



Williamstown Water Reticulation Project & Payment of Hunter Water's Service Fee and Usage Charges PFAS Investigation and Management Program

This factsheet provides guidance to property owners in the Williamstown Management Area about Department of Defence (Defence) payment of Hunter Water's Service Fees and Usage Charges.

Williamstown Water Reticulation Project

The Water Reticulation Project (the Project) is part of a long-term and precautionary measure for the supply of drinking water. Defence is funding Hunter Water to provide property owners with access to the Hunter Water supply network.

The Project was previously limited to properties within the former NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Williamstown Investigation Area without a connection to the Hunter Water supply network.

Following the NSW EPA's decision on 19 November 2017 to revise the Williamstown Management Area, Defence has broadened the scope of the Project to include payment of the Service Fee and Usage Charges for eligible properties within the revised Williamstown Management Area, including those properties with pre-existing connections.

The Project includes the installation of new water mains infrastructure and plumbing connections to private properties. Approximately 350 properties are expected to be connected under the Project and when all connections have been established, residents will have access to a long-term high-quality drinking water supply. Once connected to the supply network, any provision of an interim alternative drinking and domestic use water supply to these properties (such as bottled water or rainwater tank refills) will cease.

Hunter Water Service Fee and Usage Charges

Hunter Water has an annual service fee (the Base Water Service Charge) and ongoing water usage charges (together, the Service Fee and Usage Charges) that apply to all properties connected to their supply network. Costs are set by an independent pricing tribunal and are payable by the property owner. Charges are issued pro rata every four months.

What will Defence pay for and for how long?

If you meet the eligibility criteria described within this factsheet, Defence will fund the Service Fee and Usage Charges, payable to Hunter Water, for a period of three years.

For property owners in the Williamstown Management Area being connected to the Hunter Water supply network under the Project, payment of the Service Fee and Usage Charges will commence from the date your property is connected to the Hunter Water supply network.

For property owners where connection to the Hunter Water supply network is not feasible, alternative options for a long term sustainable domestic and drinking water supply will be considered, such as rain water tanks.

For property owners who have a pre-existing connection to the Hunter Water supply network, payment of the Service Fee and Usage Charges will commence from the billing cycle which includes 19 November 2017.

Defence will engage with property owners to understand the most appropriate water supply





solution for their individual property, and whether any further alternative measures may assist in reducing town water consumption and associated costs following the Defence funded period.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to have the Service Fee and Usage Charges paid by Defence you must meet the following criteria:

- Be the owner of the property which is within the NSW EPA Williamtown Management Area; and
- Have authorised Hunter Water to release details of the property's Service Fee and Usage Charges (i.e. bills) to Defence.

Commercial properties may be subject to further eligibility considerations.

Payments Process

In order for Defence to make any payments, property owners will need to authorise Hunter Water to release details of their bills for the Service Fee and Usage Charges to Defence. Defence is advising eligible property owners about the payments process and providing a Payment Authorisation Form. Property owners are requested to complete the form and return it at their earliest convenience to Defence via email at Williamtown.defence@aecom.com or by post to:

RAAF Base Williamtown
Stage 2 Environmental Investigation Project
C/ AECOM Australia Pty Ltd
PO Box 1307
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006

Upon receipt of the completed Payment Authorisation Form, Hunter Water will directly invoice Defence for the Service Fee and Usage Charges.

Hunter Water will provide copies of bills to property owners for information, so that they have visibility of their water usage and associated costs.

If the property is sold during the course of the three year period, the new owner will be eligible for Defence coverage of the Service Fee and Usage Charges for the remainder of the three year period, upon completion of the above mentioned Payment Authorisation Form.

If, by 30 June 2018, you have not arranged with Hunter Water for your property to be connected to the supply network under the Project, you may not be eligible to have your Service Fee and Usage Charges paid by Defence.

Backflow Prevention Devices

Hunter Water requires properties that connect to their supply network to have an appropriate device at the meter that stops the potential for backflow into the Hunter Water supply network.

Some backflow devices require annual testing by a certified plumber, with costs borne by the property owner. However, if you have a backflow prevention device installed as part of the Project, Defence will cover the cost of annual testing of the device for a period of three years for properties being newly connected to the supply network.

Arrangements for payment or reimbursement of testing costs for backflow devices will be communicated to property owners at a later date.





If you have a pre-existing connection to the supply network, costs associated with backflow prevention (e.g. device installation or annual testing) will remain the responsibility of the property owner.

Review of Defence Funding

For property owners requiring a new connection

The decision to pay costs associated with the Service Fee and Usage Charges for a period of three years will be reviewed by Defence before the expiry of the three year period.

Property owners will be advised before the end of the three year period if payments will continue to be covered beyond this timeframe, or whether arrangements will revert to normal Hunter Water billing processes (i.e. owner pays) at the completion of the three year period. Defence will provide further information on the review in due course.

For property owners with a pre-existing connection

Defence will conduct an annual assessment to consider whether property owners have experienced a loss of amenity in following the NSW EPA precautionary advice. It will consider the extent of bore, ground and surface water usage at the property and potential exposure pathways, or changes to our understanding of the risks associated with PFAS. It will also consider measures that may be of benefit to the property owner in reducing town water consumption, thereby reducing the ongoing costs following the Defence funded period.

No action will be taken to cease Defence coverage of bills within the three year period, without prior consultation with the property owner. Defence will

discuss the annual assessment process with property owners to ensure solutions are tailored to their specific needs.

Further Information

Up to date information about the Williamtown Water Reticulation Project is available at:

www.hunterwater.com.au/williamtown

Information about the Hunter Water annual service fee and usage charges is at:

www.hunterwater.com.au/your-account

If you have any questions, please direct them to the Williamtown Hotline during business hours on 1800 011 443 (freecall) or via email at:

Williamtown.defence@aecom.com

