

# Customer Service Standards

Water and Wastewater

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## 1. Water and Wastewater Customer Service Standards

Burdekin Shire Council is a registered Service Provider under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 (the Act).

Burdekin Shire Council is committed to providing access to affordable, safe and reliable water and wastewater services to shire residents connected to those services.

The Act requires council to implement certain measures to ensure the continuity of services and the protection of customers' interests. It also requires council to quantify these measures and make a copy available to its customers.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Customer Service Standards (CSS)

Pursuant to Division 3 – Customer Service Standards, the purpose of this CSS is to ensure that our customers are protected by the provisions of the Act particularly relating to adequacy, safety, quality and continuity of supply. These provisions, along with customer service performance target measures, form the basis for which Burdekin Shire Council aims to deliver water and wastewater services.

The CSS sets out the rights and obligations of Burdekin Shire Council and its customers and provides details of:

The level of service to be provided by Burdekin Shire Council.

The process for establishing new connections, billing, metering, accounting, customer consultation, complaints and dispute resolution.

Other matters stated in guidelines, if any, made by the regulator for preparing the Customer Service Standard.

### 1.2 Council's Commitment to Customer Service

Council welcomes customer comments, enquiries and suggestions. Our customers are encouraged to contact Council's Customer Service Centre for assistance on matters such as service difficulties and faults, general and technical enquiries.

Council maintains a 24-hour emergency contact service for emergencies related to service systems, such as a burst water main or sewerage overflow, and will respond promptly to customer enquiries, complaints and requests.

### 1.3 When the Customer Service Standard does not apply

This Standard does not apply during periods of declared natural disasters and emergencies until as soon as practicable after the affected normal services have been restored, or where the customer has failed to provide clear access to Council's infrastructure.

### 1.4 Amending the Customer Service Standard

This Standard is adopted by Council resolution and can only be varied by same, or at the direction of the Regulator. Council in accordance with Section 120 of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 must review the customer service standard at least every five (5) years.

## 2. Water and Wastewater – Shared Rights and Responsibilities

Both the Burdekin Shire Council and its Customers have rights and responsibilities associated with the provision and use of water and wastewater services.

### 2.1 Council's Rights and Responsibilities as a Service Provider are:

- Council has the right to interrupt, postpone or limit the supply of services in situations when:
- Infrastructure is damaged or requires inspection, maintenance, repair or replacement
- In the event of drought or as part of a Demand Management Plan
- In the event of fire, flood, cyclone, power shortage or other emergencies
- To inspect, maintain, operate, repair, replace or remove local government infrastructure, employees of Burdekin Shire Council may enter a property without providing notice and without the permission of the owner and occupier of the property. As soon as an employee enters the property, they must inform any occupier of the property of the reason for entering the property and that the representative is authorised under the *Local Government Act 2009 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* to enter the property and produce an identity card for the owner and occupier of the property to inspect.
- To limit any inconvenience, Burdekin Shire Council will attempt to carry out work at times convenient to owners and occupiers except in an emergent situation, or if a breach of legislation is suspected.
- Council is responsible for maintaining water meters and pipes between the water main and the meter.
- Council has the authority to request customers to effect necessary repairs to their internal plumbing to ensure compliance with the Plumbing and Drainage Act Queensland.
- Council has the right to recover all costs from the property owner for damage by the property owner or third party to any Council infrastructure including water services and meters.

### 2.2 The Customer Rights and Responsibilities are:

- Customers within the declared water and sewerage service areas have a right to be connected to council's infrastructure.
- Customers have the right to make a complaint in accordance with Division 3, s.118 of the Act.
- Customers must apply to and receive approval from Burdekin Shire Council to connect to water and wastewater services.
- Customers must engage a licensed plumber to do internal work on the customer's property including connection to a water meter.
- Wastewater and trade waste customers are responsible for maintaining all plumbing, drainage and fixtures to the point where they connect with Council's infrastructure. Council's infrastructure commences at the inspection opening (i/o) on the property connection stub.

- The Customer is responsible for the installation and maintenance of plumbing on the property side of the meter.
- Customers must assist Council's response to water and wastewater issues by:
  - Providing clear access to the water meter, sewer manholes and other infrastructure within and adjacent to their property by ensuring that any concrete or other structures, tree roots and vegetation are kept well clear and not covering sewer manholes with soil, garden mulch or parked vehicles
  - Gaining Council permission to build over sewerage infrastructure within their property
  - Reporting any unauthorised discharge into or interference with the water and wastewater networks
  - Notifying Council's Customer Service Centre of any service difficulties and faults that customers have encountered on (07) 4783 9800 – 24-hour service, seven days per week.
- Customers must comply with all notices served by Council under the Water Act 2000, to carry out remedial works within their property within the specified timeframe. Should the customer not comply with an issued notice within the specified time frame, Council has the authority under the Water Act 2000, to enter private property, carry out the required work and recover all costs from the owner.

