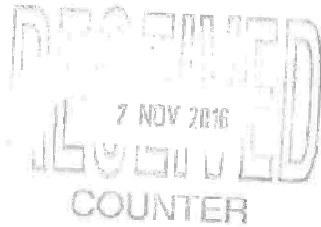


13.3 Notice of Motion - Concealed Water Leak.DOC



Rodney Hornby  
11 Palisade Way  
Lennox Head  
NSW, 2478

Ph: 0428 228 592  
E: rodhornby@bigpond.com

3 November 2016

General Manager  
Ballina Shire Council  
Attn: Rating Team  
PO Box 450  
Ballina  
NSW, 2478



**RE- HIGH WATER CONSUMPTION  
METER # 04W705122  
11 PALISADE WAY, LENNOX HEAD**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am the owner of the above property. I am writing this letter to request a review of the water consumption and subsequent charges that will be passed on to me in upcoming rates notices.

I received a letter from Ballina Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October alerting me to a high water consumption reading based on a reading taken on 9<sup>th</sup> of September. This letter was dated 27<sup>th</sup> of September. The address on the letter was a post office box in Lismore that I no longer use. I had advised Ballina Council earlier this year to use my home address for any mailed correspondence.

I was shocked when I received this letter as we had not changed our water usage habits and was not aware of any leaks on the property or taps/toilets. I immediately had a plumber called and turned off the water until we worked out what was going on. After some investigation we eventually found water leaking underground where the pipe enters the house. There was no visibility of this leak on the ground surface. The pipe was found to be cracked from corrosion and rubbing from a rock that appeared to be touching it. This problem was remedied in less than 48 hrs from when I became aware of it.

I believe that this broken pipe has resulted in just over 500 Kl of water being lost from my property. Obviously this is a terrible waste of a vital resource and a great and unexpected financial impost for me to bear.

**13.3 Notice of Motion - Concealed Water Leak.DOC**

I understand that a home owner has to take responsibility for what occurs on their property. Unfortunately due to nature of this problem I was un-aware that this was happening. The delay in being advised by Council has exacerbated this problem.

I request that the council please consider the difficult position I have been put in and the circumstances pertaining to it and reduce the financial impact of this event to me. The plumber attending my property, Mark Corbett is happy to confirm what occurred if required.

Yours Sincerely



Rodney Hornby

### 13.3 Notice of Motion - Concealed Water Leak.DOC

enquiries refer  
**Rating Team**  
in reply please quote  
**Assessment No. 217160**



17 November 2016

Mr R J Hornby  
11 Palisade Way  
LENNOX HEAD NSW 2478

**Email to: [rodhornby@bigpond.com](mailto:rodhornby@bigpond.com)**

Dear Mr Hornby

**Re: Request to review water consumption charges  
Property – 11 Palisade Way Lennox Head**

I acknowledge receipt of your correspondence received 7 November 2016 requesting a review of water consumption charges due to a concealed water leak at the above property.

Firstly, Ballina Shire Council takes a pro-active role in alerting property owners of unusually high water consumptions as these are often due to concealed water leaks. As far as we are aware, other Councils do not provide this advice to property owners.

Following each quarterly meter reading period we review consumptions to determine if there is the likelihood of an issue at properties flagged as having higher than normal water consumptions.

Depending on available resources we may telephone over 100 property owners each quarter advising of high consumptions. If we are not able to contact an owner by telephone then we send a letter advising of the high consumption.

Additionally, following each quarterly billing process we provide a bulk mail out to property owners for consumptions that are higher than normal but in a lower consumption range.

In your case we were not able to contact you by telephone and therefore on 27 September 2016 our standard letter advising of the high consumption was issued. The letter was addressed to PO Box 1383 Lismore NSW 2480 as this was the recorded address in our system for service of mail.

Subsequently on 21 October 2016 this letter was received at Council as returned mail with reason of "Box closed". Consequently this letter was then sent to the above property address. It is not known why there was a delay in the letter being returned to Council.

