

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Water & Wastewater
2020-25



OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to the delivery of water and wastewater services to the Tablelands community and these customer service standards detail our obligations, expectations from the community, levels of services and processes.

As part of our commitment we have established and strive to achieve these customer assistance performance goals:

- fewer than 17 water main breaks per 100km of pipe
- fewer than 10 wastewater main breaks and chokes per 100km of pipe
- fewer than 250 unplanned water interruptions per 1000 connections
- maximum of 5hr response time to 100% of water bursts and leaks
- maximum of 5hr response time to 100% of wastewater issues
- fewer than 10 water quality complaints per 1000 connections
- fewer than 50 water and wastewater complaints per 1000 connections
- more than 98% of water quality samples taken each year will contain no Escherichia coli.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- [Request a service](#)
- [Provide feedback](#)
- [Report a problem](#)
- [Lodge a complaint](#)



info@trc.qld.gov.au



1300 362 242



Customer service centre in Atherton,
Malanda, Ravenshoe and Herberton



PO Box 573, Atherton 4883



Customer Experience Standards

Our Customer Experience Standards detail our commitment to providing you with a quality customer experience. Customer experience is everyone's responsibility.

Our Vision
We work together to create a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive and prosperous region.

Our Purpose
To be an efficient, effective and sustainable local government for our Tablelands community.

Our Commitment To You

We will:

- act in a way that reflects and upholds our values of customer service, integrity, teamwork and creativity
- be professional, considerate and courteous
- listen to and respect your issues and concerns
- provide clear and concise information in a timely manner
- set clear expectations and deliver on those commitments
- recognise and respond to the diverse needs of our community and act with proper regard and sensitivity
- actively measure and monitor our performance against our customer experience standards.



Help Us To Deliver Better Services

Help us be the best we can be by:

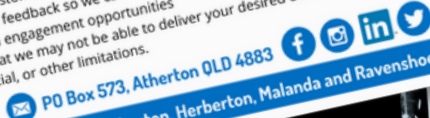
- treating our staff with respect and in a courteous manner
- providing accurate and complete information and documents
- quoting reference numbers when contacting us about existing applications or queries
- providing daytime contact details
- respecting other customers and community property
- giving constructive feedback so we can continuously improve
- getting involved in engagement opportunities
- understanding that we may not be able to deliver your desired outcome due to legislative, financial, or other limitations.

1300 362 242 (24hr customer service)

info@trc.qld.gov.au

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If you contact us by email we will respond within two business days.



Social media allows us to share our information and communicate with the community.

We will endeavour to answer your questions and/or clarify mis-information within one business day.



1300 362 242

When you call us we will aim to resolve your enquiry at the first point of contact. If we are unable to resolve your enquiry, we will forward it to an appropriate staff member.

We will return your call in one business day.

We can be contacted 24/7.



trc.qld.gov.au

Our website is our central source of information and we will ensure it is topical, timely and up-to-date.

You can access information, submit forms, make payments, view tenders, contribute to engagement, find community and sporting groups, book facilities, and more ...



If you come in to see us we will greet you with respect and a smile. We will aim to resolve your enquiry at the first point of contact. If we are unable to resolve your enquiry, we will put you in contact with an appropriate staff member.

You will receive a response by your preferred contact method within two business days.



Our customer request management system records, monitors and reports on requests we receive from the community.

Requests will be entered into our system on the day they are received or on the next business day. You will receive a customer reference number to follow your enquiry.

You will receive a response by your preferred contact method about your request within 10 business days.



If you see us while we are working outside we will put your safety first before endeavouring to answer your enquiry. If we can't resolve your enquiry we will provide details of how to best get an appropriate response.



If you contact us by mail we will respond within 10 business days.



We value your feedback and use it to learn and improve our services. We encourage you to provide your feedback via our website, email, social media, phone, mail and in person. Remember to let us know when we do something well.

Requests for service are different to complaints. You can request a service via our website, email, social media, phone (24/7), mail and in person. Our Complaints Policy outlines our formal complaints process if you are not satisfied with an outcome or service.



Customer Consultation

Communicating and engaging with the community is important to us and we will keep you informed on matters relating to water supply, wastewater services, charging, complaints handling and other issues.

Customer Assistance

We are committed to excellent service and encourage you to contact us for assistance with service difficulties and faults, accounts, general and technical enquiries, and suggestions.

