

Water and sewerage bills in Somerset (Esk) – the facts

Water and sewerage bills have two parts

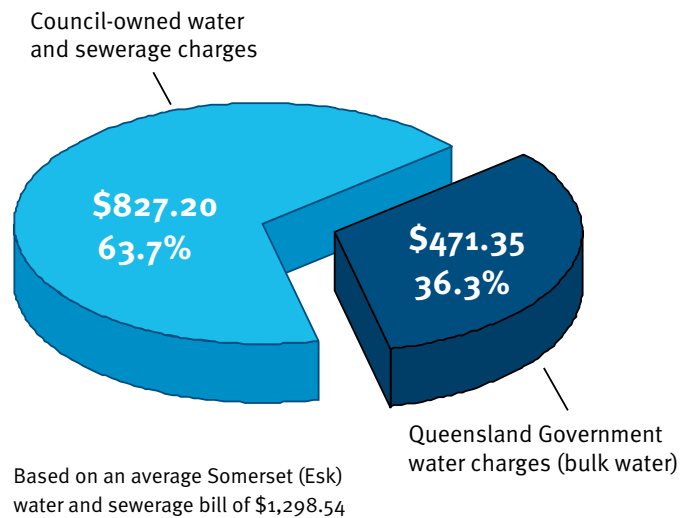
Charges imposed by Council-owned Queensland Urban Utilities include:

- Water consumption charges – based on the amount of water used.
- Fixed water access charges – for connection to the water network.
- Fixed sewerage charges – for connection to the sewerage network.

Queensland Government water charges (bulk water)

Queensland Government charges are limited to the cost of wholesale treated drinking water delivered to Queensland Urban Utilities.

Where your water and sewerage bill payment goes



Average household bill for 2011–12 financial year											Components of total bill in 2011/12		Savings achieved on total bill in 2011/12	
Queensland Urban Utilities	Comparison of councils										Queensland Government bulk water charge \$	Council-owned water and sewerage charge \$	Distributor-retailer additional savings \$	Minimum savings through State CPI cap \$
	\$0	\$200	\$400	\$600	\$800	\$1000	\$1200	\$1400	\$1600	\$1800				
Brisbane														
Bill before cap											357	819		
Bill with savings											357	776	5	38
Ipswich														
Bill before cap											345	1140		
Bill with savings											345	992	78	70
Scenic Rim														
Bill before cap											417	1175		
Bill with savings											417	946	97	132
Lockyer Valley														
Bill before cap											396	871		
Bill with savings											396	746	118	7
Somerset – Kilcoy														
Bill before cap											471	783		
Bill with savings											471	726	20	37
Somerset – Esk														
Bill before cap											471	957		
Bill with savings											471	827	71	58

Figures based on a three person household using 180 litres per person per day, equivalent to 200 kilolitres per year.

What has the Queensland Government done to ease the cost of water?

Made sure SEQ has a secure water supply into the future

Water supply in South East Queensland (SEQ) is now secure. This is because the SEQ water grid moves water from where it is plentiful to where it is needed, the community continues to save record amounts of water and the dams are full. The desalination plant is also available when needed, such as providing clean drinking water during the recent floods.

Reduced the costs of operating the water grid

The State Government has reduced the costs of running the water grid by:

- operating the desalination plant in standby mode until dams fall to 60 per cent
- taking half the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme off-line, and keeping the other half running to supply water to power stations and industry. Purified recycled water will not be added to dams until they reach 40 per cent
- merging state water authorities Water Secure, responsible for desalinated water and purified recycled water, and SEQ Water, which supplies water to the SEQ Water Grid Manager.

Kept the bulk water price in check

The State Government is protecting customers in SEQ from price impacts.

The Queensland Government's bulk water price has been controlled through a 10 year price path announced in May 2008. This price path eased the price impact of the SEQ water grid for customers.

In 2010, the price path was revised down, to take account of operational savings and continued world-class water conservation by SEQ households.

This will mean for the average household* in 2011–12, the state bulk water price will increase by \$5 less than previously announced and water price increases will now be lower than predicted every year. The bulk water price increase for 2011–12 is \$54.

What the price path means is that the Government:

- sold water to the council-owned water businesses at a loss of \$438 million in 2010–11
- is not making a profit on the \$7 billion investment in the water grid.

The Government is also providing a SEQ pensioner water rebate of up to \$120.

*An average household consists of three people using 200Litres/person/day, equivalent to 200 kilolitres per year.

Introduced a price cap on distributor-retailer charges

In 2011 the State Government imposed a two-year price cap on annual distribution and retail water and sewerage charges raised by the distributor-retailers to households and small businesses.

The cap will limit any increases in these charges for customers to no more than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2013.

In 2008, as part of securing water supplies in SEQ, the Queensland Government paid Somerset Regional Council (Esk) almost \$8 million for the acquisition of their bulk water assets.