

MEDIA STATEMENT

20 January, 2010

Household water use under the spotlight

The introduction of separate water bills has encouraged Brisbane residents to pay closer attention to the amount of water they use, according to the city's new water and wastewater business.

Queensland Urban Utilities Chief Executive Officer Noel Faulkner said today that residents were becoming more aware of how much water they used and how much it costs.

Water and sewerage charges were presented this month on a separate bill from Queensland Urban Utilities. Previously these charges were included in the Brisbane City Council rate account.

Mr Faulkner said the switch to the new separate water and sewerage account would put household water use under the spotlight.

Mr Faulkner said if ratepayers thought their bill had risen more than expected, they should consider if their water usage may have increased.

"If your water bill is higher, check if your actual water consumption may have risen," Mr Faulkner said. "Water consumption is charged based on how many kilolitres each household uses per quarter."

"If you are using more water, then your bill will rise too."

For some residents, their consumption may have increased during the 9-day exemption period from water restrictions (26 September to 2 October) following Brisbane's dust storms.

Mr Faulkner said: "Permanent water conservation measures are in place and we would encourage residents to continue to use their water wisely, particularly during these hot summer days.

He said if customers had any queries, they could call Queensland Urban Utilities on 13 26 57.

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More than 420,000 water and sewerage accounts are being sent over the next month and include individual household consumption information to assist customers to keep a track of their water use.

Tenants who receive a Water Advice will continue to receive one from Queensland Urban Utilities, but this is not a bill.

The Brisbane City Council has confirmed that it will continue to provide pensioners with the same level of remissions as they previously received on their rate account.

Mr Faulkner said customers could pay their new water bills in the same way they have previously paid their rate account, including direct debit, phone, online and over the counter.

Queensland Urban Utilities has been established as a result of State Government changes to the way water is managed in South East Queensland.

The water business units of Brisbane City Council began operating in November 2009 under the name of Queensland Urban Utilities.

From July, Queensland Urban Utilities will provide water and wastewater services to the cities and townships of five council regions in South East Queensland – Brisbane, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim and Somerset.

It will be among the largest water retail-distributors in Australia.

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