

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
New South Wales

# Sydney Water Operating Licence

## Customer Contract



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Words used in this contract	5
1.2 Understanding the contract	5
<b>2 What is this contract and who is covered by it?</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 What is this contract?	6
2.2 Who is covered by this contract?	6
2.3 Other agreements with us	7
2.4 When does this contract commence?	7
<b>3 What services does Sydney Water provide?</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Water supply services	8
3.2 Wastewater services	9
3.3 Stormwater services	10
3.4 Factors affecting service	10
<b>4 What you pay</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Responsibility to pay the account	12
4.2 Publication of charges	12
4.3 Concessions	12
4.4 Your bill	12
4.5 Undercharging	14
4.6 Overcharging	14
4.7 Billing disputes	14
4.8 Wastewater usage charges	15
4.9 How prices are determined	15
4.10 Notification of price variations	15
4.11 Other costs and charges	15
4.12 Exchange of information	16
<b>5 What can I do if I am unable to pay my bill?</b>	<b>17</b>
5.1 Payment difficulties and assistance options for all customers	17
5.2 Payment arrangements	18
<b>6 Restriction or disconnection of water supply and wastewater services</b>	<b>19</b>
6.1 Restriction or disconnection	19
6.2 Notice of restriction or disconnection of supply of water for non-payment by customers	19
6.3 Conditions for restriction or disconnection of supply of water for non-payment by customers	20
6.4 Restriction or disconnection for other reasons	20
6.5 Occupiers (tenants) may pay charges to avoid restriction or disconnection	21
6.6 Minimum flow rate during restriction	21

6.7	Limitations on restriction or disconnection	21
6.8	Disconnection by a customer	22
6.9	Restoration of water supply after restriction or disconnection	22
6.10	Costs for debt recovery activities	23
<b>7</b>	<b>Redress</b>	<b>24</b>
7.1	Notification	24
7.2	Rebates	24
7.3	Rebates for recurring unplanned interruptions	25
7.4	Rebates for recurring wastewater overflows	25
7.5	Exception for disaster events	25
7.6	Redress	26
7.7	Claim for damages	26
7.8	Guarantees and assurances	27
<b>8</b>	<b>Responsibilities for maintenance</b>	<b>28</b>
8.1	Water pipes	28
8.2	Wastewater pipes	29
8.3	System Diagrams	29
8.4	Pressure sewerage equipment	30
8.5	Private joint water or wastewater pipes	30
8.6	Stormwater connections, coverings and bridges	30
8.7	Water efficiency	30
8.8	Defective work	31
8.9	Giving notice of system failures	31
8.10	Building work	31
8.11	Connections to services	32
8.12	Altering and unauthorised connection or use	32
8.13	Removal of trees	32
<b>9</b>	<b>Entry onto a customer's property</b>	<b>34</b>
9.1	Access to Sydney Water's systems	34
9.2	Identification	34
9.3	Notice of access	34
9.4	Impact on customer's property	34
<b>10</b>	<b>Water meter reading, installation, testing and maintenance</b>	<b>36</b>
10.1	Installing and maintaining a meter	36
10.2	Measuring water supplied	37
10.3	Meter testing	37
10.4	Access to the water meter	37
10.5	Meter replacement	38
<b>11</b>	<b>Who can I speak to if I have any questions or want to make enquiries?</b>	<b>39</b>
11.1	Telephone enquiries	39
11.2	Internet enquiries	39
11.3	Written enquiries	39
11.4	Leaks and faults assistance	39

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11.5	Interpreter and TTY Service	40
<b>12</b>	<b>If I am unhappy with the service provided by Sydney Water what can I do?</b>	<b>41</b>
12.1	Customer complaints	41
12.2	Complaints review	41
12.3	Resolution of complaints	41
12.4	External dispute resolution	42
<b>13</b>	<b>Consultation, information and privacy</b>	<b>44</b>
13.1	Involving customers in service planning	44
13.2	Providing information	44
13.3	Privacy	44
<b>14</b>	<b>When does this contract with Sydney Water terminate?</b>	<b>45</b>
14.1	Termination of this contract	45
14.2	Variation of this contract	45
<b>15</b>	<b>Definitions and Interpretation</b>	<b>46</b>
15.1	Definitions	46
15.2	Interpretation	52
<b>A</b>	<b>Operation and Maintenance Obligations for Pressure Sewerage Equipment</b>	<b>53</b>
	Pressure sewerage equipment owned by you	53
	Pressure sewerage equipment owned by us	53
<b>B</b>	<b>System Diagrams</b>	<b>55</b>
	Figures	56

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## Foreword

Sydney Water provides **water supply services**, **wastewater services** and some **stormwater services** to people in Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains.

Sydney Water's key objectives are protecting public health, protecting the environment and operating as a successful business.

This contract (as found in Schedule C of the **Operating Licence**) outlines your rights and obligations as a **customer** and sets out the minimum standards of customer service that you can expect. It is our service guarantee to our **customers**. It also outlines Sydney Water's rights and obligations to help us meet our key objectives.

For more information about Sydney Water and the services we provide, visit [sydneywater.com.au](http://sydneywater.com.au) or call us on 13 20 92.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Words used in this contract

Words that are bold and italicised in this contract have a special meaning. The meanings are set out in the definitions in clause 15.1 at the end of this contract.

## 1.2 Understanding the contract

There are a number of provisions in clause 15.2 at the end of this contract that may assist you in interpreting the contract.

Nothing in this contract is intended to remove or limit any statutory rights you may have under legislation that cannot be excluded, including the consumer guarantees regime under the ***Australian Consumer Law***.

## 2 What is this contract and who is covered by it?

### 2.1 What is this contract?

This contract is between us, Sydney Water, and you, the **customer**. You do not need to sign this contract for it to be valid and binding.

This contract provides the terms under which we provide, where available, **water supply services**, **wastewater services**, and **stormwater services** to you. This contract also sets out rights and obligations including your rights in any dispute with us.

This contract is a legally enforceable document and is a requirement of the **Act**.

This contract is summarised in a separate brochure called 'Our contract with you'. Copies of this brochure are available on our website or by contacting us.

### 2.2 Who is covered by this contract?

#### 2.2.1 Owners of property

You are our **customer** and are covered by this contract if you are the owner of **property** within our **area of operations** that is connected to a water main or **wastewater system** owned by us and that connection has been authorised or approved by us.

You are also our **customer** and covered by this contract if:

- you are the owner of **property** that is within a **declared stormwater drainage area** or the **Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area**, and
- charges for the **stormwater services** we provide are payable by you.

You may be entitled to an exemption from **service charges** based on the use of your land.

#### 2.2.2 Private residential tenants

You are also our **customer**, and covered by clauses 5.1, 6.5, 12, 13 and 14 only, if you receive **water supply services** and/or **wastewater services** from us and you are a **private residential tenant**.

#### 2.2.3 Commercial tenants

You are also our **customer** and covered by clauses 5.1, 6.5, 12, 13 and 14 only, if you receive **water supply services** and/or **wastewater services** from us and you are a **commercial tenant**.



## 2.2.4 Services from WIC Act licensees

If you have a contract for water supply services and/or wastewater services from a supplier licensed under the **WIC Act**, this contract only applies to you for the services you receive from us.

## 2.3 Other agreements with us

If you have a separate agreement with us (for example, in relation to **trade waste**, **sewer mining**, stormwater harvesting, **recycled water** or an additional services agreement), the terms of that agreement will take precedence over the terms of this contract, to the extent of any inconsistency between them.

If you are a **non-residential customer** and you request a different level of service for a **utility service**, we may enter into a separate agreement with you to provide that different level of service. Before entering into that separate agreement, we will:

- provide you with an estimate of the costs of supplying you with the requested **utility service**, and
- advise you if the requested **utility service** is below the standards set out in this contract.

## 2.4 When does this contract commence?

This contract commences (as relevant):

- on the Commencement Date for any person who, on that date, is taken to have entered into this contract under section 55 of the **Act** or clause 2.2 of this contract, and
- for any person who, after the Commencement Date, is taken to have entered into this contract under section 55 of the **Act** or clause 2.2 of this contract, the date that the person is taken to have entered into this contract under section 55 of the **Act** or clause 2.2 of this contract.

On the Commencement Date, this version of the contract replaces any previous versions of this contract between you and us. Any rights and liabilities that have accrued under any previous contract with us are not affected by the commencement of this contract.

## 3 What services does Sydney Water provide?

### 3.1 Water supply services

#### 3.1.1 Supply of water

We will supply you with water to meet your reasonable needs except:

- in the case of **unplanned interruptions** or **planned interruptions** under clauses 3.4.2 and 3.4.3
- in the case of water restrictions under clause 3.4.4
- where we are entitled to restrict or discontinue supply under clause 6, or
- in the case of events beyond our reasonable control, including in the case of a **disaster event**.

To receive **recycled water** from us, your **property** must be within a Sydney Water **recycled water area** or you must enter into a separate agreement with us.

If we supply you with **recycled water**, we will give you information on the standard requirements for its safe use at the time we commence supplying **recycled water** to you. We are not responsible for your use of **recycled water** contrary to the information we provide.

#### 3.1.2 Drinking water quality

The **drinking water** we supply a **customer** will comply with the health related guidelines provided in the **Australian Drinking Water Guidelines** except to the extent otherwise specified by **NSW Health**.

#### 3.1.3 Recycled water quality

The **recycled water** we supply a **customer** will comply with the **Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling** except to the extent otherwise specified by **NSW Health**.

#### 3.1.4 Drinking water pressure

We will ensure that the **drinking water** we supply to your **property** is at a minimum of 15 metres head of pressure at the **point of connection** to our **water system**. This pressure is recognised as suitable for **residential customers** and **non-residential customers**.

#### 3.1.5 Health or special needs

If you require a water supply to operate a life support machine or for other special health needs, you must arrange for your health provider to notify us. In certain circumstances, you may be eligible for an allowance of water use that is not subject to charges.

## 3.2 Wastewater services

### 3.2.1 Supply of wastewater services

If your **property** is connected to our **wastewater system**, we will supply you with **wastewater services** to meet your reasonable needs for the discharge of domestic **wastewater** except:

- where we are entitled to restrict or disconnect supply under clause 6
- in the case of **unplanned interruptions** and **planned interruptions** under clauses 3.4.2 and 3.4.3, or
- in the case of events beyond our reasonable control, including in the case of a **disaster event**.

### 3.2.2 Wastewater overflow

We will make every reasonable effort to minimise the incidence of **wastewater overflows** on your **property** due to a failure of our **wastewater system**.