We operate a 24/7 phone service for emergencies.

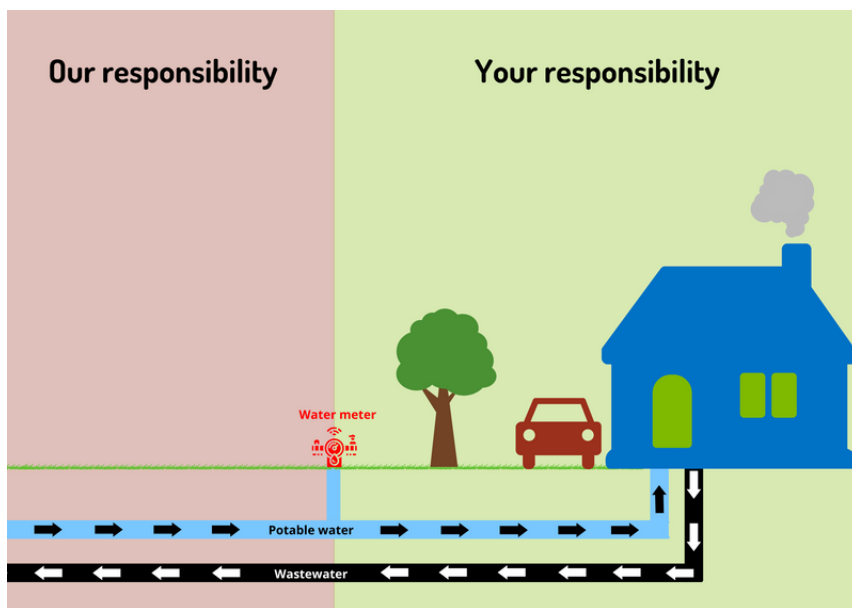
OUR OBLIGATIONS TO YOU

We must plan for, establish, operate and maintain systems for the:

- collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water for designated water schemes
- collection and supply of non-potable water to declared areas
- collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of wastewater.

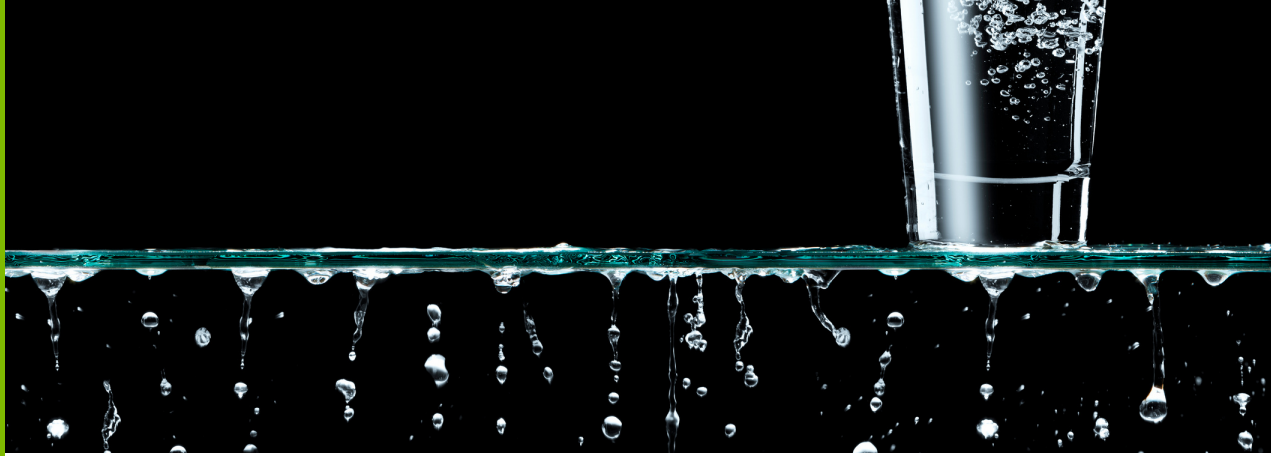
In providing these services, we pursue the objectives of our [Corporate Plan](#) and Operational Plan, comply with our [policies](#) and [local laws](#), and satisfy all statutory requirements.

These customer service standards do not apply during disasters or pandemics.



Service Areas

The service areas for water and wastewater are defined each year in the [Budget and Operational Plan](#).



