A customer charter outlines:

- Our standard of service to you.
- Your expectations on your water and sewer services.
- Your rights and obligations as a customer, and ours.
- How you can help us to help you.

## How did we develop your customer charter?

Your customer charter was developed through an extensive consultation program as part of Central Coast Council's "Improving your water and sewer services" engagement.

Council worked with the community to develop the charter based on the needs of our community.

## Our service commitments

### Simple and easy to interact with us

- We will communicate clearly.
- You know what to expect at every step.
- You will have a choice of options to contact us.

### The experience is consistent for you

- We will communicate honestly, professionally and in plain language.
- You can expect friendly, helpful and knowledgeable service from our staff.

### We will ask you how we went and what we need to change

- We will listen carefully to you to ensure our water and sewer services meet your needs.
- We will make decisions in the best interests of the whole community.



# Shared rights and responsibilities

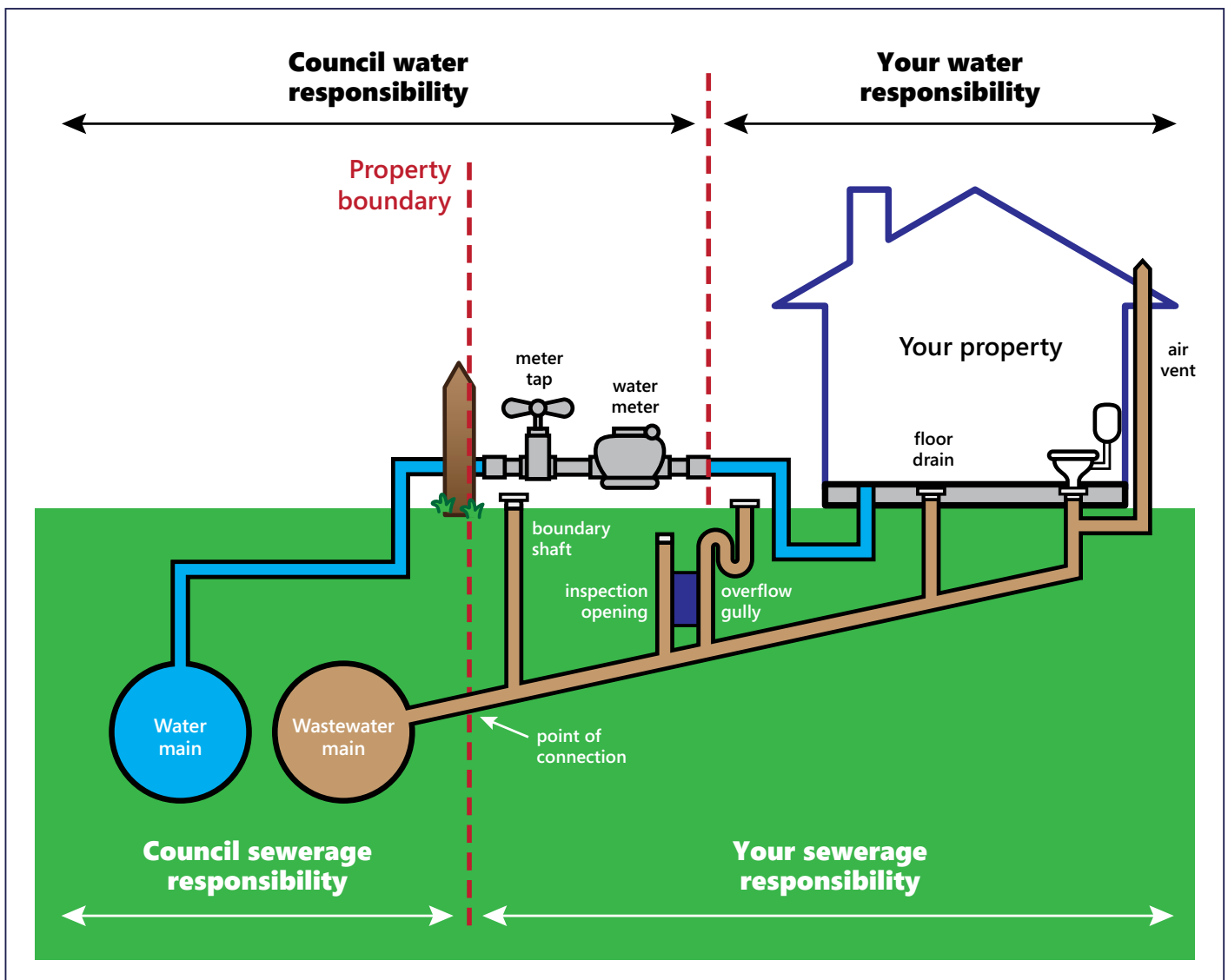
Central Coast Council Water and Sewer is accountable for maintaining your water service for all properties up to the water meter, while for sewer services, Council is responsible up to the connection point.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain all plumbing and pipework from the connection points to their residence.