In addition to any statutory rights you may have under any legislation, including the **Australian Consumer Law**, if there is a **wastewater overflow** on your **property** due to the failure of our **wastewater system**, we will ensure that:

- inconvenience and damage to you is minimised
- the affected area is suitably and promptly cleaned up at our cost and in a way that minimises the risk to human health and the environment, and
- any rebate or redress that may be due to you under clauses 7.2, 7.4 and 7.6 are paid or provided.

### 3.2.3 Trade waste

You may discharge **trade waste** into our **wastewater system** only if you have obtained our written permission and entered into an agreement with us for this activity.

We will give you our written permission and enter into such an agreement with you only if we are able to accept, transport and process **trade waste** that you discharge in full compliance with applicable safety and environmental laws, the **Operating Licence** and the **Act**.

We reserve the right to refuse **trade waste** into our system if we determine that it poses a risk to our operations, the health and safety of our workers or our ability to service or meet the expectations of our broader customer base.

You can contact us to obtain further information on the guidelines and standards for a **trade waste** discharge.

### 3.2.4 Sewer mining and stormwater harvesting

You may extract from our **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** only if you have obtained our prior written permission and entered into an agreement with us for this activity.

### 3.3 Stormwater services

We will provide you with a service to transport stormwater through our **stormwater drainage systems** under our control if your **property** is within a **declared stormwater drainage area** or within the **Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area**.

If your **property** is within a **declared stormwater drainage area** or the **Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area** we will charge you for this service in accordance with the maximum prices, or methodology for fixing the maximum prices, determined by **IPART**.

We can provide information to assist you in determining whether your land is within a **declared stormwater drainage area** or within the **Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area** and whether our stormwater pipes or channels are located within or adjacent to your **property**.

We will notify you if an area of land is newly declared to be a **declared stormwater drainage area** and the declaration affects your **property**.

### 3.4 Factors affecting service

#### 3.4.1 Repairs and maintenance

If we undertake any work on our assets located on or adjacent to your **property**, we will leave the affected area and immediate surrounds as near as possible to its original state which existed prior to the works being undertaken, unless we have agreed to a different arrangement with you.

#### 3.4.2 Unplanned interruptions

If there is an **unplanned interruption** to your **water supply service** or **wastewater service**, we will minimise the inconvenience to you by:

- restoring the service as quickly as possible
- providing as much information as practicable on a 24 hour leaks and faults telephone service (see clause 11.4), and
- providing access to emergency supplies of water where reasonably practicable and necessary having regard to the particular circumstances.

#### 3.4.3 Planned interruptions

We may need to arrange **planned interruptions** to the **water supply services** and **wastewater services** provided to you to allow for planned or regular **maintenance** of our **water system** or **wastewater system**.

We will inform you of the time and duration of any **planned interruption**, at least two days in advance if you are a **residential customer**, and seven days in advance if you are a **non-residential customer**, unless you agree to another period.

We will use our best endeavours to ensure the **planned interruption** is no longer than five hours from when the supply of water is turned off until the water is turned back on.

#### 3.4.4 Water restrictions

Where the **Minister** has imposed water restrictions under clause 24 of the *Sydney Water Regulation 2017* (NSW), you must comply with those water restrictions. If you fail to comply with any water restrictions, we may **disconnect** or **restrict water supply services** supplied to you.

We will publish any water restrictions:

- on our website
- in a manner that is likely to bring the water restrictions to the attention of the public in the **area of operations**, and
- in accordance with the *Sydney Water Regulation 2017* (NSW).

These water restrictions may include:

- restrictions on the use of water, including the purpose for which water may be used
- a variation of charges consistent with the **Act** and **Operating Licence**, and
- other conditions that we consider appropriate, including the period or likely period of restrictions or limitations on supply and usage of water.

We will also make every reasonable effort to notify you in your next bill of any water restrictions.

## 4 What you pay

### 4.1 Responsibility to pay the account

You must pay us the amount on your bill by the date specified unless you have entered into a **payment arrangement** with us.

### 4.2 Publication of charges

We will publish on our website up-to-date information on our charging policies and current charges. This information will also be provided to you on request.

### 4.3 Concessions

You are eligible for a government funded pension concession if you hold one of the recognised pensioner concession cards. You must apply to us for the concession and establish your eligibility.

If you are eligible for the concession, we will ensure that it is granted from the commencement of the next **charging period** after your application for a concession was lodged.

You may contact us to obtain information on whether you are eligible for a concession. On request, we will provide information about concessions in a language other than English (where available).

### 4.4 Your bill

#### 4.4.1 When will your bill be sent?

We will issue you a bill for the services that we provide to you. You will be sent a bill on a quarterly basis, unless otherwise agreed.

**Non-residential customers** with high water usage and **wastewater** disposal may be sent a bill on a monthly basis.

We will provide you with copies of your bills or a statement of all charges that you have incurred for the previous 12 months on request, free of charge.

#### 4.4.2 What information is on your bill

We will ensure that your bill contains details of:

- the **charging period** to which it applies
- the total amount due
- the usage and **service charges**, separately itemised

- other fees and charges payable
- the date payment is due
- your postal address and account number
- the address of the **property** for which the charges in the account have been incurred
- options for the method of payment
- a comparison of your water usage with your past water usage, where available
- contact numbers for account **enquiries**, leaks and faults, and text telephone (TTY) services
- the payment assistance available
- your rights to rebates
- information in community languages about the availability of interpreter services and the phone number for those services, and
- the credit balance or amounts overdue from previous bills.

#### 4.4.3 How bills are sent

We will send your bill to the postal address you nominate.

If you do not nominate a postal address, the bill will be sent to:

- the **property** to which the **utility services** are available or provided, or
- your last known postal address.

On your request we will send your bill and other communications regarding payment electronically.

Your bill will be considered delivered to you if it is sent by one of the above means.

#### 4.4.4 How to make a payment

We will provide you with a range of payment options including in person, by mail, via the internet or by direct debit.

You must pay by one of the methods that we offer. We will not accept payments by other methods.

#### 4.4.5 Overdue account balances

If you do not pay your account by the due date, you will have an overdue account balance and we may charge you:

- interest on your overdue account balance, or
- a late payment fee, but only if a maximum late payment fee amount is specified by **IPART** as part of a review conducted by **IPART** under the *Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992* (NSW).

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Any late payment fee we charge you will:

- not exceed the maximum late payment fee amount specified by **IPART**, and
- be charged in accordance with any terms and conditions specified by **IPART** as part of the review (including conditions requiring us to provide you with adequate notice prior to charging you a late payment fee).

We will not charge you interest on your overdue account balance or a late payment fee if:

- we have already agreed with you a deferred payment date, or an arrangement to pay by instalments with respect to the overdue account balance, or
- you have entered into a **payment arrangement** with us.

#### 4.5 Undercharging

If your bill states that you are required to pay us an amount that is less than what you are actually required to pay us (that is, we have undercharged you) as a result of our error, we may adjust your next bill to charge the undercharged amount as a separate item.

If the undercharging is due to:

- you providing false information
- an unauthorised connection (for example, you have not obtained our written consent in accordance with clause 8.11 or you have not obtained the required approvals for the connection)
- your breach of this contract or the **Act**, or
- building works which were not approved in accordance with clause 8.10,

you must pay the correct amount on request. We will state the amount to be paid as a separate item in your next bill.

We may also charge you from a date we determine an unauthorised connection to have occurred.

#### 4.6 Overcharging

If your bill states that you are required to pay us an amount that is greater than what you are actually required to pay us (that is, we have overcharged you) due to our error, we will apply a credit to your next bill after we become aware of the error.

#### 4.7 Billing disputes

If there is an unresolved dispute concerning an amount of money to be paid by you, we will not seek the disputed amount from you until the dispute has been resolved.

You are obliged to pay any undisputed charges or fees by the due date.



## 4.8 Wastewater usage charges

The **wastewater** usage charge applies to **non-residential customers** only. We will determine a **wastewater usage discharge factor** that is used to calculate **wastewater** charges for **non-residential customers**. Where a **wastewater usage discharge factor** is varied, the revised charge will apply from the beginning of the next **charging period**. We will notify you of any change to your **wastewater usage discharge factor** in accordance with clause 4.10.

## 4.9 How prices are determined

We set charges for the services we provide you under this contract in accordance with any applicable maximum prices, or methodology for fixing the maximum prices, determined by **IPART**.

We may vary these charges from time to time, but only in accordance with our **Operating Licence** and the **Act** and subject to the maximum prices, guidelines and methodologies determined or issued by **IPART**.

## 4.10 Notification of price variations

We will publish notice of any variations to our charges on our website and provide details on your bill. The variation will commence on:

- the first day of the next quarter after the notice of the variation has been published, or
- any other date we nominate after we have published the notice of the variation.

## 4.11 Other costs and charges

### 4.11.1 Dishonoured or declined payments

If payment of your bill is dishonoured or declined, we may charge you a dishonoured or declined payment fee in an amount not exceeding the amount specified on our website, as amended from time to time.

We may refuse to accept personal cheques or card payments for a specific bill where two or more dishonoured payments have been provided. We may refuse future payments by these means if you have a history of dishonoured payments.

### 4.11.2 Payment adjustments

If we incorrectly apply a payment to your bill, we will reverse the payment and inform you of this reversal.

### 4.11.3 Costs for installing and connecting services

You are responsible for all costs of connecting your **property** to our **water system**, **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**.

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Connection to our **water system**, **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** must be approved by us and comply with the conditions we set to ensure the safe and reliable supply of services.

Where a new connection point requires works on our systems, those works can only be carried out by us or a provider listed by us. This list is available on our website or by request.

#### 4.11.4 Charges for other services

We may charge you a fee for any other services you request from us or where we have agreed to provide you with a different level of service as set out in clause 2.3. To the extent that any determination of maximum prices made by **IPART** applies to these fees, we will charge those fees in accordance with that determination. In circumstances where no such determination applies, we may charge you a fee in a way determined by us and advised to you. We will publish these fees on our website, where possible, and provide you with information on request.

We may also charge you other fees, charges and amounts where we are entitled to do so under the **Act**.

#### 4.12 Exchange of information

To the extent permitted by law, we may exchange information about your creditworthiness, credit standing, credit history or credit capacity with credit reporting agencies, other credit providers, other suppliers, or our agents, contractors and franchisees.

## 5 What can I do if I am unable to pay my bill?

### 5.1 Payment difficulties and assistance options for all customers

If you are experiencing **payment difficulty** you should contact us and we will provide you with information about options available to assist you. All reasonable effort will be taken to provide assistance to you.