YOUR OBLIGATIONS TO US

In addition to paying for your water supply and wastewater removal, we appreciate the community helping us by:

- applying for and receiving approval before connecting to our systems
- using water in a 'water-wise' manner and in accordance with its intended purpose
- maintaining water and wastewater pipes and fittings on your property in accordance with the standards
- engaging a licensed plumber to do work on your property
- providing unimpeded access to the water meter, water and wastewater mains, wastewater manholes and other infrastructure on and near your property
- selecting plants that won't damage water supply and wastewater infrastructure
- notifying us of any faults so we can quickly rectify them
- ensuring only authorised substances are released into sewers and applying for a trade waste permit to discharge trade waste to sewers.

ACCESSING WATER

Connection & Reconnection

Submit an [application form](#) and pay appropriate [fees](#) to apply for a water and/or wastewater connection in a serviced area.

We will perform the connections to the water network to ensure safety and reliability. A licenced plumber and drainer can perform the connection to the wastewater network providing we have installed the jump up. Depending on the circumstances, a TRC plumbing inspector may need to conduct a final inspection.



Disconnection

Contact us if you no longer need a water or wastewater service. Access charges to the service will still apply. Connecting to or disconnecting from the infrastructure without consent, or interfering with the infrastructure, can result in penalties.

All properties within the declared service area for water or wastewater services are required to connect to the infrastructure and will be charged accordingly.

Unauthorised Connections

If an unauthorised connection is not posing an immediate risk we will give notice and request a response within 48 hours as to why the disconnection should not take place. If the response is not satisfactory, we will disconnect the service.

If an unauthorised connection is causing damage to our infrastructure, we will enter the property and disengage the connection. In this situation we will provide a notice of disconnection to the owner or person who appears responsible for the property. If no-one is in attendance, we will leave the notice in a conspicuous and secure location.

We may recover costs associated with the disconnection.

Raw Water Connections

Some properties in the region have raw water connections. These connections are for the supply of water that is not for consumption, and these premises remain under a permanent boil water notice under an agreement with us. We will not consider applications for additional raw water connections.

Community Title Development

Community title development is a form of development where allotments are individually owned, with all associated infrastructure owned in common and privately operated. All associated infrastructure is to be of Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) standards and approved as a part of a development application.



Metered Standpipes

We lease metered standpipes for the extraction of water from our network. Water must only be extracted from the designated points and details will be provided at the time of hire. Private standpipes are prohibited. [Apply for a metered standpipe.](#)

Taking Water Without Approval

Water must not be extracted from our infrastructure without approval. This includes standpipes, hydrants and fill points. Taking water without approval may incur penalties.

SERVICES

Water Meters

A water meter will be installed as part of a new water service connection and will remain the property of TRC. The meter will be used as the basis of the consumption component of water charges. We will maintain water meters within industry standards limits of accuracy.

You can [request a meter test](#) if you have doubts about its accuracy or reliability. [Fees](#) may apply. If the meter is found to be defective and results in overcharging, the overcharged amount will be refunded and no fee will be charged for the meter test. Meters that are faulty will be replaced at our expense. Our [Water Usage Concession Policy](#) details the process for adjustments.

Water Pressure

Water pressure requirements will be observed from the FNQROC guidelines and monitored to ensure compliance with these customer service standards. [Contact us](#) if you believe your pressure is outside the guidelines.

Hydrant Flow Tests

We can conduct hydrant flow tests. [Fees](#) apply.



Special Meter Reads

If you're selling a property or there is a change of tenancy, you can request a special water meter reading to determine the amount of water used. Fees apply.

PROVIDING WATER

Temporary Interruptions

We may interrupt the water supply to perform emergency and planned work. Where possible, we will provide at least 48 hours' notice of planned work, including the reason/s for and duration of the interruption.

If there is a serious risk to public health, likelihood of injury to people, damage to property or our assets, or another emergency we are unable to provide advanced notice but will endeavour to provide information to the affected properties.

Water High Risk Customers

We maintain a register of high risk users including people who require at-home dialysis, people who are immunocompromised, and facilities such as daycare centres and schools. [Contact us](#) to register your details.

If you are registered as having a life-support machine requiring water, we will contact you for all water interruptions (planned or emergency). You may also be entitled to a concession.

Water Restrictions

We will apply [water restrictions](#) to responsibly manage supplies for the community while maintaining compliance with water extraction licences and protecting the environment. The restrictions will be enforced in accordance with the Water Supply (Safety & Reliability) Act and can include the application of penalty notices if repeatedly breached.