## Connections to Council's water supply and sewerage services

The Central Coast's water and sewer infrastructure is vital for delivering services to the community. To protect it, we ask that you do not undertake any excavation, building, landscaping or other construction work that is over, or adjacent to, our infrastructure without speaking to us first.

For more information search Building in proximity to water and sewer pipelines at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](https://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)



*Your water and sewerage supply system responsibilities*



## Service standards

### Our responsibility





- Ensure a consistent level of service which is in the best interests of the whole community.
- Maintain our service commitments with you.
- Assess and prioritise your service requests.
- Be fair and impartial in our dealings with customers.
- Engage with the community to ensure your views are considered in service planning and delivery.

### Your responsibility

- Be courteous and respectful to our staff.
- Refrain from using abusive language.
- Be direct in your communication with us regarding any service issues or enquiries you may have.

### Our response times

Our response times are based on the below matrix:

Description	Examples	Timeframes
 Priority 1 Emergency	Water and sewer main breaks. Pump station failures. Sewer overflows impacting critical customers. Subsidence, collapse or cave in. Fault creating risk to health.	Response time within 2 hours. Return to service within 5 hours. Restoration within 10 business days.
 Priority 2 Urgent	Burst water service. Failure of vacuum pot. Wet weather event. Blockage of sewer main, branch or shaft.	Response time within 4 hours. Return to service within 24 hours or next working day. Restoration within 10 business days.
 Priority 3 Non-Urgent	Seepage. Blocked water meter.	Response time within 5 business days. Return to service depends on the issue. Restoration depends on the issue.
 Priority 4 Low	Manhole adjustment. Faults on Council assets that have a visual impact only.	Response time within 15 business days. Return to service depends on the issue. Restoration depends on the issue.

## Entry onto your property

Our employees and contractors have the right to enter and undertake works on your property under the Water Management Act 2000.

Our team may need to access our infrastructure on your property to;

- Carry out investigations and inspections, including responding to emergencies.
- Inspect pipes, fittings and sewer pits.
- Read the meter located at the property.

## Your water supply

Our commitment is to provide you with a reliable and secure supply of drinking water that adheres to all applicable public health, environmental, and regulatory requirements.

### Our responsibility

- Ensure minimum water pressure levels are met.
- Supply safe drinking water for you and your family.
- Monitor and assess the quality of drinking water supplied.
- Inform you of planned works that may interrupt your services.
- Advise you of unplanned system interruptions.
- If we need to excavate the verge or road outside your house, we will leave your street or property in a similar state (time frames depend on works required).

### Your responsibility

- Install, maintain and repair all pipes and fittings on your property from the point of connection with our meter – this includes garden taps, hot water service and water tanks.
- Protect your water meter from damage or theft.
- Ensure your water meter is easy to access.
- Report any significant change in the flow, quality or pressure of your water.

## Your sewerage services

We are dedicated to removing sewage from your property and treating it to the appropriate standard and prioritising public health and environmental protection. Our goal is to provide a reliable service that ensures the wellbeing of both the community and the environment.

### Our responsibility

- Respond as soon as possible to sewer issues. This will take place within 4 hours for urgent sewer issues.
- Notify you in advance of any planned works that may interrupt your services.
- Minimise any damage or inconvenience in the event of a sewage spill.
- Schedule restoration works as required.
- Clear blockages that occur in our infrastructure.

### Your responsibility

- Ensure all stormwater connections are legally connected to the stormwater system.
- Maintain and repair all pipework from the point of connection on your property.
- Ensure the overflow gully is not obstructed to prevent a sewer overflow inside your home.
- Contact Council in the first instance of a sewer blockage or overflow within your property's pipework. Council will advise if a plumber is required.