If you are experiencing **payment difficulty**, you have the right to:

- be treated sensitively on a case by case basis by us
- have your **payment difficulty** dealt with in a fair and reasonable manner
- tailored advice on other broader assistance options (including any appropriate government concession programs) (for **residential customers** and **private residential tenants** only)
- seek deferral of payment for a short period of time (being, in the case of a **private residential tenant**, at least four weeks)
- access to a language interpreter, if required, at no cost to you
- referral to financial counselling services (for **residential customers** and **private residential tenants** only)
- information from us about an accredited welfare agency for payment assistance (for **residential customers** and **private residential tenants** only), and
- negotiate a **payment arrangement** with us (for **residential customers** and **non-residential customers** only). If you are a **non-residential customer** these arrangements will be based on reasonable commercial considerations and market conditions.

You may also be eligible for Payment Assistance Scheme credit issued by an accredited welfare agency or us (for **residential customers** and **private residential tenants** only).

## 5.2 Payment arrangements

If you enter into a **payment arrangement** with us, we will:

- enable you to make payments by instalments, in advance or arrears
- inform you of the following:
  - the period, or periods, of the payment plan
  - the amount and frequency of each instalment
  - if you are in arrears, the completion date of the payment plan required to pay the arrears, and
  - if you choose to pay in advance, the basis on which the instalments are calculated
- provide for instalments to be calculated having regard to your consumption needs, your capacity to pay and the amount of arrears you are required to pay, and
- ensure that your arrears are cleared over a period of time and your debt does not continue to grow.

If you are experiencing **payment difficulty** and have entered into a **payment arrangement** with us and honour that arrangement, we will:

- not take any legal action to enforce the debt or **restrict** or **disconnect** the supply of water to your **property**, and
- waive interest and late payment fees on the overdue amount for the period of the arrangement.

## 6 Restriction or disconnection of water supply and wastewater services

### 6.1 Restriction or disconnection

If you fail to pay your bill by the due date and have failed to make alternative arrangements for payment, we may restrict or disconnect the supply of water to your **property**. This will be done in accordance with our policies relating to debt, water flow **restriction** and **disconnection** for non-payment, as amended from time to time.

Information on these policies will be sent to you annually. This information is also available on our website or on request.

### 6.2 Notice of restriction or disconnection of supply of water for non-payment by customers

If you fail to pay your bill by the due date, we will send you a reminder notice. The reminder notice will:

- state the total amount due
- state that payment is immediately due
- state that you should contact us if you are having difficulty making payment and we will provide you with payment options, including **payment arrangements**, subject to eligibility criteria, and
- advise you of your right to raise your concerns with **EWON**.

If you fail to comply with the reminder notice, we will send you a **restriction** or **disconnection** notice advising you that:

- you must pay the bill immediately otherwise, after 10 business days of our issuing the **restriction** or **disconnection** notice to you, we may take action to restrict or disconnect the supply of water to your **property** or take legal action to recover the amount outstanding
- you may incur additional costs relating to us restricting or disconnecting the supply of water and/or taking legal action to recover the amount outstanding
- the supply of water to your **property** may be restricted or disconnected without further notice
- you have the right to raise your concerns with **EWON**, and
- you should contact us if you are experiencing **payment difficulty** and we will provide you with information about options available to assist you.

### 6.3 Conditions for restriction or disconnection of supply of water for non-payment by customers

We may restrict or disconnect the supply of water to your **property** if:

- you have not paid your bill and at least 10 business days have elapsed since we issued the **restriction** or **disconnection** notice, or
- you have entered into a **payment arrangement** with us, but have failed to make the agreed payments.

If you are a **residential customer**, we will use our best endeavours to make further contact with you, in person, by post or by phone about the non-payment prior to **restriction** or **disconnection**.

Details are provided in our 'payment assistance' and 'overdue payments' policies that are available on our website, as amended from time to time.

In addition to the limitations on **restriction** or **disconnection** set out in clause 6.7, we will not restrict or disconnect the supply of water for a failure to make due payment where:

- you have applied for a payment plan that is being assessed, or
- you are complying with the agreed terms of a current **payment arrangement**.

If you receive a bill for a new **charging period** that contains an overdue amount from a previous **charging period**, we may restrict or disconnect supply on the arrears after issuing you with the appropriate notices relating to the overdue amount, as described in this clause.

### 6.4 Restriction or disconnection for other reasons

We may also restrict or disconnect the supply of **utility services** to your **property** in the following circumstances:

- if you are connected to our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** without our approval
- if **your water system, your wastewater system** or your stormwater pipes are defective
- you fail to rectify a defect with, or unauthorised work on, **your water system, your wastewater system** or your stormwater pipes as set out in clause 8.8 of this contract
- you fail to remediate or remove an unapproved excavation, building, landscaping or construction work that interferes with our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** as set out in clause 8.10 of this contract
- you have breached this contract, the **Act**, your additional services agreement or any other agreement with us
- if you use **sewer mining** or stormwater harvesting facilities that are not authorised by us or do not comply with applicable laws
- you discharge **trade waste** into our **wastewater system** without our written approval or you do not comply with the requirements of our written approval

- where you fail to ensure access to our **meter** for your **property** (prior to taking this step, we will use our best endeavours to contact you to arrange reasonable access, leave a notice requesting access and provide you with a **disconnection** warning)
- where you fail to meet our metering requirements (published in our policies and guidelines that are available on our website, as amended from time to time)
- if you are connected to our **wastewater system** using **pressure sewerage equipment** that may be owned by us or you and you do not comply with your operation and **maintenance** requirements set out in Appendix A
- if a serious health or environmental risk is posed by the discharge of chemicals into our **wastewater system**
- if you have not installed a **backflow prevention containment device** (if required to do so by us)
- if you have not correctly installed or maintained your **backflow prevention containment device** or have failed to provide an annual test report by the due date
- you use your **recycled water** in a manner inconsistent with its intended purpose or in a manner contrary to the information we provide on its safe use
- where we are entitled or required to restrict or to discontinue supply by direction of the **Minister** or under an applicable law, or
- where lack of access to the **meter** or the poor quality of **your water system** prevents us from exchanging the **meter** and you have failed to address this within 30 days of our notifying you of this.

## 6.5 Occupiers (tenants) may pay charges to avoid restriction or disconnection

Where an amount unpaid on a bill is owed by a landlord, we may accept payment of outstanding charges by an occupier of the **property** (in other words, the tenant) who may, in accordance with the **Act**, deduct those charges from rents otherwise payable to the landlord.

## 6.6 Minimum flow rate during restriction

If we restrict the supply of water to you, we will provide a flow sufficient for health and hygiene purposes. If you believe that the **restriction** will cause a health hazard you should contact us and we will consider increasing the flow.

## 6.7 Limitations on restriction or disconnection

Under no circumstances will we restrict or disconnect the supply of water to your **property**:

- without providing reasonable notice to the occupier of the **property** that we intend to restrict the supply

- without giving you notice under clauses 6.2 or 6.3 (as applicable) where the reason for **restriction** or **disconnection** is non-payment of your bill, except when an order is issued under relevant legislation
- without providing the occupier with information on our policies relating to **payment difficulty**, debt, water supply **restriction** and **disconnection** for non-payment
- if a related **complaint** is being considered for resolution by us or **EWON**, and
- without advising the occupier that in some circumstances the **Act** permits a tenant to pay outstanding charges and deduct them from rents otherwise payable to the landlord and providing the occupier with a reasonable opportunity to pay the bill.

We will only carry out a **restriction** or **disconnection** on a business day (excluding Fridays and the day before a public holiday), prior to 3pm.

## 6.8 Disconnection by a customer

You may **disconnect** your **property** from our **water system** or **wastewater system** provided that:

- you have complied with all applicable health, environmental and local council regulatory requirements
- you have complied with all our requirements, as detailed in the policies published on our website, as amended from time to time
- you have given us information we may reasonably require
- you have given us 10 days' written notice and you have obtained our written permission,
- you have paid any applicable **disconnection** charge, and
- the **disconnection** is undertaken by a licensed plumber and conducted in accordance with plumbing, drainage or other regulations or standards that may apply.

On **disconnecting** your **property**, we may recover any equipment that we installed on the **property** and may continue to charge you a service availability charge in accordance with the **Act**. You may apply to us to be exempted from this charge.

## 6.9 Restoration of water supply after restriction or disconnection

Following **restriction** or **disconnection** of your water supply, we will provide you with information to enable you to make arrangements for the restoration of the supply. A restoration fee will apply.

When the reason for the **restriction** or **disconnection** of supply no longer exists or if there is mutual agreement to restore supply, we will restore your supply:

- on the same day, if you pay or we agree to other arrangements before 3 pm on any business day, or
- on the next business day if you pay or we agree to other arrangements after 3 pm.



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When the conditions for restoration are met after 3 pm, we may restore supply on the same day but you may be asked to pay an after-hours restoration fee.

#### **6.10 Costs for debt recovery activities**

We may recover from you our reasonable costs associated with debt recovery under this contract.

## 7 Redress

### 7.1 Notification

If you notify us of a failure by us to comply with this contract or our activities result in inconvenience, damage or loss to you or your **property** we will promptly advise you of:

- your right to a rebate or redress under clauses 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 or 7.6
- how we may rectify your problem, and
- how to seek compensation from us under clause 7.7.

### 7.2 Rebates

Information on rebates provided under this contract is set out in our *Allowances and Rebates on your Bill* policy, which may be amended from time to time. This is available on our website or in hard copy by request.

We will pay the rebate in your next bill where possible.

#### 7.2.1 Planned interruption

Where your **water supply service** is interrupted for over five hours by a **planned interruption** you are entitled to an automatic rebate of \$20. You are eligible for this rebate for each and every event of this type that you experience.

#### 7.2.2 Unplanned interruption

Where your **water supply service** is interrupted for over five hours by an **unplanned interruption** you are entitled to an automatic rebate of \$40 for each of up to two **unplanned interruption** events. If you experience three or more **unplanned interruptions** that last for more than one hour each in a rolling 12-month period, the rebate outlined in clause 7.3 will apply in relation to those additional **unplanned interruptions**.

#### 7.2.3 Low water pressure

Where your **drinking water** pressure is below 15 metres head of pressure at the **point of connection** to our **water system** for a continuous period of one hour (**low water pressure**), unless as a result of an **unplanned interruption** or a **planned interruption**, you are entitled to a rebate of \$40. This rebate is payable for one event each quarter. A rebate will be granted automatically when this is identified through our monitoring.

However, you are not entitled to a rebate for **low water pressure** under this clause if you live in the vicinity of a **property cluster** and we inform you of the risk of recurring **low water pressure** at your **property** before your **property** is connected to our **water system** for the first time.

#### 7.2.4 Wastewater overflow

If you experience a **wastewater overflow** on your **property** due to a failure of our **wastewater system**, you are entitled to a rebate of \$75. If you experience two or more **wastewater overflow** events in a rolling 12-month period, the rebate outlined in clause 7.4 will apply in relation to those additional **wastewater overflows**.