### 3. Customer Service Procedures

As a registered water service provider, Burdekin Shire Council must, by resolution, declare all or part of its local government area to be a declared service area for a water and/or wastewater.

In the case of a new water service outside of the Declared Water Service area, customers must apply for a service connection. Council will consider each application on its merits. Should the connection be approved, all costs for extension to and provision to the service will be recovered from the customer for the provision of the service.

#### 3.1 New Connections

If a customer wishes to apply for any of the following services, they will need to submit the appropriate application form and payment to Council. These forms are available from the Customer Service Centre at 145 Young Street, Ayr, or from Council's website at [www.burdekin.qld.gov.au](http://www.burdekin.qld.gov.au)

- New water service
- Relocation of existing water service
- Disconnection/reconnection of water service
- Upgrade water service
- New wastewater service connection
- Relocation of wastewater service connection

## 3.2 Charges and Customer Accounts

Fees, charges and rates are set annually by Council resolution. The current water and wastewater rates and charges are available on our website at [www.burdekin.qld.gov.au](http://www.burdekin.qld.gov.au).

Burdekin Shire Council charges users a fixed access charge to its water and wastewater networks and a two-tiered consumption charge for water used. Water meters are read twice per year in May/June and October/November. Water consumption charge notices are sent out in August/September with the annual rates notices and in January of the following year.

## 3.3 Water Meters

It is compulsory that all serviced properties be metered. A water meter will be installed as part of a new water service connection and will remain the property of Council. The meter will be used to measure the water consumption component of any water charges. All new water meters will be within industry standard limits of accuracy ( $\pm 2\%$ ).

Burdekin Shire Council actively monitors the accuracy of its water meter fleet, and through its water meter replacement program targets inaccurate meters. Where a customer has reason to doubt either the accuracy or reliability of their water meter, Burdekin Shire Council will offer to test the meter for the fee prescribed in Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges. If the meter is found to be defective, then the fee will be reimbursed along with the amount of any water consumption over-charge.

Should you have any problems or enquiries regarding your meter, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 4783 9800.

## 3.4 Service Alterations

If a customer requests to relocate an existing service, the customer will need to complete the appropriate application form, available from the Customer Service Centre or by downloading from the public website. The application form must be submitted along with the relevant fee.

## 3.5 Disconnection of Water or Wastewater Services

If a customer no longer requires a water supply or wastewater service, they may apply in writing to Council for disconnection. An application form is available from the Customer Service Centre or can be downloaded from the public website. Approval will be subject to legislation and a disconnection fee, as per the adopted fees and charges, will apply.

## 3.6 Reconnection of Water Service

If a customer requests to reconnect to the water supply network, the customer will be required to complete the appropriate application form and pay a fee to cover the reconnection service application. Water services must be reconnected by Council.

### 3.7 Sanitary Drains

The owner of a property is responsible for the maintenance and repair of any sanitary drains on their property, up to and including the connection point on Council's sewer. This also includes the cost of clearing any blockages caused by the ingress of tree roots or other foreign objects.

Council is responsible for clearing blockages in Council's wastewater infrastructure. Private plumbers or drainers are not to undertake any work to clear a blockage in Council sewer or wastewater infrastructure without obtaining Council's approval prior to commencing any work. If approved, the Council will reimburse the private Plumber or Drainer fees.

### 3.8 Damage to Infrastructure

If Council's water or wastewater infrastructure is damaged, please report the damage to Council's Customer Service Centre on (07) 4783 9800, 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

Council will charge the owner of the property for the cost of repairing any accidental damage to Council's infrastructure. It is the property owner's responsibility to recover costs from any third party that may have caused the damage.

Where incidental damage to council infrastructure is caused by a customer's tree or tree roots, the customer will be provided the opportunity to remove the tree at their own costs. Should the customer fail to do so to the satisfaction of Council, Council will remove the tree and recover costs associated with the removal.

If Council's infrastructure is damaged intentionally this is considered an offence and is provided for in the Act. If you witness Council infrastructure being intentionally damaged please report the damage as soon as possible to minimise any potential compromise to community health.

If damage is done to infrastructure on the property owner's side of the property boundary, after the water meter, then it is the responsibility of the owner to repair or replace the infrastructure. Where a Council employee caused the damage through no fault of the owner, Council will be responsible for the repair of any infrastructure on the property owner's side.

### 3.9 Works and Repairs

When conducting works or repairs, Burdekin Shire Council will ensure the area is left in the same standard as before the work or repairs were carried out. Any work area also will be adequately fenced or signed to ensure safety.

