

PORTWAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

FACT SHEET

Water usage

All Portway Housing tenants pay for water consumption, even if there is not a separate water meter connected to their property.

How is Portway Housing helping to reduce household water consumption?

Many of Portway Housing's properties have had common garden areas upgraded with more drought tolerant planting, to reduce water use and support the majority of tenants who already try hard to limit their water usage. Where possible, Portway Housing installs dual flush toilet cisterns, as well as plumbed-in rainwater tanks i.e. new housing developments and refurbishment of existing properties.

Water remissions (concessions)

The Government of South Australia, Department for Families and Communities, Water Rates Remission Scheme is available to Portway Housing tenants. The scheme provides financial assistance to reduce the water use charges payable by eligible households. Remissions are available to people who hold a Centrelink Health Care Card and receive the following Centrelink payments: Newstart allowance, Sickness allowance, Widow allowance, Youth allowance, Partner allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered, Bereavement allowance, Special benefit, Exceptional Circumstances payments, Community Development Employment Project (CDEP), New Enterprise Incentive Scheme, ABSTUDY and Austudy.

More information about concessions is available from the Government of South Australia's *Concessions Hotline* on 1800 307 758 (freecall), email your enquiries to concessions@dcsi.sa.gov.au or apply online www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/concessions. A text telephone service is available for people with hearing or speech impairments on 8226 6789.

Payment of water bills

Portway Housing is billed by SA Water for water supply and water usage. Tenants are charged directly by Portway Housing for water usage only.

- Where Portway Housing owns all properties within a group, individual flow meters have been installed to measure each household's water use. Portway Housing pays the basic rate charged by SA Water and the remaining amount is charged to the tenants.
- If you live in a property that does not have individual meters, Portway pays the basic rate of water use, with other water use charges to be shared equally between all tenants at the site. This is considered the most accurate method for charging for water.
- Tenants will receive a letter from Portway Housing indicating the amount due for water use consumption.
- All tenants have 28 days to pay their water bills.
- If you are unable to pay your bill in a lump sum, payment arrangements can be made by contacting the Portway Housing office.
- You can also pay water bills in advance by paying a little extra when you pay your rent. However, please be aware that if you fall into rent arrears, any credit will be applied to your rent first.
- If you fail to pay your bill you will incur a debt. Refusal to pay water bills and/or rent is a breach of your Conditions of Tenancy.

How often you are billed

Portway Housing receives bills on a quarterly basis from SA Water. The timing of bills is determined by when SA Water read the meters.

Water bill concerns

Tenants who are concerned about the accuracy of their water meter reading or their water bill are encouraged to contact Portway Housing.

Vacancy – change of tenancy

When a tenant vacates a property, the property manager will do a meter reading at the final inspection. The vacating tenant will be charged on a pro rata calculation of their usage, which is determined by how many days the property was occupied by them in the water charge period.

New tenants will be charged by the same pro rata calculation determined by the date they moved into the property and the days within the water charge period.

Water meter damage and faults

You are required to contact Portway Housing immediately if your water meter has been stolen or if any damage to the water meter or pipes has occurred. Unreported leakages resulting in high water bills will be the responsibility of the tenant and not Portway Housing. If you believe the water meter on your house or on your site (if your home is connected to a shared meter) is faulty you can request that the meter be tested. Portway Housing will arrange with SA Water for the test to take place.

If Portway Housing has evidence that a water meter on a separately metered property has been damaged or stolen (through deliberate or careless action) by a tenant, members of the tenant's household, or by tenants' visitors, the cost of repairs or replacement may be charged to the tenant.

More information

More information about water charges or details of other services is available by contacting the Portway Housing office.