

## Frequently asked questions about Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates

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### Why and when were these rebates introduced?

The NSW Government introduced the NSW Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates from 2019-2020 to reduce cost pressures on pensioners who own and live in a property serviced by a private water or sewerage scheme. Public water utilities in NSW also offer pensioner rebates to their customers.

Applications for the Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebate for the 2021-2022 financial year closed on 30 June 2022.

Applications are now open for the 2022-2023 financial year and will close on 30 June 2023.

### What is a private water scheme?

The rebates only apply to private water schemes that are licensed under the *Water Industry Competition Act 2006*. This Act allows private companies to develop and run water supply and wastewater (sewerage) schemes. The aim of the Act is to provide more competition in the water sector and to encourage water recycling so that the use of scarce drinking water resources in NSW is reduced.

These schemes are run and owned by private companies or associations. Most schemes provide services to housing estates and large apartment developments. A few schemes provide recycled water to large commercial or industrial customers.

Of the residential schemes, some provide both drinking water and wastewater (sewerage) services to customers' properties. Other schemes only provide wastewater services, with drinking water supplied to residents by the local public water utility. Most schemes also provide recycled water to their customers for uses such as flushing toilets and watering gardens.

## Frequently asked questions

There are currently 9 licensed private water schemes that issue bills to individual residential customers. A list of these schemes and their retailers is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Licensed private water schemes

Scheme name/location	Billier name/licensed retailer	Drinking water charges	Wastewater charges
Box Hill North*	Box Hill Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	No	Yes
Catherine Hill Bay	Solo Water	Yes	Yes
Central Park, Chippendale	Central Park Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	Yes	Yes
Cooranbong North	Cooranbong Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	Yes	Yes
Discovery Point, Wollie Creek	Discovery Point Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	Yes	Yes
Huntlee	Huntlee Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	Yes	Yes
Narara	Narara Ecovillage Co-operative	Yes	Yes
Pitt Town*	Pitt Town Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	No	Yes
Shepherds Bay, Meadowbank	Shepherds Bay Water / Altogether Group Pty Ltd**	Yes	Yes

\*Schemes that are marked with an asterisk (\*) in the above list do not bill residents for drinking water. Instead, the local public water utility bills residents for drinking water.

\*\*Altogether Group Pty Ltd previously known as Flow Systems

[Note that the Bingara Gorge scheme at Wilton is now owned by Sydney Water and Sydney Water will provide pensioner rebates on these services-](#)

## Frequently asked questions

### How do I know if my home is serviced by a private water scheme?

The NSW Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates only apply to private water schemes that are licensed under the *Water Industry Competition Act 2006* and that bill individual residential customers directly. These Schemes are listed in [Table 1](#).

If you have any other questions about the rebates, there is more information at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/About-Us/Sydney-Metropolitan-Water/Water-Industry-Reform/NSW-Private-Water-Scheme-Pensioner-Rebates> or you can contact the Department of Planning and Environment on 1800 953 119 or by emailing [private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au)

### How do I apply for a pensioner rebate on my water bills if my home isn't serviced by a private water scheme?

All public water utilities in NSW offer rebates to pensioners on their water bills. You can contact your local water utility (their contact details will be on your water bill) to ask about the rebates they offer and how to apply.

This webpage also has links to some of the public water utilities' pensioner rebates: [www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/pensioner-water-rebate](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/pensioner-water-rebate).

If you are unsure if your property is part of one of the schemes listed above, you can contact your water utility for advice. Your utility can also advise you on any rebates they offer to pensioners.

If you have concerns about your water utility, or would like to make a complaint about them, you can contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) on 1800 246 545 or visit [www.ewon.com.au/page/suppliers/suppliers-in-nsw/water-providers](http://www.ewon.com.au/page/suppliers/suppliers-in-nsw/water-providers)

If you have any other questions about the private water rebates, you can contact the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 1800 953 119 or by email: [private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au)

### What are the eligibility criteria for the rebates?

You can apply for the private water rebates if you:

- are the owner of a residence serviced by one of the schemes listed in [Table 1](#) and this is your principal place of residence; and
- are a customer of the retailer of the privately operated water scheme; and
- receive bills in your name from that retailer for the supply of drinking water and/or wastewater (sewerage) services to that residence; and
- hold or receive one of the following:
  - Pensioner Concession Card issued by the Australian Government's Services Australia or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA); or
  - DVA Gold Health Card marked with either:
    - War Widow or War Widower, or
    - Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA), or
    - Totally and Temporarily Incapacitated (TTI), or
    - Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI), or
  - DVA intermediate rate pension.