#### 7.2.5 Dirty water

If we do provide you with **dirty water** (water that is not suitable as **drinking water**), you may be entitled to a rebate of \$40 for each occasion that we provide you with **dirty water**.

If the cause of the problem is identified in **your water system** the rebate will not apply.

#### 7.2.6 Boil water incidents

If **NSW Health** issues a 'boil water alert' due to contamination of **drinking water** caused by us, you are entitled to a rebate of \$50 for each incident in relation to which the 'boil water alert' is issued.

### 7.3 Rebates for recurring unplanned interruptions

If you are a **customer** and experience three or more **unplanned interruptions** to your **water supply service** that last for over one hour each in a rolling 12 month period, you are entitled to a rebate equal to the whole annual water **service charge**, less any concessions available to you, after the third event. This rebate operates in addition to any rebates you may have received under clause 7.2.

### 7.4 Rebates for recurring wastewater overflows

If you are a **customer** and experience two or more **wastewater overflows** on your **property** in a rolling 12 month period due to a failure in our **wastewater system**, you will be entitled to a rebate of \$150.

If you are a **customer** and experience three or more **wastewater overflows** on your **property** in a rolling 12 month period due to a failure in our **wastewater system**, you will be entitled to a rebate equal to the whole annual **service charge** for **wastewater services**, less any concessions available to you, after the third event.

These rebates operates in addition to any rebates you may have received under clause 7.2.

### 7.5 Exception for disaster events

Any incidence you experience of:

- an **unplanned interruption** to your **water supply service**
- a **wastewater overflow** on your **property** due to a failure in our **wastewater system**

- **low water pressure**, or
- **dirty water**

that is caused by a **disaster event** will not be taken into account to determine your entitlement (if any) to a rebate under clauses 7.2, 7.3 or 7.4.

## 7.6 Redress

In addition to our obligation to pay a rebate under clauses 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4, we may provide one of the following forms of redress:

- reinstatement
- repair
- rectification
- construction of works
- providing alternative supplies of water
- emergency accommodation, or
- payment for damages as set out in clause 7.7.

If you are unsatisfied with the form of redress we provide you, you may request additional redress from us. We will consider your request in accordance with the timeframes in clause 12.1 as if your request were a **complaint**.

## 7.7 Claim for damages

In the event of physical loss or damage to you or your **property** as a result of our activities or our failure to comply with this contract, the **Operating Licence** or the **Act**, you may be entitled to reimbursement for any loss suffered.

All claims must be submitted in writing on an incident notification form that is available on our website or by contacting us. You must specify the nature of the problem and the compensation sought.

We will within five business days of receiving your claim:

- acknowledge receipt of your claim, and
- advise you of the name and contact details of our representative who will assist you with your claim.

We will undertake investigations into the circumstances surrounding the claim/incident and provide a response time for making a decision in regard to your claim.

You will be provided with a written assessment of your claim within the response time indicated. The assessment will outline the reasons for the decision in regard to your claim and the type of compensation to be provided, if any.

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You could, if you have insurance, consider making a claim to your insurance company to determine if the loss or damage is covered by an insurance policy.

If you are not satisfied with our decision, you have the right to seek review of your claim under clause 12.2 or you may seek an external review under clause 12.4.

## 7.8 Guarantees and assurances

Our goods and services come with certain guarantees that cannot be excluded under the ***Australian Consumer Law***. The only additional assurances we make and the only conditions and warranties included in this contract are those set out in this contract, and those that are included by law.

This clause does not affect rights you have under a law that applies to us that says we cannot exclude or limit our liability.

## 8 Responsibilities for maintenance

### 8.1 Water pipes

You are responsible for maintaining all water pipes and fittings between our **water system** and the buildings and/or taps on your **property**. This is referred to as **your water system**.

As a **property** owner, you are responsible for any damage caused by a failure of **your water system**.

Subject to the exclusions listed below, if you notify us of a failure of **your water system**, we will perform a free repair of **your water system** between our **water system** and the **meter** for your **property**. However, if the **meter** lies more than one metre along your pipe inside the **property boundary**, or there is no **meter**, we will provide this service only up to one metre along your pipe inside the **property boundary**.

If you do not want us to perform the repair on **your water system**, you must have any failure between our **water system** and the **meter** for your **property** repaired by a licensed plumber in accordance with the **Plumbing Code of Australia** or any other acts, regulations or standards that may apply.

However, the free repair offered under this clause does not apply to, and specifically excludes the repair of:

- unauthorised connections and those parts of **your water system** installed contrary to applicable codes, regulations and standards
- **fire services** (including **combined services**), both inside and outside the **property boundary**
- **backflow prevention containment devices**
- water services to construction sites
- water pipes and fittings:
  - connecting to privately owned water mains, or
  - forming part of **your water system**, if **your water system** is completely within private property,  
such as in some community title subdivisions, or shared **private joint services** or **extended private services**, and
- faults caused by your wilful or negligent act or omission.

If we make repairs to your water pipes, we will backfill and make safe any excavations required on your **property**. We will not restore any landscaping, structures or hard surfaces.

We will also not meet the costs of installing new privately owned services or modifying, upsizing or relocating existing privately owned services.

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You are responsible for installing, maintaining and annual testing of your **backflow prevention containment devices**, except where the device is integrated into the **meter** supplied by us.

If you fail to carry out an annual test of your **backflow prevention containment device**, we may arrange for an annual test and charge you the cost incurred by us for the annual test.

## 8.2 Wastewater pipes

You are responsible for maintaining all **wastewater** pipes and fittings between your **property** and the connection with our **wastewater system**, including your privately owned **pressure sewerage equipment**. This is referred to as **your wastewater system**.

You must not allow **rainwater** to enter **your wastewater system**.

The **point of connection** with our **wastewater system** may be outside your **property**. If you do not know where the **point of connection** is, you should contact us for information on where to obtain a diagram.

If a fault occurs in **your wastewater system**, you are responsible for arranging to have the fault rectified by a licensed plumber or drainer.

If the fault occurs in our **wastewater system** we will repair the fault at our cost. However, you may be liable to pay for the repair to the extent you have contributed to the fault.

As a free service, we may repair collapsed **wastewater** pipes that form part of **your wastewater system** where the collapse is located within a footpath or roadway and a licensed plumber has confirmed that the fault cannot be repaired without excavation of the footpath or roadway and replacement of the collapsed **wastewater** pipes.

However, if the problem is assessed by us as able to be repaired without excavation, you will remain responsible for the cost of repair. We will not reimburse any plumbing costs.

We will not provide this service for unauthorised **wastewater** systems installed contrary to applicable codes, regulations and standards.

## 8.3 System diagrams

Appendix B contains diagrams showing responsibilities for **maintenance** of authorised connections to our **water system** and **wastewater system**. These diagrams are illustrative only and should not be relied on for any purpose other than to assist with understanding the provisions in this contract.

In the event of an inconsistency between the diagrams and other terms and conditions of this contract, those other terms and conditions prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

## 8.4 Pressure sewerage equipment

We are the owner of **pressure sewerage equipment** where the equipment is provided and installed by us or our approved contractor, including where the equipment is located on your **property**.

You are the owner of the **pressure sewerage equipment** where the equipment is provided and installed by, or on behalf of, you or a prior owner of your **property**. You may know this arrangement as 'pump-to-sewer'.

You have different operation and **maintenance** obligations depending on whether you have **pressure sewerage equipment** that is owned by us or you (this is illustrated in Figure 5 and Figure 6 of Appendix B). Your operation and **maintenance** obligations are set out in Appendix A and illustrated in Figures 5 and 6 in Appendix B.

## 8.5 Private joint water or wastewater pipes

If you share a **private joint service** for a water or **wastewater** pipe you are jointly responsible for the cost of its **maintenance**, including damage to private or public property resulting from a defect in the **private joint service**. Your shared responsibility starts from the **point of connection**. The apportionment of costs incurred in its **maintenance** is a matter between you and others who share it.

**Disconnection** of private pipes from **private joint services** for either water or **wastewater** is a matter between the relevant **private joint service** property owners. We have no authority in respect of **disconnection** from **private joint services**.

## 8.6 Stormwater connections, coverings and bridges

You are responsible for the **maintenance** of any connections between your **property** and our stormwater channel, pipe or culvert.

You are responsible for the **maintenance** of any coverings, bridges or similar structures within your **property** that cover or cross our stormwater channels, pipes or culverts unless they are owned by us.

## 8.7 Water efficiency

You may install water efficient plumbing fixtures, appliances and equipment, such as those recommended under the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme.

You may install water saving devices, for example:

- that collect and use rainwater for your own use (if you have a rainwater tank connected to our system, a **backflow prevention containment device** is required to be installed), and/or
- a composting toilet that does not require connection to our **water system** or **wastewater system**.



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You must comply with **BASIX** requirements, plumbing regulations and health, environmental and local council requirements when installing water saving devices. Approval may be required from your local council.

On request, we will provide you with information on how to use water efficiently.

## 8.8 Defective work

If we become aware of any defect with, or unauthorised work to, **your water system**, **your wastewater system** or your stormwater drainage system, that impacts or poses risks to the operation of our **water system**, our **wastewater system** or our **stormwater drainage system**, we will request the defect to be fixed within a reasonable time.

A defect includes where **your wastewater system** or your stormwater pipes allow **rainwater**, stormwater, groundwater or surface runoff to enter and impact the operation of our **wastewater system**. If you do not comply with the request, we may restrict or disconnect your water supply or your **wastewater** connection until the defect is fixed. We may also remedy the defect or unauthorised work and you may be charged the reasonable costs incurred by us in undertaking this work.

## 8.9 Giving notice of system failures

You should inform us if you become aware of any failure of our **water system**, **wastewater system**, or **stormwater drainage system**. If you notify us of an interruption to your water supply, a burst or leak in our **water system**, a disruption to the **wastewater** drainage from your **property** or an overflow or leakage from our system, we will ensure that the problem is attended to as soon as practicable.

## 8.10 Building work

You must not undertake any excavation, building, landscaping or construction work on your **property** without firstly identifying the location of our assets, and obtaining a building plan approval from us if required. In general, you require a building plan approval if the work occurs over or next to our assets or you need approval from a council or a certifier before carrying out the works. You can obtain a plan from us identifying the location of our assets. You can find further information about whether a building plan approval is required on our website or by contacting us. Our contact details are set out in clause 11 of this contract.

We will request that you remove or remediate any unapproved work that interferes with our **water system**, **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** at your cost. If you do not comply with our request within the required timeframe, we will remove or remediate the unapproved work and charge you the reasonable costs incurred by us in undertaking this work. If you do not comply with our request within the timeframe required, we may also disconnect your **property** from our **water system**, **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** until the work is carried out.