### 3.10 Trade Waste

A customer may discharge trade waste into Council's Wastewater System provided the customer has first obtained approval for a trade waste permit from Council. The Trade Waste Application for Permit to Discharge to Sewer form is available from the Customer Service Centre or can be downloaded from Council's website. All approvals are subject to conditions contained in Council's Trade Waste Policy, management plan and guidelines and are usually valid for and renewable each financial year. Council may review the conditions at renewal of the permit. Conditions include sewer admission limits and the service frequency of any pre-treatment devices.

Council will accept trade waste only where there is no likelihood the trade waste will harm a person/s, the



environment and/or Council's wastewater system.

### 3.11 Sub-metering

Sub-metering is an initiative aimed at water conservation measures and the sustainability of water supply. Sub-metering is a legal requirement in all new developments of multi-unit properties. Burdekin Shire Council is required to comply with the *Plumbing and Drainage Act Queensland and subservient documents*.

### 3.12 Water Restrictions

Water restrictions will be implemented consistent with the provisions of the Burdekin Shire Council Demand Management Plan. Burdekin Shire Council will notify customers a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of water restrictions coming into effect as part of the Demand Management Strategy to ensure security of water resources and continuity of supply.

### 3.13 Customer Consultation

Burdekin Shire Council will endeavour to inform customers of any planned interruptions to normal service provision at least 48 hours in advance. This will be via posting relevant information on Council's website, Council's social media platforms, advertising in the local paper, displayed on roadside LED message boards or alternative methods as appropriate. In the event of a planned loss of supply to customers' residence or business, Council will endeavour to complete a letter drop at the affected address at least 48 hours prior to work beginning.

### 3.14 Customer Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution

Burdekin Shire Council will endeavour to provide the highest level of service to its water and wastewater customers.

In the first instance should the customer have any problem with the service they have received, or compliance with the targets set out in this document they should contact Customer Service to report their concerns.

Burdekin Shire Council will investigate any complaints registered with Council in compliance with its Complaints Management Policy.

Where the customer is not satisfied with the outcome or resolution of their complaint, they may contact the Queensland Water Supply Regulator with their concerns.

## 4. Service Level Standards

### 4.1 Quality of Water

Burdekin Shire Council is committed to supplying our Customers with water that complies with the National Health and Medical Research Council's Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.



## 4.2 Adequacy of Supply

Council is committed to providing a safe and reliable water supply system to the Burdekin community. Council will endeavour to maintain water flow and pressure in accordance with State Government guidelines.

If customers notice a significant change in the usual water supply pressure not caused by household pipes and fittings, Council encourages customers to contact the Burdekin Shire Council immediately. Council will investigate and advise customers of any action that has been or needs to be taken to rectify problems.

## 4.3 Continuity of Supply

Council has outlined its strategy for the provision of improved water and sewerage network reliability through planned infrastructure upgrades in its Corporate plan. Council will continue to undertake ongoing maintenance and repair work to ensure its services will operate effectively in the long term. Council aims to provide a reliable long-term water supply and wastewater service to Burdekin Shire customers.

## 4.4 Effective Transport of Waste / Effluent

Burdekin Shire Council is committed to environmentally sound practices. Council will always treat wastewater and dispose of effluent and biosolids (sludge) in an environmentally responsible manner. The Ayr and Home Hill Wastewater Treatment Plants are operated in accordance with statutory licence conditions set by the Department of Environment and Science.