I can confirm that the mailing address of PO Box 1383 Lismore NSW 2480 was the address for service of mail shown on the property transfer advice received by Council from NSW Land and Property Information. This detail is completed by your conveyancer on the transfer documentation.

Additionally, a search of our records does not reveal any previous request to change the mailing address for this property.

...2/

40 cherry street, po box 450, ballina nsw 2478  
t 02 6686 4444 • f 02 6686 7035 • e [council@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au) • w [ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

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Mr R J Hornby  
17 November 2016

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**Water consumption charges**

Presently, all water consumption charges as levied must be met by the property owner, irrespective of how the water may have been used. This includes any water that may have been lost through water leaks.

Previously, Council had a Concealed Water Leaks Policy which was adopted in April 2011 and allowed for a level of financial relief. However this policy later was rescinded at Council's Ordinary Meeting on 22 May 2014. This means financial relief is no longer available.

Unfortunately at this time I can only empathise with you in your concerns that the charges levied to you may appear excessive and unfair, however, Council purchases water from Rous Water and irrespective of what happens to that water, the cost of this water must still be recouped.

**Future water management**

Concerning future water management, I suggest that apart from paying attention to the average daily usage of water consumption, as detailed on quarterly Rates & Charges notice, it is good practice to periodically check the water meter reading to readily identify any unusual increase in consumption.

In this regard, please refer to the enclosed Water Meter Checking Procedure form which is also available from Council's website [www.ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au) then go to *Your Council* then *Council Forms*. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to be able to view this form.

If you have any further queries in regard to the above matter, please contact Council's Water Billing Officer, Marco Romanet on 02 6686 1299.

Yours faithfully

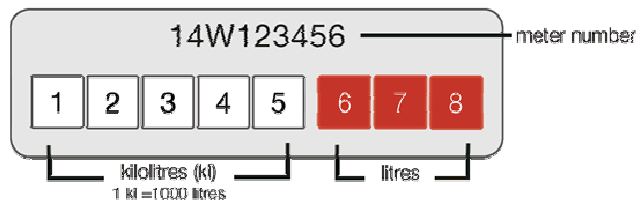


Peter Kennedy  
**Coordinator Rating**

40 cherry street, po box 450, ballina nsw 2478  
t 02 6686 4444 • f 02 6686 7035 • e [council@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au) • w [ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

## Water Meter Checking Procedure

This diagram shows the typical view under the 'flap' on top of your water meter. It indicates 12,345 kilolitres and 678 litres of water have passed through the water meter since it was connected. For billing purposes Council will only read the dials representing whole kilolitres.



### check the meter serial number

- the serial number stamped on the body of the water meter should be the same as the serial number listed on your Water Based Charges notice.

### check the meter reading

- compare the current reading shown on your Water Based Charges notice to the reading on your meter
- your meter reading should be proportionally greater than the reading on the notice by the number of days since the date of reading on the charges notice.

### check for water leaks

- turn off all taps at the property
- record the reading on your water meter, paying particular attention to the red dials on the right hand side of the meter that record litres
- wait for one hour without using any water at the property (all day or overnight would provide a better result)
- record the water meter reading again
- if the second reading is greater than the first reading, this would indicate a water leak which should be investigated immediately. You may need to contact a plumber for further assistance.
- once water has passed through the water meter, it is the property owner's responsibility. This means you will have to pay for the water consumption even if it is due to a water leak.

### check the accuracy of the meter

- record the meter reading, paying particular attention to the last two dials that record tens of litres and single litres
- fill a bucket with 10 litres of water
- read the water meter again, the meter dial indicating tens of litres should have advanced by one, all other dials should have remained the same
- if you consider the water meter is not recording consumption correctly, contact Council to arrange for accurate testing of the water meter. You will be required to pay a deposit for the testing of the water meter (see Council's fees and charges for current fee). If Council finds the water meter is faulty, the testing deposit will be refunded and your water charges will be adjusted. However, if the water meter is found to be accurate, the testing deposit will be retained by Council.

### Further information

Ballina Shire Council  
Rating Team  
ph: 6686 1299  
email: [council@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au)  
[ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

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