**Properties** with an existing water service must be metered during the period of excavation, building, landscaping or construction work. The **meter** must be accessible (as described in clause 10.4) at all times.

### 8.11 Connections to services

You must apply and have our written consent to be able to connect to our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**.

Once your application is approved, connections to our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system** are to be made using the services of a provider listed by us or licensed plumber and in accordance with plumbing, drainage or other regulations or standards that may apply. A list of providers is available on our website or by request.

### 8.12 Altering connections and unauthorised connection or use

You must not:

- wrongfully take, use or divert any water supplied by us
- use a dedicated **fire service** for any purpose other than firefighting or testing of the **fire service**
- wrongfully interfere with the operation of a **meter**, metering system or prevent a **meter** from registering the quantity of water supplied by us, or
- wrongfully discharge any substance into a system owned by us.

If you do not comply with the requirements in this clause, we may charge you for the estimated amount of water used. Fines may also apply and be imposed on you by a relevant authority.

You must obtain our consent before carrying out any activity that may alter, cause destruction of, damage or interfere with our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**.

### 8.13 Removal of trees

If a tree on your **property** is damaging or interfering with our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**, or is reasonably likely to do so, we may require the removal of the tree at your cost.

We will notify you in writing requiring you to remove the tree within a reasonable period. You may with our consent and at your cost, take steps to eliminate the cause of damage or interference to our **water system, wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**, without removing the tree.

We will reimburse you for the reasonable expenses incurred in removing the tree if:

- the person who planted the tree on your **property** could not have reasonably known that the planting of the tree would result in the damage or interference, and

- 
- an easement did not exist in favour of our system when the tree was planted on your **property**.

If you fail to comply with the notice to remove the tree by the specified date without reasonable cause (such as a delay or failure in obtaining consent from your local council or refusal by the council to allow you to remove the tree), then we may remove the tree and recover the costs of removal from you where:

- you were the owner of the **property** at the time the tree was planted, and
- you should have known that the planting of the tree would result in the damage or interference, or where an easement existed in favour of our **water system**, **wastewater system** or **stormwater drainage system**.

We cannot require a tree to be removed that is the subject of a protection or conservation order under the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW), the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NSW) or any applicable law.

## 9 Entry onto a customer's property

### 9.1 Access to Sydney Water's systems

You must ensure that we have safe access to your **property**:

- to maintain our **water system, wastewater system and stormwater drainage system**
- to ensure that this contract or the **Act** is being complied with
- for other purposes set out in the **Act** or other applicable laws
- to identify if **your water system, your wastewater system** or your stormwater pipes comprise defective private works, and
- to read, fit, exchange or maintain a **meter**.

### 9.2 Identification

When we enter your **property**, our staff or contractors will carry identification that will be shown to you (or to any person present at the time of access).

### 9.3 Notice of access

We will give you, or the occupier of your **property**, two days' written notice of our intention to enter your **property** specifying the date and approximate time of entry, unless you agree to a shorter notice period.

We will not give you written notice in cases where:

- entry is required urgently
- the purpose is to read, fit, exchange or maintain a **meter**
- giving notice would defeat the purposes of entry
- we intend to conduct a water restriction investigation on your **property**
- we need to investigate a health or safety issue, or
- we conduct a general **property** inspection such as verifying connection installation, **meter**, plumbing or a **backflow prevention containment device** inspection.

### 9.4 Impact on customer's property

If we enter your **property** for the reasons outlined in clause 9.1, we will ensure that we:

- cause as little disruption or inconvenience as possible
- remove all rubbish and equipment we have brought on to the **property**, and

- 
- unless otherwise agreed, leave the ***property***, as near as possible, in the condition that it was found on entry.

You may be entitled to compensation from us under the **Act** for damage incurred by our entry to your ***property***.

## 10 Water meter reading, installation, testing and maintenance

### 10.1 Installing and maintaining a meter

Unless we otherwise agree, your **property** must have a **meter** to measure the quantity of water that we supply you. Details, including who is required to supply you with the **meter** and who is required to pay for the plumbing installation are provided in our metering requirements published in our policies and guidelines that are available on our website, as amended from time to time.

If you install a **meter** in an inaccessible location, or make a **meter** inaccessible to us, we may charge you a fee for the provision of a remote reading device.

An approved **backflow prevention containment device** appropriate to the **property's** hazard rating must be fitted. The **backflow prevention containment device** must comply with the **Plumbing Code of Australia**, and any other regulations or standards that may apply. Residential **properties** with low risk of backflow that are serviced by either a 20mm or 25mm **meter** are exempt from this requirement because these **meters** already contain a **backflow prevention containment device**. **Properties** with larger **meters** must comply with our requirements published in our policies on our website, as amended from time to time.

If you have a Sydney Water **data logger** on your **property** as part of a metering system (for example, in multi-level buildings), you are responsible for maintaining and paying for the continuous electricity supply to it.

You are responsible for installing the pipework on either side of the **meter**. You are also responsible for maintaining the pipework located on either side of the **meter**, unless we maintain it under clause 8.1. For further details, refer to our requirements published in our policies on our website, as amended from time to time.

The installed **meter** remains our property and we will maintain it. In multi-level buildings the individual unit **meter** becomes our property once transferred to us, and from such time we will maintain it.

If the **meter** is damaged by you or a person acting on your behalf, other than by normal wear and tear, we will charge you for the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged **meter**, whichever has the lowest cost.

We may charge you an unmetered service charge if there is no **meter** measuring the supply of water to your **property**.

We may require that you fit a **meter** to your **fire service**. This requirement will be noted in your connection approval.

## 10.2 Measuring water supplied

You will be charged for the quantity of water measured by the **meter** for your **property**, unless the **meter** is faulty and we are required to adjust what we charge you under clause 10.3.

If a **meter** is stopped, inaccessible, or damaged, an estimated usage will be calculated on a basis that is representative of your usage pattern. The estimated usage will be used to calculate your usage charge.

We may charge you an unmetered service charge until the **meter** can be repaired or replaced where we have made three attempts (each at least one week apart) within a 6 week period to contact you to arrange to repair or replace a **meter** and we have had no response. Where possible, we will use at least two different communication methods to try and contact you before charging an unmetered service charge to you.

When the price for water or **wastewater** usage is varied on a date that falls within your **meter** reading period, we will apply the new price on a pro rata basis.

We will endeavour to provide an actual **meter** reading once every 12 months, inclusive of **meter** readings taken by you on our behalf.

You must not remove a **meter** from your **property** without our consent.

Where your **meter** is part of an automated **meter** reading system in a multi-level building we may share your **meter** reading information with the **Owners Corporation** or building manager.

## 10.3 Meter testing

If you consider that the **meter** is not accurately recording water passing through it, you may request that we test it. We will advise you of the **meter** reading results and make available a written report on your request.

If the test shows that the **meter** is over-recording by more than three per cent of the actual quantity of water passing through it, we will:

- repair or replace the **meter**
- refund any charge paid by you for the test, and
- adjust your bill by calculating the measurement error on a basis that is representative of your consumption pattern.

## 10.4 Access to the water meter

We may enter your **property** without notice for the purposes of reading, testing, inspecting, maintaining and replacing the **meter**.

You must ensure that the **meter** is accessible for **meter** reading and **maintenance**. The **meter** and the visible pipe connected should be clear of concrete, plants, trees, bushes and other obstructions.

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If you have not provided reasonable and safe access to your **meter**, we may bill you on an estimate of your usage.

If you have not provided reasonable and safe access to your **meter** for reading or **maintenance** on three or more occasions, we may:

- ask you to relocate the **meter** at your cost
- ask you to read the **meter** yourself and provide us with the reading
- seek access at a time suitable to you, which may incur an additional fee
- ask you to install a remote reading device, which may incur an additional fee
- take action under clause 6.4 and restrict or disconnect your supply until you replace your pipes or remove the obstruction or concrete around the **meter**; or
- make other arrangements with you.

If you intend to relocate your **meter**, you should engage a licensed plumber at your cost. Your plumber should check our requirements published in our policies on our website, as amended from time to time, before relocating the **meter**.

## 10.5 Meter replacement

We will replace the **meter** at no cost to you if the **meter**:

- is found to be defective
- can no longer be reasonably maintained, or
- is replaced as part of a **meter** replacement program.

We will attempt to notify you at the time of replacement and advise you that a new **meter** has been installed. A mutually acceptable time will be negotiated with **non-residential customers** for the replacement of **meters**.



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## 11 Who can I speak to if I have any questions or want to make enquiries?

### 11.1 Telephone enquiries

If you have a telephone **enquiry**, relating to a bill, payment options, concession entitlements or other information about our services, you may contact us on 13 20 92 between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

Our contact phone number is provided on your bill, in the phone directory and on our website.

If your **enquiry** cannot be answered immediately, we will provide a response to your **enquiry** within five business days of receiving it.

### 11.2 Internet enquiries

You can find information on a range of topics on our website at [sydneywater.com.au](http://sydneywater.com.au). You can also ask questions and be provided with a response.

### 11.3 Written enquiries

You can also email or write to us.

Email **enquiries** should be sent to [CustomerService@sydneywater.com.au](mailto:CustomerService@sydneywater.com.au) and written **enquiries** sent to:

Sydney Water  
PO Box 399  
Parramatta NSW 2124.

We will reply to your written **enquiry** within five business days of receiving it by mail, where your matter cannot be responded to sooner by phone contact.

### 11.4 Leaks and faults assistance

In the event of a leak or break to our water main, a **wastewater overflow**, an **unplanned interruption** to supply, or a water quality or water pressure problem, you may contact our 24-hour leaks and faults phone service on 13 20 90.

Our leaks and faults phone number is listed on your bill, in the telephone directory and on our website.

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## 11.5 Interpreter and TTY Service

We provide an interpreter service and a TTY service for the hearing impaired at our cost.

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## 12 If I am unhappy with the service provided by Sydney Water what can I do?

### 12.1 Customer complaints

If you have a **complaint** about our service or our compliance with this contract, the **Act** or **Operating Licence**, you should first contact us, either by telephone or by writing to us.

We will address your **complaint** promptly by providing:

- a telephone response within two business days where you have made contact with us and the matter cannot be dealt with immediately, or
- a written or email response within five business days where you have made a written or email **complaint** and the matter cannot be responded to sooner by phone contact.

The response will provide you with our intended course of action and/or identify when the action will be taken. We will also provide the name of a contact person for follow up **enquiries**.

### 12.2 Complaints review

If you are not satisfied with the solution offered or action taken by us, you may have the **complaint** reviewed by a Sydney Water manager.

The manager will:

- clarify your **complaint** and the outcome sought
- ensure that the **complaint** has been properly investigated
- advise you of the estimated timeframe for our proposed action
- inform you of the outcome of the manager's review
- outline the relevant facts and regulatory requirements where appropriate
- indicate what we will do to address the issue, and
- notify you of your rights to external review if you are still not satisfied with our decision.

