

Policy

Customer Account Adjustments Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Urban Utilities will identify, manage and rectify undercharges or overcharges on customer accounts caused by billing errors, or the omission of charges, as it applies to water and wastewater charges.

Applicability of the Policy

This is an operational policy. This is also an external policy, available to customers and the public on our website.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- any billing errors identified, by either a customer or Urban Utilities, that lead to undercharging or overcharging, and
- bills not issued and retrospective charges omitted due to an error.

This policy expands on the requirements as set out in relevant legislation and the Department of Energy and Water Supply's *South East Queensland Customer Water and Wastewater Code 2017*.

Related Legislation

- *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Qld).
- *South East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009* (Qld).
- *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* (Qld).

Policy Statement

Urban Utilities is committed to accurately billing its customers for water and sewerage services. Unfortunately, sometimes information required to bill accurately is not available, or a billing error occurs. In these situations, Urban Utilities may subsequently need to correct the account by sending an adjusted bill or by issuing retrospective bills for services provided.

Urban Utilities has processes in place to identify potential under or overcharging. If a customer believes Urban Utilities has made an error on their account, or has not issued a bill for a period, Urban Utilities encourages them to make prompt contact to query the account to avoid retrospective charges accruing.

Undercharging

Undercharging occurs when what has been charged is incorrect and less than what was owed or the customer has not been issued bills for a period.

If a customer has been undercharged due to a billing error or the omission of charges and there is an amount owed to Urban Utilities, Urban Utilities will, within 10 business days of becoming aware of the undercharging:

- contact the customer by phone or letter to notify them of the undercharging and next steps for correcting the charges, or
- issue adjustment or retrospective bill/s accompanied with an explanation.

Urban Utilities will not charge interest on the amount owed unless it falls overdue and encourages customers to get in contact if they require a payment arrangement for the outstanding charges.

When billing retrospectively for residential customers and small businesses, Urban Utilities will only apply retrospective charges incurred in the previous 12 months.

Overcharging

Overcharging occurs when what has been charged is incorrect and more than what was owed.

If Urban Utilities determine there has been an overcharge on an account, Urban Utilities will advise the customer via letter within 10 business days of this determination. Urban Utilities will credit any amount which has been overcharged and issue an adjustment bill once the investigation has been finalised.

If requested by the customer, this amount can also be refunded directly rather than applied to future bills. Refunds will normally occur within 10 business days of the customer's request, providing all supporting documentation is provided.

Complaints

If a customer wishes to dispute a retrospective or adjustment bill a complaint may be lodged through Urban Utilities' complaints process. Urban Utilities' Complaints Management Policy can be found at <https://urbanutilities.com.au/about-us/corporate-information/our-policies>.

If the complaint is not resolved within 20 business days, the complainant will pay the higher of the following:

- the portion of the account that is not part of the complaint or is not in dispute, pending resolution, or
- the average amount of the accounts for water and sewerage services in the previous 12 months, pending resolution.

Once the complaint is resolved, if there has been an undercharge, the customer must pay any balance owing. If there has been an overcharge, Urban Utilities will deduct the amount from the next account, unless the customer requests a refund, and in this case, payment will be made within 10 business days, subject to all supporting documentation being provided.

Definitions

Adjustment Bill	means that the bill for a period is reissued with amended charges.
Customer	is a customer of Urban Utilities (or their authorised representative, including body corporates).
Error	is a mistake in the billing process or inaccurate data and includes errors in calculating charges, remissions and rebates. This may be an error on Urban Utilities' behalf, an error made by the customer or another external factor that may or may not be within Urban Utilities' influence or control.
Kilolitre	1000 Litres.
Residential customer	means the owner or lessee of a property where it has been determined by Urban Utilities that the intended land use is for a residential purpose and who is billed directly by Urban Utilities.
Retrospective Bill	means a customer has not previously received a bill from Urban Utilities for the affected period/s and the bill includes charges from previous periods.
Small business	means a business that uses less than 100 kilolitres per annum.

Related Documents

Internal Documents

- POL74 Complaints Management Policy.
- Urban Utilities Residential Customer Charter.
- Urban Utilities Business Customer Charter.
- Urban Utilities Pricing Guidelines.

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or in accordance with changes to relevant legislation or business objectives.

Authorising Officer

Urban Utilities Board