## 5. Water – Key Performance Indicators

| Key Service Characteristics | Customer Service Indicator   |                                     | Target Response Time | Target Repair Time | Customer Service Target |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Day to Day</b>           | Dirty Water / Water Quality  |                                     | <2 hour              |                    | >95%                    |
|                             |  | Flush                               |                      | <4 hours           | >90%                    |
|                             | Broken Water Main  |                                     | <45 minutes          |                    | >95%                    |
|                             |  | Repair -urgent LOS                  |                      | <8 hours           | >90%                    |
|                             | Broken Water Service   |                                     | <45 minutes          |                    | >95%                    |
|                             |  | Repair -urgent LOS                  |                      | <5 hours           | >90%                    |
|                             |  | Repair – non urgent                 |                      | <5 working days    | >90%                    |
|                             | Leaking Water Service/Main/Hydrant<br>NON URGENT   |                                     | <1 working day       |                    | >95%                    |
|                             | Repair   | Repair                              |                      | <30 Working Days   | >90%                    |
|                             | Defective Stopcock (urgent)  |                                     | <45 minutes          |                    | >95%                    |
|                             | Repair   |                                     |                      | <2 hours           | >90%                    |
|                             | Defective Stopcock (non-urgent)  |                                     | <1 working day       |                    | >90%                    |
|                             | Repair   |                                     |                      | <30 Working Days   | >90%                    |
|                             | Loss of Supply - Respond   |                                     | <45 minutes          |                    | >95%                    |
|                             | Low Water Pressure - Respond   |                                     | <1 working day       |                    | >95%                    |
|                             |  | Repair (If required)                |                      | <5 working Days    | >90%                    |
|                             | Planned Interruptions  |                                     |                      |                    |                         |
|                             | Provide Prior Notice of Planned Works  |                                     | <48 hours            |                    | >90%                    |
|                             | Provide Prior Notice of Planned Works-Minimum requirement Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 |                                     | <24 hours            |                    | >98%                    |
|                             | Water Service Replacement  |                                     |                      | <30 Working Days   | >90%                    |
|                             | New Water Service  |                                     |                      | <40 working days   | >90%                    |
|                             | Flow / Pressure Investigation  |                                     |                      | <30 Working Days   | >90%                    |
|                             | Unplanned Interruptions  | Number of Incidents                 |                      |                    | <50/1000 connections    |
|                             | Ratio of Unplanned to Planned Interruptions  |                                     |                      |                    | <1:3                    |
| <b>Quality of Water</b>     | Microbiological (Coliforms & E-Coli)   | No of Tests completed and in limits |                      |                    | <98%                    |
|                             | Physical/Chemical Parameters   | No of Tests completed and in limits |                      |                    | <95%                    |
|                             | Water Quality Complaints (Taste/Odour - validated)   | Number of Incidents                 |                      |                    | <5/1000 connections     |
|                             | Dirty Water Complaints (validated)   | Number of Incidents                 |                      |                    | <30 /1000 connections   |

| Key Service Characteristics | Customer Service Indicator  |                  | Target Response Time | Target Repair Time | Customer Service Target |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Adequacy of Supply          | Minimum flow at boundary  | Urban (L/minute) | >22                  |                    | <10/1000 connections    |
|                             |   | Rural (L/minute) | >4.5                 |                    | <5/1000 connections     |
|                             | Minimum Static Pressure   | Urban (m)        | >20                  |                    | <5/1000 connections     |
|                             |   | Rural (m)        | >12                  |                    | <10/1000 connections    |
| Continuity of Supply        | Number of Water Main Breaks   | Number of breaks |                      |                    | <10/100km of main       |
|                             | Intervention level for water main replacement / renewal                                 | Number of breaks |                      |                    | 3 per segment           |
|                             | System Water Loss and Unaccounted Water Use   | (Litres/Con/Day) |                      |                    | <500                    |
| Customer Service            | Number of complaints about water bill (confirmed)                                       |                  |                      |                    | <10/1000 connections    |
|                             | Ratio for compliments to complaints (confirmed) about general customer service standard |                  |                      |                    | >2:1                    |

## 6. Wastewater Key Performance Indicators

| Key Service Characteristics                    | Customer Service Indicator                   |   | Target Response Time | Target Rectification Time | Customer Service Target |
|--|--|---|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Continuity of Supply</b>                    | Sewer Main Breaks and Chokes                 | Number of Incidents   |                      |                           | <10/100km Sewer         |
|  | Rising Main Breaks                           | Number of Incidents   |                      |                           | <1/10km Rising Main     |
|  | Sewer Inflow/Infiltration                    | Ratio of ADWF to MWWF   |                      |                           | >1:6                    |
| <b>Effective Transport of Waste / Effluent</b> | Pump Station Overflows/Annum                 | Number of Incidents (excluding Flooding/Loss of Power supply) | < 45 minutes         | <4 hours                  | <2                      |
|  | Sewage Overflows (confirmed)                 | Response and repair times met                                 | < 45 minutes         | <8 hours                  | >90%                    |
|  | Sewage Main Breaks and Chokes (confirmed)    | Response and repair times met                                 | < 45 minutes         | <8 hours                  | >90%                    |
|  |  |   |                      |                           |                         |
|  |  |   |                      |                           |                         |
|  | Odour Complaints                             | Response and repair times met                                 | <4 working hour      | <30 Working days          | >50%                    |
|  | Total Sewage overflows/Annum                 | Number of confirmed Incidents                                 |                      |                           | <10/100km Sewer         |
|  | Odour Complaints/Annum (verified)            | Number of confirmed Incidents                                 |                      |                           | <5/100km Sewer          |
|  | Sewage Overflows to Customer                 | Number of confirmed Incidents                                 |                      |                           | <5/1000 Connections     |
|  | Compliance with EPA Licence Conditions/Annum | Percentage compliance   |                      |                           | >98%                    |

## 7. Document History and Version Control

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Title of Document</b>         | Customer Service Standards Water Wastewater               |
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