### 12.3 Resolution of complaints

A **complaint** will be considered resolved if we provide you with a response:

- that resolves the dispute to your satisfaction or indicates how the dispute will be resolved to your satisfaction
- that provides an explanation of the relevant policy and/or regulatory requirements and why no further action is proposed in relation to the dispute

- that provides a date when the issue will be resolved if the **complaint** relates to future planned operational or capital work, or
- where 28 business days have passed since we provided you with a response and you have not sought a further review by us or lodged a claim in an external dispute resolution forum.

We will extend the 28 business days by a reasonable period if:

- within those 28 business days you have requested an extension, or
- after the 28 business days you demonstrate that, because of special circumstances, you were unable to seek an extension within the 28 business days.

Where a further communication from you or your representative is received, this shall be regarded as a new **enquiry** or **complaint**.

## 12.4 External dispute resolution

You have the right to seek external resolution of a dispute that has not been resolved by us to your satisfaction.

### 12.4.1 The Energy and Water Ombudsman, New South Wales (EWON)

You have the right to refer a **complaint** or dispute arising under this contract to **EWON**. **EWON** is an independent dispute resolution body that can investigate and resolve disputes you have with us under this contract. **EWON** will work with us and you to find a fair and reasonable outcome.

Disputes that may be referred to **EWON** include disputes about supply of **utility services**, your bill, credit or payment services, **restriction** or **disconnection**. Full details are available from **EWON**.

All our **customers** have the right to contact **EWON** at any time for independent advice and assistance. However, you are encouraged to contact us first to allow us the opportunity to resolve the issue.

**EWON's** services are available to you without cost.

EWON's contact details	
Free call	1800 246 545 (Fees may apply for some mobile phone users. You can request that EWON call you back).
Online	www.ewon.com.au
Free Fax	1800 812 291
Free Post	Reply Paid 86550 Sydney South NSW 1234
In Person	Level 11, 133 Castlereagh Street Sydney NSW 2000 (Please call first on 1800 246 545 to make an appointment)
Interpreter Service	131 450
National Relay Service	133 677

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#### 12.4.2 NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)

The **NCAT** may hear and determine consumer claims relating to services supplied by us under this contract.

#### 12.4.3 Other legal avenues

You may also have recourse to the courts.

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## 13 Consultation, information and privacy

### 13.1 Involving customers in service planning

To enable community involvement on issues relevant to our programs, services and decision-making processes, we have a **Customer Council**.

Further information on the role and functions of the **Customer Council** may be obtained on our website or by contacting us.

### 13.2 Providing information

We will respond in a timely and open manner to requests for information consistent with normal commercial practices and relevant legislation, including the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW).

### 13.3 Privacy

We will treat your **personal information** according to the applicable provisions of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW).

Details on how we handle your **personal information** and protect your privacy are available on our website.

Privacy **enquiries** and **complaints** may be directed to our Privacy Coordinator, or to the NSW Privacy Commissioner.

## 14 When does this contract with Sydney Water terminate?

### 14.1 Termination of this contract

This contract (or the applicable parts of this contract) will terminate between you and us if you cease to be covered by this contract (or those parts of this contract) as described in clause 2.2.

The termination of this contract does not affect any rights or obligations of you or us that accrue prior to termination.

If this contract (or the applicable parts of this contract) terminates (or terminate) because you have requested that some or all of the **utility services** that we provide to your **property** be transferred to a supplier licensed under the **WIC Act**, we will comply with the Transfer Code of Conduct established under that Act to effect the transfer.

### 14.2 Variation of this contract

We may vary this contract with approval from the Governor and as permitted by the **Act** as follows:

- a notice identifying a variation to this contract (other than for variations of charges and fees) will be published in a daily newspaper circulating in the **area of operations** and on our website and as required by the **Act** at least six months before the variation becomes effective, or a shorter period of notice approved by the **Minister**, and
- a copy of the notice will also be given to each **customer**.

This requirement to obtain approval from the Governor and to give notice of variations to the terms of the contract does not apply to variations to fees and charges made in accordance with a determination by **IPART**. Variations to charges and fees will be published in accordance with clause 4.10.

Information on all variations to this contract will be made available on our website or provided to you on request and will otherwise be made available to you in accordance with the **Act** and our **Operating Licence**.

## 15 Definitions and Interpretation

### 15.1 Definitions

<b>Act</b>	<i>Sydney Water Act 1994</i> (NSW).
<b>Area of operations</b>	The area of operations specified in section 10 of the <b>Act</b> , a description of which is set out in Schedule A of the <b>Operating Licence</b> .
<b>Australian Consumer Law</b>	The Australian Consumer Law, as set out in Schedule 2 to the <i>Competition and Consumer Act 2010</i> (Cth).
<b>Australian Drinking Water Guidelines</b>	The document entitled <i>Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011</i> published by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council.
<b>Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling</b>	The document entitled <i>Australian Guidelines For Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks (Phases 1 and 2)</i> published by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council, the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, and the National Health and Medical Research Council or the Australian Health Ministers' Conference.
<b>Backflow prevention containment device</b>	A device to prevent the reverse flow of water from a potentially polluted source into the <b>drinking water</b> supply system.
<b>BASIX</b>	The NSW Government's Building and Sustainability Index, which applies to all new homes and some renovations.
<b>Charging period</b>	Any period for which your bill was calculated.
<b>Combined service</b>	A single water connection to our <b>water supply system</b> used to provide both firefighting and domestic water needs.
<b>Commencement Date</b>	Is the Commencement Date of Sydney Water's Operating Licence 2019-2023 specified by the Governor in a notice published in the NSW Government Gazette.
<b>Commercial tenant</b>	A person who occupies commercial premises under a tenancy agreement and is not a <b>private residential tenant</b> .
<b>Complaint</b>	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Sydney Water related to its actions, products, services,



	staff or the <b>complaint</b> handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
<b>Customer</b>	Has the meaning given in clause 2.2.
<b>Customer Council</b>	A customer council established by us under section 15 of the <b>Act</b> and clause 6.6.2 of the <b>Operating Licence</b> .
<b>Data logger</b>	A device that electronically measures water use. An owner may retrofit this device to the <b>meter</b> when they want up-to-date information on their water use.
<b>Declared stormwater drainage area</b>	An area declared to be a stormwater drainage area as set out in Schedule 1 of the <i>Sydney Water (Stormwater Drainage Areas) Order 2011</i> .
<b>Dirty water</b>	Has the meaning given in clause 7.2.
<b>Disaster event</b>	A major event affecting a significant portion of our <b>water system</b> or <b>wastewater system</b> that was caused by events outside our control such as a natural disaster (eg, tsunami or earthquake) or a terror event, the risks of which we could not reasonably have mitigated.
<b>Disconnection</b>	The stopping (either temporarily or permanently) of our supply of services to your <b>property</b> .
<b>Drinking water</b>	Water intended primarily for human consumption but which has other personal, domestic or household uses such as bathing and showering.
<b>Enquiry</b>	A written or verbal approach by a <b>customer</b> which can be satisfied by providing written or verbal information, advice, assistance, clarification, explanation or referral about a matter.
<b>EWON</b>	The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW.
<b>Extended private service</b>	<p>You have an extended private service if we have classified it as such for one of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your water <b>meter</b> is a long way from the <b>property</b></li> <li>• access to your <b>property</b> is from a minor lane or road that does not have a water main, or</li> <li>• there are no hydrants along the access road to your <b>property</b> (indicating there may be no water main).</li> </ul> <p>An <b>extended private service</b> may serve a single <b>property</b> or multiple <b>properties</b>.</p>
<b>Fire service</b>	A water service constructed to meet fire protection requirements under building or fire codes and standards. <b>Combined services</b> are considered to be <b>fire services</b> .

<b>Low water pressure</b>	Has the meaning given in clause 7.2.
<b>Maintenance</b>	Includes repairs, replacement and, where relevant, testing and inspection.
<b>Meter</b>	The device used to measure water use. This includes any remote reading equipment and associated wiring, power, data logging and servicing equipment. If a <b>customer</b> receives <b>recycled water</b> from us, he or she will have separate <b>meters</b> for <b>drinking water</b> and for <b>recycled water</b> .
<b>Minister</b>	The Minister responsible for administering those provisions of the <b>Act</b> relating to Sydney Water's <b>Operating Licence</b> .
<b>NCAT</b>	The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.
<b>Non-residential customer</b>	A <b>customer</b> who is not a <b>residential customer</b> , <b>private residential tenant</b> or <b>commercial tenant</b> .
<b>NSW Health</b>	The New South Wales Ministry of Health.
<b>Operating Licence</b>	The licence granted to Sydney Water under section 12 of the <b>Act</b> or any renewal of it, as in force for the time being.
<b>Owners Corporation</b>	The collective group of owners of a strata plan.
<b>Payment arrangement</b>	An arrangement between Sydney Water and a <b>customer</b> to pay their bill by instalments, in advance or in arrears.
<b>Payment difficulty</b>	A situation where a <b>customer</b> is willing but unable to pay all or some of the bill by the due date.
<b>Personal information</b>	Any information or opinion held by Sydney Water about an individual that relates to the supply of services by Sydney Water, from which the individual's identity is apparent or can be reasonably ascertained from the information or opinion.
<b>Planned interruption</b>	An event which, in relation to a <b>property</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commences when the supply of water at the first water tap of the <b>property</b> is interrupted following receipt by the <b>customer</b> or any person who consumes or uses <b>utility services</b> (including a tenant or occupier) of a prior water interruption notice from Sydney Water, and</li> <li>• ceases when a normal supply of water is restored.</li> </ul>
<b>Plumbing Code of Australia</b>	The <i>National Plumbing Code of Australia</i> as produced by the Australian Building Code Board.

