



# High water bills



## High bills

Your water bills will naturally go up and down over time, depending on factors like the weather, how many people are at home, and your daily routines. Water use often increases in hotter, drier months.

Sometimes, you may receive a bill that doesn't match your usual pattern and feels unexpectedly high. This could be because:

- your bill includes unpaid amounts or extra charges
- your bill is estimated
- the cost per kilolitre has changed
- you used more water than usual
- you have a leak.

This fact sheet will walk you through each possibility, how to check your bill, and what to do next.

## You haven't paid previous amounts

A high bill may include money still owed from earlier bills. This can happen if:

- you didn't receive a past bill or didn't notice it
- you only paid part of a previous bill.

If this has happened more than once, the unpaid amounts can add up over time.

## Your bill includes fees and charges

Check your bill to see if it includes:

- non-payment fees
- meter test, repair or replacement fees
- fees charged for technical services

If something doesn't look right, contact your provider to ask why the fee was applied.

## Your bill is an estimated bill

If your provider can't access your meter, it may estimate how much water you used. This is usually based on your past use or an average for similar customers.

Estimated bills must be clearly labelled. Look for the word 'estimated' next to the current reading (or similar).

Because an estimate is only an approximation, it can sometimes be too low or too high. Read our [Estimated bills](#) fact sheet for more information.

If you think your bill is estimated, ask your provider why. There may be an access issue on your property, such as obstacles blocking the meter.

You can also ask if you can submit a self-read before the due date and have the bill reissued.

## The price has changed

In South Australia, most people get their water from SA Water. Some areas are supplied by small-scale water networks, such as local councils or private companies.

All water providers must follow state and/or national rules when setting their prices. When these rules change, providers may increase the daily supply charge or the price per kilolitre (kL).

This can cause your bill to rise even if your water use hasn't changed, although the increase is usually small.

## Good to know

If your provider is SA Water, charges are tiered, meaning the more water you use, the more you pay per kilolitre. Check your bill to see if you've moved into a higher pricing tier.

## You used more than usual

Compare your high bill with the bill you received at the same time last year. Check your usage on the bill (shown in kL) to see how much water you used.

If your usage is higher than last year's, consider questions like:

- Have you had guests staying?
- Have you used more water in the garden?
- Have you used some appliances (like your dishwasher) more often?

## You have a leak

To check for a water leak:

1. Turn your water off.
2. Read your water meter.
3. Wait 2 hours without using any water.
4. Read your meter again.

If the reading has changed, you may have a leak. Contact a plumber to help you work out where the leak is and fix it. Leaks get worse over time, so fixing them early can help avoid higher bills.

## Your bill is wrong

Water bills can be complicated, and mistakes do sometimes happen. Your provider might:

- forget to apply concessions, discounts or credits
- misplace a payment or not apply it to your account
- misread your meter or use incorrect meter data.

If something doesn't look right, ask your provider to review the bill. If you're not satisfied with the response, contact us.

## Is your usage still high?

You can use your water meter to check whether your water use is still high or has returned to normal.

### Step 1: Check your current daily water use

- Take a meter reading at the same time on two days in a row.
- Subtract the first reading from the second. This shows how much water you used in 24 hours.

### Step 2: Work out your average daily use for the high-bill period.

- Find the start and end dates of the billing period on your bill and count how many days it covers.
- Find the total kilolitres (kL) of water used during that period.
- Divide the total kL by the number of days.


### Step 3: Compare the results.

## Payment help

If your bill is too high for you to pay, contact your provider as soon as possible. They can:

- set up a payment plan
- check whether you're eligible for concessions or rebates
- look at your water use to help you save
- offer other support depending on your situation.

## Need help?

**Call us** **1800 665 565** (free call)  
Monday to Friday,  
8:30am to 5:00pm  
 **131 450** (interpreter service)

**Text us** **0488 854 555**

**Online** **ewosa.com.au**

We are independent. Our complaint resolution service is free, fair and easy to use. If we can't help you, we will tell you about someone who can.