For more information on how to dispose of common waste materials, search '**hazardous waste disposal**' at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)



## Disposal of common waste materials



Wet wipes, nappies, cotton buds, feminine hygiene products.

Dispose of appropriately in the general waste bin.



Cooking oil, grease

Wrap in paper towel or cloth and dispose of appropriately in the general waste bin.



Chemicals e.g. paint or pesticides

Give to a licensed hazardous wastes contractor or dispose of for free at one of Central Coast Council's scheduled chemical collections or at one of our community recycling centres.



Cleaning products

Give to a licensed hazardous wastes contractor or dispose of for free at one of Central Coast Council's scheduled chemical collections or at one of our community recycling centres.



Newspaper, plastics

Dispose of appropriately in a recycle or general waste bin.



Food scraps

Dispose of in compost or general waste bin.



Syringes

Place in a properly sealed puncture proof container and take to your nearest participating Central Coast pharmacy or public hospital. Head to our website for full list of participating pharmacies.



Unused medicines

Contact your local pharmacy and return your unused medications.



Engine oils

Pour your used motor oil back into an empty oil container and dispose of for free at one of Central Coast Council's scheduled chemical collections or at one of our community recycling centres.

## Liquid trade waste

We are proactively working alongside our commercial customers to ensure effective disposal and monitoring of liquid trade waste to ensure a safe, clean environment for today and the future. Council's Liquid Trade Waste Policy 2023 outlines specific requirements and industry standards for the disposal of liquid trade waste.

### Our responsibility

- Process and issue approvals to ensure customers are aware of their specific industry obligations.
- Regulate customers trade waste activities through scheduled inspections, sampling and audits of trade waste facilities and effluent quality.
- Provide immediate written notification to the owner of non-compliances associated with effluent quality, trade waste pre-treatment devices and any breach of approval conditions.
- Implement a sound pricing structure for trade waste services with full cost recovery through trade waste fees and charges.

### Your responsibility

- Operate, maintain and repair approved trade waste infrastructure and associated pipe work and fittings.
- Ensure all pre-treatment equipment is installed and compliant with relevant regulations.
- Ensure all plumbing and drainage work is carried out by a licensed plumber.
- Ensure you have approval from Council and adhere to all the conditions.

## Water meters

All properties should have a water meter installed. A small number of properties also have a separate meter for recycled water. When required, we will install a water meter on your property to measure the quantity of water we supply to you. The water meter remains the property of Central Coast Council.

If you need to read your meter they are usually located in line with the boundary of the property. Black digits show the kilolitres (1000 litres) and red digits show the single litres used.

### Our responsibility

- Read your meter, including recycled water where used, every quarter to accurately measure your water usage.
- Maintain your meters and ensure they are functioning correctly.

### Your responsibility

- Protect all meters on your property from damage.
- Inform us promptly if your water meters are damaged or leaking or contains reading errors (send us a photo and we will investigate).
- Ensure access for Council staff and its contractors to maintain or repair the water meters.
- Request a water meter test if you suspect your meter is faulty.
- Recycled water customers need to adhere to end use controls as per your user agreement to prevent cross connections with the drinking water supply.

## Billing

You may receive quarterly bills for water usage and service charges for water and sewer depending on the property type and Council services available to your property. If you do not pay your account by the due date interest will accrue.

### Our responsibility

- Issue accurate notices to all customers quarterly.
- Publish water and sewer fees and charges annually on Council's website in accordance with the prices set by the Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

### Your responsibility

- Pay your bill by the due date, payment can be made at the time it falls due or regular payments can be made to ensure the bill is paid in full by the due date.
- Contact us as soon as possible if you are having difficulty paying your bill or if you find a mistake with your bill.

### Payment Options



**Direct Debit** – Saving or cheque account only. Contact Council for an application form or visit [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)



**Centrepay** – Contact Centrelink and quote 555 121 781J and your assessment number.



**Online** – Mastercard or Visa. [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)



**Post** – Complete the payment slip and post with your cheque to: PO Box 20 Wyong NSW 2259.



**Telephone** – Mastercard or Visa. Call 1800 226 651



**In Person** – Pay by eftpos, credit card or cheque at Council Administration Buildings and Service Centres. **Please note that cash payments are not accepted at any Council Service Centre.** Payments can also be made at any Australian Post Office



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## Rebates and hardship

We provide eligible pensioners with rebates on water notices. If you are having trouble paying your account, we can also provide hardship assistance or a personalised payment plan to help you get back on track.

