

Burke Shire Council - Customer Service Standards

Water and Waste Water



1. Introduction

Burke Shire Council (Council) is committed to delivering quality and reliable water and sewerage services to its customers. This customer service standard outlines the level of service that Council's water and sewerage customers can expect. This is done through establishing performance indicators, performance measures and performance targets.

The customer service standards also describe the processes for service connection, billing, metering, accounting, customer consultations, shared responsibilities and dispute resolution.

2. Service Standards

Performance Indicator	Performance Measure	Target
Water Services		
Water mains breaks	Per 100 km / year	<30
Incidents of unplanned interruptions	Per 1,000 connections / year	<50
Water quality related complaints	Per 1,000 connections / year	<10
Drinking water quality	% of samples tested with no <i>E. coli</i> detection / year	98%
Time to respond to water incidents – water quality complaints, burst mains, supply interruption	% of response to incident <12 hours	>95%
Sewerage Services		
Sewer mains breaks and chokes (blockages)	Per 100 km / year	<25
Sewerage complaints – overflow on properties and odour	Per 1,000 connections / year	<50
Time to respond to sewerage incidents – blockages, chokes, overflows	% of response to incident <12 hours	>95%
Combined		
Total water and sewerage complaints (any nature)	Per 1,000 connections / year	<120

3. Processes

3.1 Service connections

Property owners who wish to connect to the water or sewerage service need to submit an application form to Council, along with the prescribed fee. Service connections are approved if the property has access to the reticulated water or sewerage service and the water main or sewer line is capable of providing the required service. The installation of a new service connection is usually undertaken within 10 business days of receiving the complete application form and fee.

3.2 Billing

The water tariff is charged based on annual meter reading at the end of each financial year. There is an annual water allocation of 900 kL/year for domestic usage, which, if exceeded attracts additional charges. There is a fixed annual charge for sewerage.

Council levies charges half yearly generally in the months of February and August, and these are included in the Rates Notice. Information about how to pay the bill is included in the Notice, including in person at the council office (cash, cheque, money order or EFTPOS), by mail (cheque or money order), BPay or by phone (credit card).

Council offers a 10% discount on water and waste water charges (with the exception of excessive water consumption) where rates/charges are paid within 30 days. If you are posting your rates payment, please ensure sufficient time to allow for any potential postal delays. Pensioner rebates are also provided, subject to application and verification by Council.

For the current schedule of fees and charges, visit the Burke Shire Council website (pp. 23-24):

<http://www.burke.qld.gov.au/documents/5174497/9670285/Burke%20Shire%20Council%202015-2016%20Budget>

3.3 Metering

To ensure equity of charges a water meter is required for all properties. The meters installed by Council are calibrated prior to installation and are of high quality. The meter is read quarterly and exceedence from the annual allocation is charged on the bill.

A customer may request a special meter reading, which will incur a fee. If the customer considers that the meter is faulty, Council will test the meter once a fee is paid. The fee will be refunded and adjustment made to the bill if the meter is found to be faulty.

3.4. Customer Consultation

The methods that Council uses to communicate with its customers include:

- mail out with the Rates Notice
- Burke Shire Council website
- letter box drop, door knocking
- community consultation sessions
- social media (Facebook)

A minimum of at least 48 hours notice is provided to customers before any unplanned interruption to the water or sewerage services.

3.5. Complaints and Dispute Resolutions

Customers may lodge a complaint in person, by calling the Council office or in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). On receipt of the complaint Council will undertake the following steps:

- immediately register the complaint in our system
- assign a staff member to investigate the complaint
- investigate the complaint as soon as possible and efficiently
- close out the complaint and inform the customer of the outcomes, if required

If you are not satisfied with the outcome you may have the resolution reviewed by the CEO, or considered at an Ordinary Meeting of Council. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to take your concerns to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

3.6. Water Restrictions

While Council does not anticipate the need to impose water restrictions, Council reserves the right to impose water restrictions in order to effectively manage water resources and prevent adverse impacts from potential drought conditions.

Notices relating to water restrictions are communicated to customers using the methods mentioned in section 3.4.

3.7. Shared Rights and Responsibilities

Council and its customers have rights and responsibilities associated with the provision of water and wastewater services, including:

- Council employees have the right to enter private property at any reasonable time to read, repair or replace a water meter, or to inspect, operate, repair, maintain or remove council water or sewerage infrastructure.
- Council employees entering private property are required to carry and show customers current authorised identification card.
- Council is responsible for maintaining water meters and the pipes between the water main and the water meter.
- Property owners are responsible for all plumbing fixtures between the water meter and water taps, and all sewerage fixtures and pipes up to the point where they connect with the council system.
- Council has the right to ask customers to correct faults in their plumbing or to remove trees that interfere with council water or sewerage infrastructure.
- Customers are responsible for ensuring their water meters are accessible and that any manholes on their property are not covered or obstructed.

Contact Information

Telephone	(07) 4745 5100
Email	office@burke.qld.gov.au
Website	www.burke.qld.gov.au
Emergency or After Hours	(07) 4745 5100
Office Hours	8:30 am - 4:00 pm Monday to Friday, excluding Public
Address	65 Musgrave Street / PO Box 90 Burketown QLD 4830

Community Submissions

In accordance with Queensland legislation, these customer service standards must pass through a community submission process, with all submissions considered before final adoption of the Customer Service Standards. Please provide submissions in writing by 30 September and address to:

- office@burke.qld.gov.au
- Attention CEO: Customer Service Standards

Review

In accordance with Queensland legislation, the customer service standards will be reviewed in June 2020, unless Council deems an earlier review is necessary.