### How do I apply for the rebates?

To apply please complete an application form and submit your completed application with a copy of your relevant water bill to the Department of Planning Environment. You can obtain the application form online, by clicking the following link: [2022-2023 application form - PDF](#)

You can also obtain an application form from your private water scheme retailer or by contacting the Private Water Rebates team in the Department of Planning and Environment on 1800 953 119 or by emailing [private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Applications for the 2022 – 2023 financial year close on **30 June 2023**.

You can submit the completed form, along with copies of your most recent water bill for 2022-2023, by post or email:

- Email to: [private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au)
- Post to: [NSW Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates, PO Box 435, Parramatta, NSW 2124](#)

### What information do I need to provide with my application?

You will need to provide the following information in or with your completed application form:

- a copy of your most recent water/wastewater (sewerage) bill issued by the relevant private water scheme retailer for the year you're applying for. The bill must:
  - be issued in the 2022-2023 financial year and show a billing period within the 2022-23 financial year
  - include your name and address which must be the same as the name and address on your pensioner concession card or gold health card
  - confirm you receive drinking water and/or wastewater (sewerage) services
  - be in PDF or JPEG format if you are submitting your application by email
- your personal and contact details
- your pensioner concession card or gold health card details
- your bank account details for the electronic funds transfer.

### How much are the rebates and how often are they paid?

As the prices charged by private water schemes can vary, the government has decided to pay an amount equivalent to the pensioner rebate provided by Sydney Water to its customers. Sydney Water is the largest water utility in NSW, serving about 5 million people in the Greater Sydney region.

## Frequently asked questions

The private water rebate on your:

- **drinking water service charges** is \$97.20 per eligible household per financial year
- **wastewater (sewerage) service charges** is \$495.23 per eligible household per financial year.

Customers who are eligible for both the private water and wastewater (sewerage) rebates will receive a combined rebate payment of \$592.43 per household per year.

Customers of some private water schemes are billed directly by their local public water utility (for example, Sydney Water) for their drinking water. Customers of these schemes are only eligible to receive the private water rebate on their wastewater service charges and should apply to their local public water utility for a pensioner rebate on their drinking water service charges.

**Note:** If you are billed by your public water utility for drinking water, you can contact your public water utility (its contact details will be on your water bill) to ask about the rebates it offers and how to apply. This webpage also has links to some of the public water utilities' pensioner rebates: [www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/pensioner-water-rebate](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/pensioner-water-rebate)

If you are unsure of which services your private water scheme retailer bills you for, you can contact them directly for advice.

Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates will only be paid to one eligible pensioner per household once per financial year and only if that property is your principal place of residence.

The Department of Planning and Environment pays the rebate as a lump sum payment, deposited into the applicant's nominated bank account.

## Why aren't water usage charges, stormwater charges and recycled water charges covered by the rebates?

The NSW Private Water Scheme Pensioner Rebates are subject to the same rules as Sydney Water's pensioner rebate and Sydney Water does not provide rebates on water usage charges (that is, on the amount of water you use) or on recycled water charges.

Private water schemes do not provide or charge for stormwater services.

## Once I've submitted my application, how long will it take for the rebates to be paid?

The Department of Planning and Environment processes rebate applications and makes payments to eligible households.

The Department will send you a confirmation email or letter when it commences processing your application. The Department will process your application and provide you with a response as soon as possible.

If the Department asks you for more information, your application will not be assessed further until you have provided the information required.

### Who can I contact if I have any questions about the rebates?

You can find more information on the rebates at the department's website: <https://planning.nsw.gov.au/About-Us/Sydney-Metropolitan-Water/Water-Industry-Reform/NSW-Private-Water-Scheme-Pensioner-Rebates>. You can contact the Private Water Rebates team in the Department of Planning and Environment by calling 1800 953 119 or by emailing [private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:private.water.rebates@planning.nsw.gov.au)

If you have questions about **other** water rebates, please contact your water retailer or Service NSW:

- Phone: 13 77 88
- Online request: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/contact-us>
- Post: Service NSW, GPO Box 7057, Sydney, NSW 2001

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