### Our responsibility

- Offer payment plans as part of our hardship assistance.
- Assess applications for pensioner rebates.
- Refer you to a financial counselling service for additional support.

### Your responsibility

- Apply for a pensioner rebate if you hold an eligible concession card.
- Advise us if you are having difficulty paying your bill.

## Special health needs for customers

It is important for us to be aware of any special health needs that you may have so we can take necessary steps to accommodate you if your water or sewer supply will be interrupted.

### Our responsibility

- Prioritise you as a critical customer reliant on drinking water supply.
- Personally liaise with you before interrupting your water supply.
- Advise and work with you to meet your needs in the event of an unplanned water outage affecting your area.

### Your responsibility

- Provide confirmation from a registered medical practitioner or hospital to include you as a special needs customer.
- Advise us when the special health needs customer no longer resides at the property.

## Access and inclusion

We are continuing to improve accessibility and inclusion so that people with a disability and those whose first language may not be English, can easily access our services.

### Our responsibility

- Proactively ensure that we meet the needs of all our customers, including those living with disabilities.
- Provide access to customers with hearing or speech impairments.
- Offer the National Relay Service on 13 36 77 by quoting Council's contact number 02 4306 7900.

### Your responsibility

- Provide feedback on our access and inclusion to help us improve our services to you.
- Contact us if you experience any difficulties.

For more information, search '**disability inclusion action plan**' at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](https://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

## Environmental obligations

We are dedicated to promoting environmental sustainability and empowering our customers to have a positive impact on the environment and our infrastructure.

### Our responsibility

- Respond promptly to any environmental incidents and investigate to identify the cause of recurring incidents.
- Work with industry to implement effluent improvement plans to reduce the impact of poor quality effluent on the sewerage system and the environment.
- Demonstrate ongoing commitment to water conservation and efficient water use.
- Adhere to all requirements of our Environmental Protection Licenses.

### Your responsibility

- Ensure only appropriate items are flushed down the toilet.
- Dispose of fats and oils correctly.
- Report incidents that may have an adverse impact on the environment.
- Rectify any plumbing defects including illegal stormwater connections.

## Complaints management

We seek to address enquiries and complaints promptly and efficiently, preferably during the first contact with our customers.

Council values all feedback and considers that good management of feedback cultivates transparency and trust.

### Our responsibility

In accordance with Council's Complaints and Feedback Management Policy, we strive to:

- Respond to urgent issues within one business day.
- Acknowledge all requests within five working days.
- Investigate complex complaints within 20 working days, while maintaining regular communication to keep you informed of progress.
- Make contact with you to finalise your enquiry or complaint.
- Advise customers that there is an option for an internal review, and should they still be dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint they can request an external review available through the NSW Ombudsman.

### Your responsibility


- Be direct in your communication with us regarding any service issues or enquiries you may have.
- Provide evidence if available to support your enquiry or complaint.
- Advise us if you no longer require a response.
- Contact the NSW Ombudsman if you would like to exercise your right to request a review of your complaint.



# Get in touch

Our customer service centre can assist you anywhere anytime if you'd like to report an issue, make a request, or offer feedback.


## General enquiries, billing and payment difficulties

 (02) 4306 7900 – 8:30-5:00pm Monday-Friday

If you have hearing or speech impairments, call the National Relay Service on 13 36 77, and quote Council's contact number 02 4306 7900.

 [ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

 Search '**customer help**' at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

 Council Office  
2 Hely Street, PO Box 20, Wyong NSW 2259

## Faults, services and emergencies

 (02) 4306 7900 – 24 hours/7 days

 Search '**water service interruptions**' at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

Contact us about issues with:



## We invite you to

Take part in local community forums, in person or online, to provide feedback and learn about our projects and programs. Visit:

 [yourvoiceourcoast.com](http://yourvoiceourcoast.com)

Attend Council meetings. For more information, search '**council meetings**' at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

## Keep in touch and up-to-date

Sign up to Coast Connect e-newsletter  
[centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/enews](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/enews)

## Read the latest news online

 [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/news](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/news)

## Be water wise

 [lovewater.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://lovewater.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)



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**For more information visit  
[centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)**