<b>Point of connection</b>	Where the privately owned service from a <b>property</b> connects to our <b>water system, wastewater system or stormwater drainage system</b> . Refer to the diagrams in Appendix B.
<b>Pressure sewerage equipment</b>	All equipment that collects <b>wastewater</b> in a tank installed on a private <b>property</b> . The equipment includes a pressure sewerage pump, collection tank and cover, alarm control panel, electrical connections and ancillary equipment. The pump located inside the tank grinds the <b>wastewater</b> into a slurry and pumps it from the private property to our <b>wastewater system</b> .
<b>Private joint service</b>	A private joint water or <b>wastewater</b> service exists when a private pipe serves more than one property, but there is a single connection to our main.
<b>Private residential tenant</b>	A person who occupies premises under a residential tenancy agreement, excluding premises managed by a <b>social housing provider</b> .
<b>Property</b>	Any real property that is connected to, or for which a connection is available to, our <b>water supply system</b> or our <b>wastewater system</b> or is within a <b>declared stormwater drainage area</b> or within the <b>Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area</b> . This also includes strata titled properties.
<b>Property boundary</b>	The boundary shown in a plan registered with NSW Land Registry Services. For strata plans, the relevant boundary is the boundary of the strata scheme (not the boundary of an individual lot).
<b>Property cluster</b>	Has the meaning given in the <b>Operating Licence</b> . [Note: The meaning given in the <b>Operating Licence</b> refers to certain identified <b>properties</b> that are affected by recurring <b>low water pressure</b> and are located in one of the following areas:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kurrajong</li> <li>• North Richmond</li> <li>• Horsley Park</li> <li>• Bass Hill</li> <li>• Buxton, or</li> <li>• Denham Court.]</li> </ul>
<b>Rainwater</b>	Water or ice that falls from the sky to the earth but excludes water that is collected in a rainwater tank for use on your <b>property</b> .
<b>Recycled water</b>	Water that, upon appropriate treatment, is suitable for its intended re-use application.

<b>Recycled water area</b>	A community supplied with <b>recycled water</b> through a pipe network separate from that part of our <b>water system</b> used to supply <b>drinking water</b> .
<b>Residential customer</b>	A <b>customer</b> who owns a <b>property</b> that is used as a principal place of residence.
<b>Restriction</b>	A direct action taken by us in order to reduce flow to your <b>property</b> .
<b>Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area</b>	The area of land located in the Rouse Hill stormwater catchment as identified in any determination made by <b>IPART</b> of maximum prices that may be levied by <b>Sydney Water</b> for <b>stormwater services</b> , as in force from time to time.
<b>Service charge</b>	A charge that applies to <b>customers</b> for being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connected to our <b>water system</b>, and/or</li> <li>• connected to our <b>wastewater system</b>, and/or</li> <li>• within a <b>declared stormwater drainage area</b> or the <b>Rouse Hill stormwater catchment area</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Sewer mining</b>	The process of tapping into a <b>wastewater</b> pipe (either before or after the <b>wastewater</b> treatment plant) and extracting <b>wastewater</b> that is then treated and used as <b>recycled water</b> .
<b>Social housing provider</b>	Any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the New South Wales Land and Housing Corporation</li> <li>• the Aboriginal Housing Office</li> <li>• an organisation registered under Part 5 of the <i>Aboriginal Housing Act 1998</i> (NSW), and</li> <li>• a registered community housing provider.</li> </ul>
<b>Stormwater drainage system</b>	The stormwater drainage channels, land for drainage, pipes, detention structures, and stormwater quality improvement devices and other equipment for the provision of <b>stormwater services</b> .
<b>Stormwater services</b>	The services we are permitted to provide by the <b>Operating Licence</b> and any applicable law in respect to providing <b>stormwater drainage systems</b> .
<b>Trade waste</b>	Any liquid, and any material contained in any liquid, that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is produced at a <b>property</b> in the course of non-residential activity and contains pollutants at a concentration greater than the domestic equivalent determined by IPART in the prevailing price determination for Sydney Water referred to in clause 4.9.</li> </ul>

- is produced or stored on, or transported by, any vehicle (including, without limitation, motor vehicles, planes, boats and trains)
- is comprised of waste from a portable toilet or septic tank, or
- is comprised of run-off from land that is contaminated within the meaning of section 5 of the *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997* (NSW).

You may know the term **trade waste** as 'trade wastewater'.

<b>Unplanned interruption</b>	<p>An event which, in relation to a <b>property</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commences when the supply of <b>drinking water</b> at the first cold water tap of a <b>property</b> is interrupted without the <b>customer</b> having received prior notice of that interruption from Sydney Water, and</li> <li>• ceases when a normal supply of <b>drinking water</b> is restored.</li> </ul>
<b>Utility service</b>	<p>Means, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a <b>water supply service</b> (including a <b>fire service</b> or <b>combined service</b>)</li> <li>• a <b>wastewater service</b>, and/or</li> <li>• a <b>stormwater service</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Wastewater</b>	<p>Also known as sewage, <b>wastewater</b> includes the water you flush down your toilet, water that drains from your shower, bathtub, sink, washing machine and other sources.</p>
<b>Wastewater overflow</b>	<p>The discharge of untreated or partially treated sewage from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any part of Sydney Water's <b>wastewater system</b>, or</li> <li>• any part of <b>your wastewater system</b> where the cause of the discharge is a problem with Sydney Water's <b>wastewater system</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Wastewater service</b>	<p>The service we are permitted to provide by the <b>Operating Licence</b> and any applicable law in respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a <b>wastewater system</b>, and</li> <li>• disposing of <b>wastewater</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Wastewater system</b>	<p>The <b>wastewater</b> pipes and treatment plants and other equipment that we provide, manage, operate and maintain under the <b>Act</b> to provide <b>wastewater services</b> and disposal of <b>wastewater</b>. This includes three types of <b>wastewater systems</b> - pressure sewerage, gravity and vacuum.</p>

<b>Wastewater usage discharge factor</b>	A measure of the volume of <b>wastewater</b> discharged to our <b>wastewater system</b> expressed as a percentage of water delivered to a <b>property</b> via all Sydney Water <b>meters</b> .
<b>Water supply service</b>	The services we are permitted to provide by the <b>Operating Licence</b> and any applicable law in respect to storing and supplying water.
<b>Water system</b>	The water mains, pipes, treatment plants and other equipment that we must provide, manage, operate and maintain under the <b>Act</b> to supply and store water.
<b>WIC Act</b>	<i>Water Industry Competition Act 2006</i> (NSW).
<b>Your wastewater system</b>	Has the meaning given in clause 8.2.
<b>Your water system</b>	Has the meaning given in clause 8.1.

## 15.2 Interpretation

A person includes an individual, a body corporate, an unincorporated body or other entity.

The law includes legislation, regulations, licences, orders, mandatory codes, permits and directions.

A business day is a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday in New South Wales.

The singular includes the plural and vice versa.

If there is any inconsistency between this contract and any law, the law will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

A reference to a document, instrument or law includes any amendments, revisions, renewals or reprints from time to time.

Where a word is defined, any other grammatical form of that word has a corresponding meaning.

A reference to we, our or us means Sydney Water Corporation, established under the **Act**, including its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

A reference to you or yours means our **customers**.

A reference in this contract to:

- any person that is reconstituted or renamed will be a reference to that person as reconstituted or renamed, and
- any person that is replaced by, or who has his or her powers or functions transferred to, another person will be a reference to that other person.

## A Operation and maintenance obligations for pressure sewerage equipment

Your operation and **maintenance** obligations for **pressure sewerage equipment** will depend on whether the equipment is owned by you or us as set out in clause 8.4 of this Customer Contract.

### Pressure sewerage equipment owned by you

You may only connect your **pressure sewerage equipment** to our **wastewater system** with our written permission.

You must maintain a collection tank that can safely store **wastewater** before you pump it to our **wastewater system**.

You must manage your collection tanks and pumps to ensure that they do not emit odours, or increase the chance of odours or corrosion in our **wastewater system**. You are responsible for any overflows or odours that may occur from your **pressure sewerage equipment**.

You must install an isolation valve at the **point of connection** to our **wastewater system**, so that we can disconnect **your wastewater system** if required.

We may disconnect **your wastewater system** if:

- your **pressure sewerage equipment** causes overflows, unacceptable odours or leaks in our **wastewater system**, or
- your pumped **wastewater** causes our **wastewater system** to corrode.

### Pressure sewerage equipment owned by us

You may only connect to our **pressure sewerage equipment** with our written permission.

Before we provide our written permission, your **wastewater system** must be inspected by a NSW Fair Trading plumbing inspector to ensure that it meets the **Plumbing Code of Australia**.

You may only use our **pressure sewerage equipment** to pump **wastewater** from a dwelling on your **property**.

You must ensure that the **pressure sewerage equipment** is connected, and remains continuously connected, to your electrical circuitry on your side of the electricity meter. You must ensure, at your expense, that your electrical circuit is suitable for the connection.

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You must ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, that electricity is continuously supplied (at no cost to us) by your electricity supplier, to enable the **pressure sewerage equipment** to function properly.

If the **pressure sewerage equipment** is damaged as a result of irregular or incorrect electricity supply, you:

- are liable for the costs of fixing that damage, and
- authorise Sydney Water to act as your agent to recover the repair costs from your electricity supplier.

You will own and be responsible for maintaining any extension to your electrical circuit that is necessary to connect the **pressure sewerage equipment** (including the alarm control panel) to your electrical circuit.

You must not do anything that will interfere with the proper functioning of the **pressure sewerage equipment** or our ability to safely access and service the **pressure sewerage equipment**.

We are responsible for the cost of maintaining the **pressure sewerage equipment** arising from normal use.

You will be responsible for costs resulting from damage caused by you or the occupiers of your **property**.

Only we may maintain and repair the **pressure sewerage equipment**.

You must ensure that occupiers of your **property** are aware of the terms of this appendix and that they agree not to breach them.

If you want the **pressure sewerage equipment** to be relocated on your **property** after it has been installed, you must engage a water servicing coordinator certified by us. A list of certified water servicing coordinators is available on our website.

We may impose conditions on the relocation of our **pressure sewerage equipment** which you must comply with and you will be responsible for all costs associated with any relocation.

You may apply to disconnect from our **wastewater system** if you obtain approval from your local government authority to install an on-site sanitary treatment system to service your **property**.

If we agree to disconnect your service, you must cooperate to allow us to remove our **pressure sewerage equipment** from your **property**.