Restricting Water Services

Under certain circumstances we may need to restrict the:

- volume of water taken by or supplied to a customer or type of customer
- hours when water may be used on the premises for stated purposes
- way water may be used on premises.

These situations may include excessive leaks that a property owner does not fix, and repeated excessive water use.

LOOKING AFTER OUR SYSTEMS

Remedial Work

Avoid building structures over water and wastewater mains and ensure your gardens don't damage water and wastewater infrastructure. We may request that an owner address vegetation or other issues adversely affecting our infrastructure.

Damage to Infrastructure

Contact us if you are doing work and need to know the location of our services. Penalties may apply if you damage or interfere with our infrastructure.

Entry to Private Property

In certain circumstances we may need to enter a property to carry out investigations and/or work on the water or wastewater systems. We will provide a minimum of 48 hours' notice for planned work within a property and attempt to carry out the work during business hours or at other times convenient to commercial customers. In an emergency we will attempt to inform the property's occupier of the repairs and anticipated duration. We will also endeavour to inform you when the work is complete. All representatives of TRC will be readily identifiable from their uniform and identification.



Acceptance of Waste From Onsite Treatment Systems

Properties with onsite wastewater treatment and disposal systems e.g. septic tanks need to conduct pump outs on a regular basis. Contact a local provider who is licenced to cart regulated waste. Your provider will need to contact us to arrange disposal and pay the associated fees.

Appropriately registered businesses who cart and dispose of accepted waste (mostly residential and some regulated waste) must phone to arrange disposal and discuss payment of fees.

ADMINISTRATION

Rates, Fees & Charges

Rates, fees and charges are set annually by Council resolution and water services are subject to an annual connection fee and volumetric fees based on water consumption. There are different rates for residential and commercial volumetric use. Water meters are read and rate notices issued approximately every six months.

Unmetered properties are charged a fee based on the deemed reasonable consumption for the particular premises.

Wastewater services are subject to an annual charge per residential property, and per water closet for commercial properties.

We may charge customers interest on overdue accounts as prescribed in our Revenue Policy.

Complaints & Dispute Resolution

If you have a complaint regarding our water or wastewater service provision, we will investigate the complaint and take all reasonable action to solve the problem or address the issue in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

OUR WATER & WASTEWATER POLICIES

Complaints Policy

We are committed to managing complaints. Our Complaints Policy:

- facilitates the customer's right to make complaints, comments or suggestions about the level and quality of services
- encourages the submission of complaints
- provides an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for resolving complaints
- ensures complaints are heard and equitably resolved
- captures data to help improve services
- provides information about the complaint handling process
- promotes our commitment to resolving complaints.

Debt Recovery Policy

Our Debt Recovery Policy provides direction for payment arrangements and assistance in times of genuine hardship.

Drinking Water Quality Policy

Our Drinking Water Quality Policy outlines our commitment to the implementation and maintenance of drinking water to the Tablelands community that complies with legislation and standards, and protects public health.

Environmental Policy

Our Environmental Policy acknowledges our commitment to the Environmental Protection Act and outlines the framework for the reduction and management of environmental risks and impacts arising from our operations and activities.

Rates & Charges Concession Policy

Our Rates and Charges Concession Policy outlines the means by which concession can be applied in times of financial hardship.

Revenue Policy

Our Revenue Policy provides the parameters for the development of the annual revenue budget.



Trade Waste Policy

Our Trade Waste Policy applies to the region's wastewater service areas. The policy ensures management in accordance with the relevant legislation and our environmental licence. It applies to all trade waste generators discharging into the wastewater network. These businesses and organisations must have a Trade Waste Permit and fees and charges apply.

Water Usage Concession Policy

Our Water Usage Concession Policy acknowledges and sets the framework for concessions for unapparent plumbing failures, inaccurate or malfunctioning water meter and deemed usage charges disputes.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

As a registered service provider we are bound by and authorised under multiple acts, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to:

- Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018
- Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008
- Public Health Act 2005
- Public Health Regulation 2018
- Environmental Protection Act 1994
- Local Government Act 2009
- FNQROC guidelines and development manuals

These documents inform our operations and guide our service delivery.

REPORTS & PUBLICATIONS

- Key Performance Indicator Reporting
- Drinking Water Quality Annual Report