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## B System diagrams

## Figures

Figure 1: Typical water system maintenance responsibilities

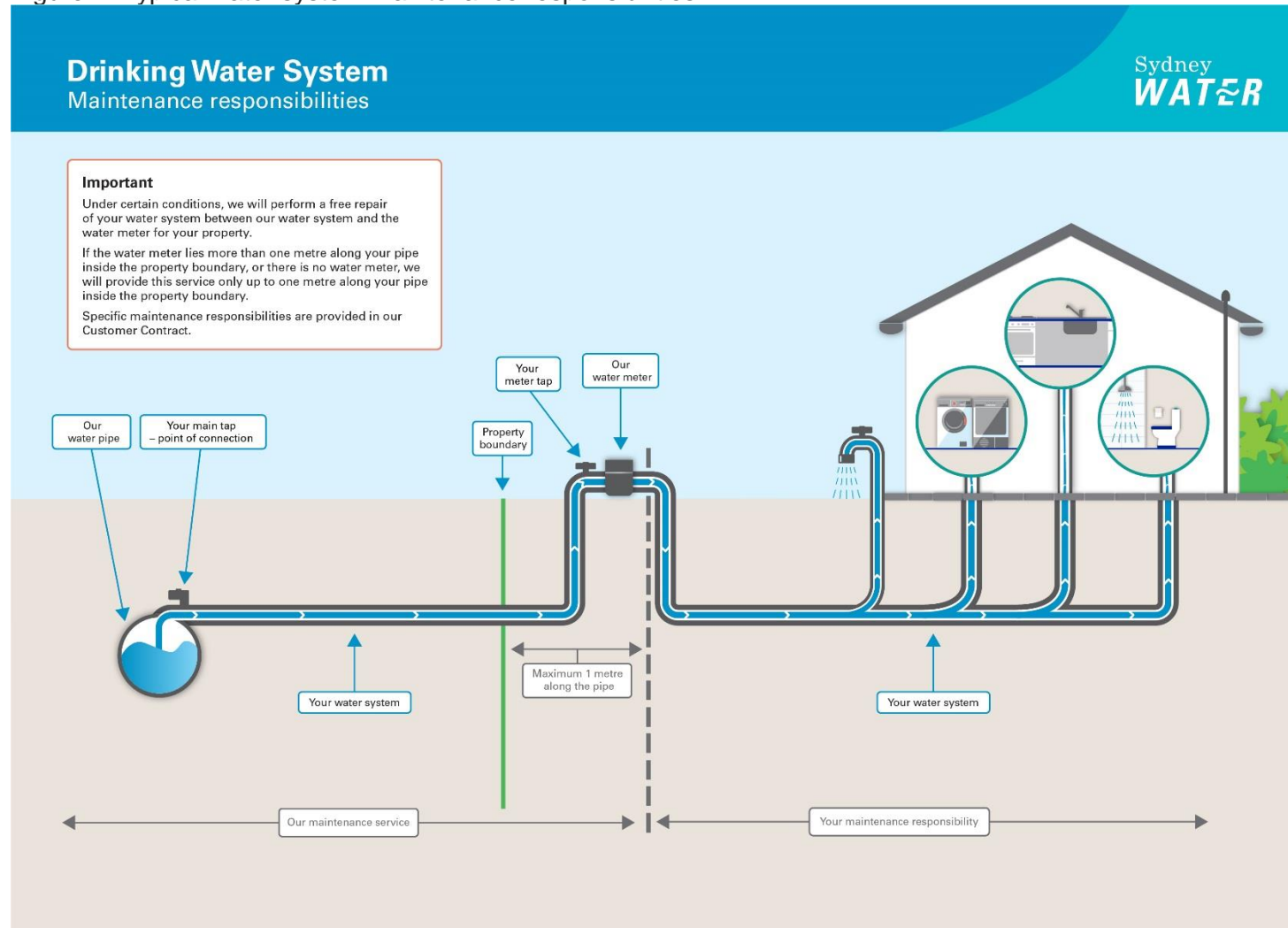


Figure 2: Typical recycled water system maintenance responsibilities

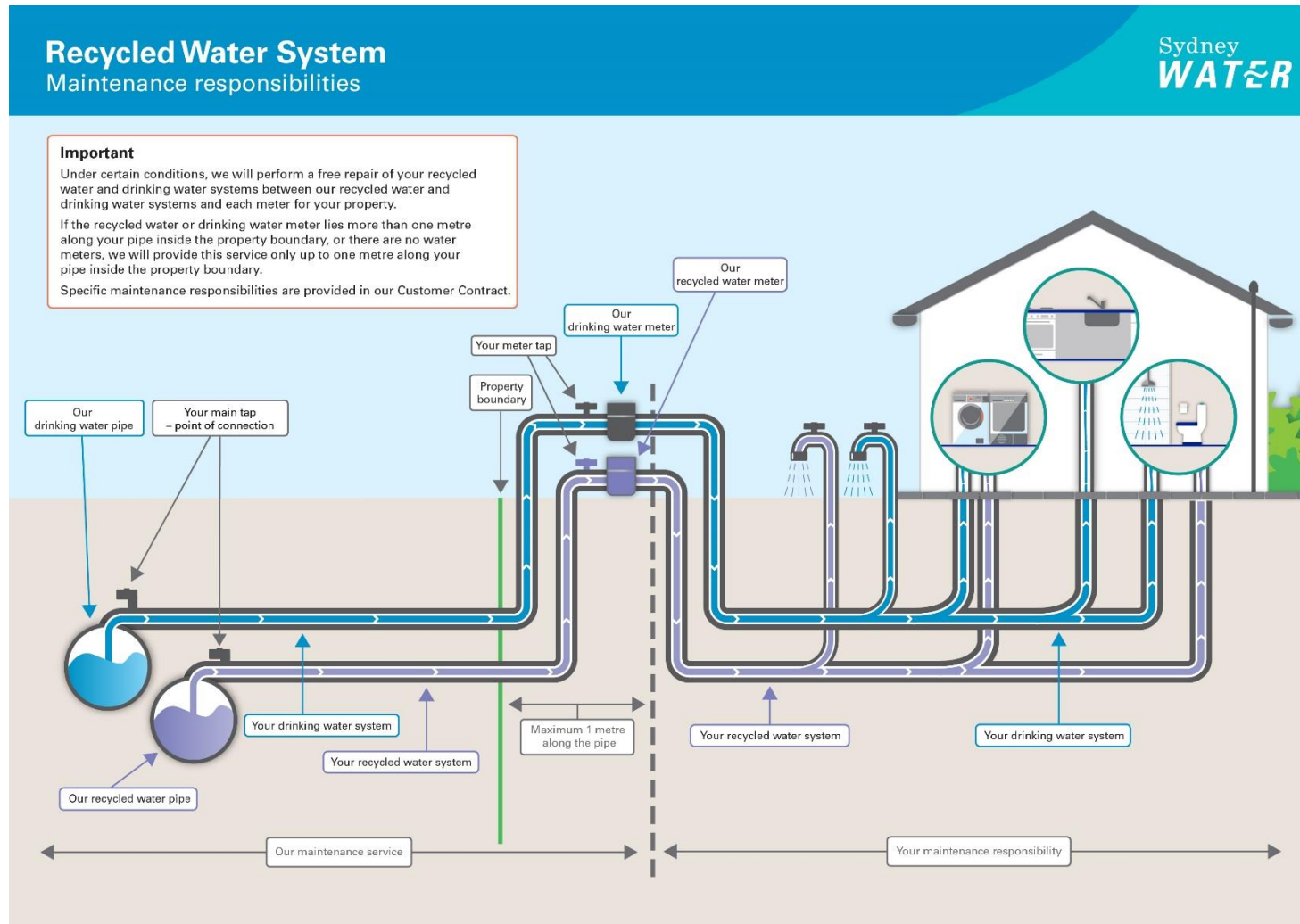


Figure 3: Typical wastewater system maintenance responsibilities – Gravity wastewater system

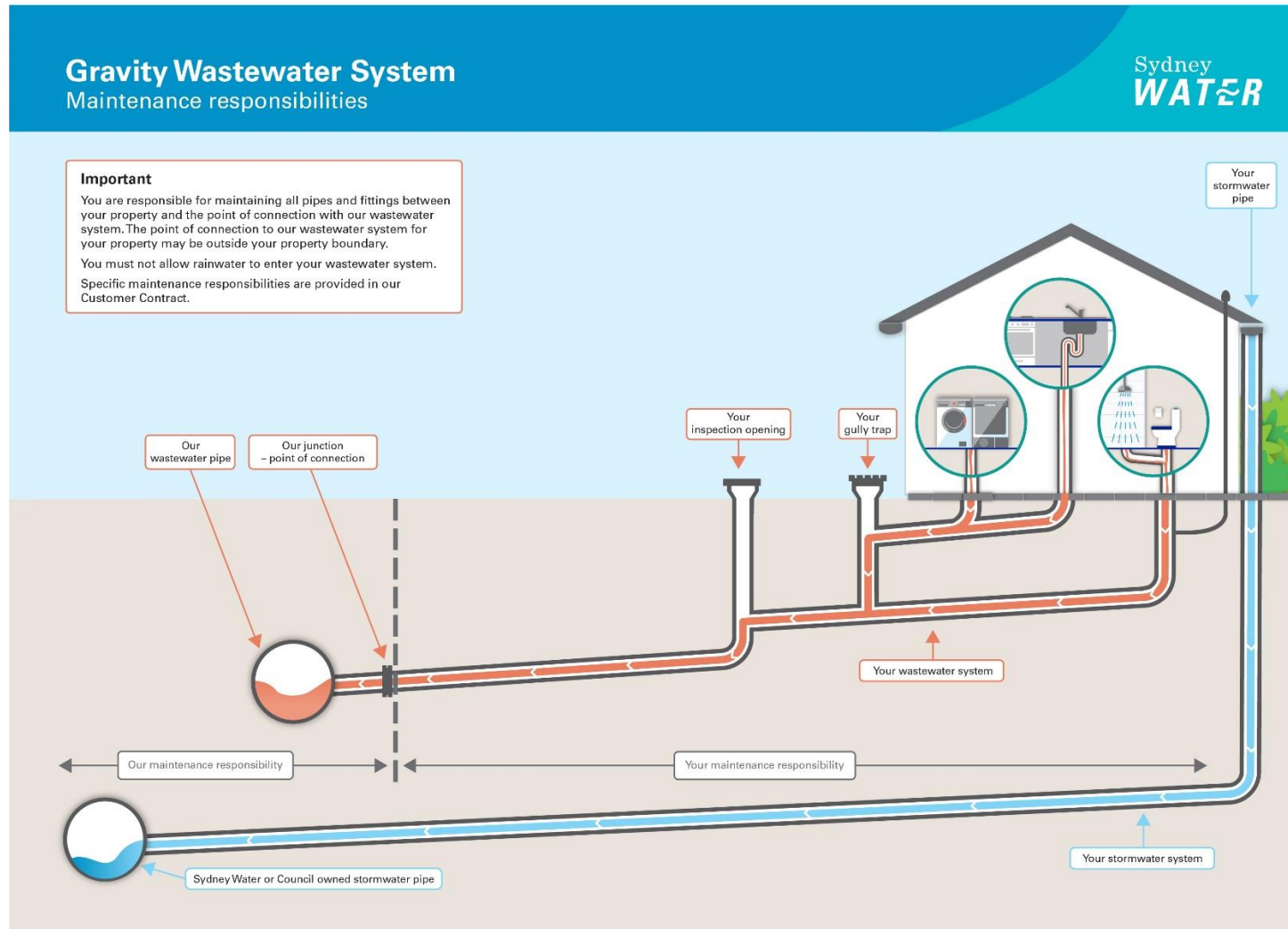


Figure 4: Typical wastewater system maintenance responsibilities – Vacuum wastewater system

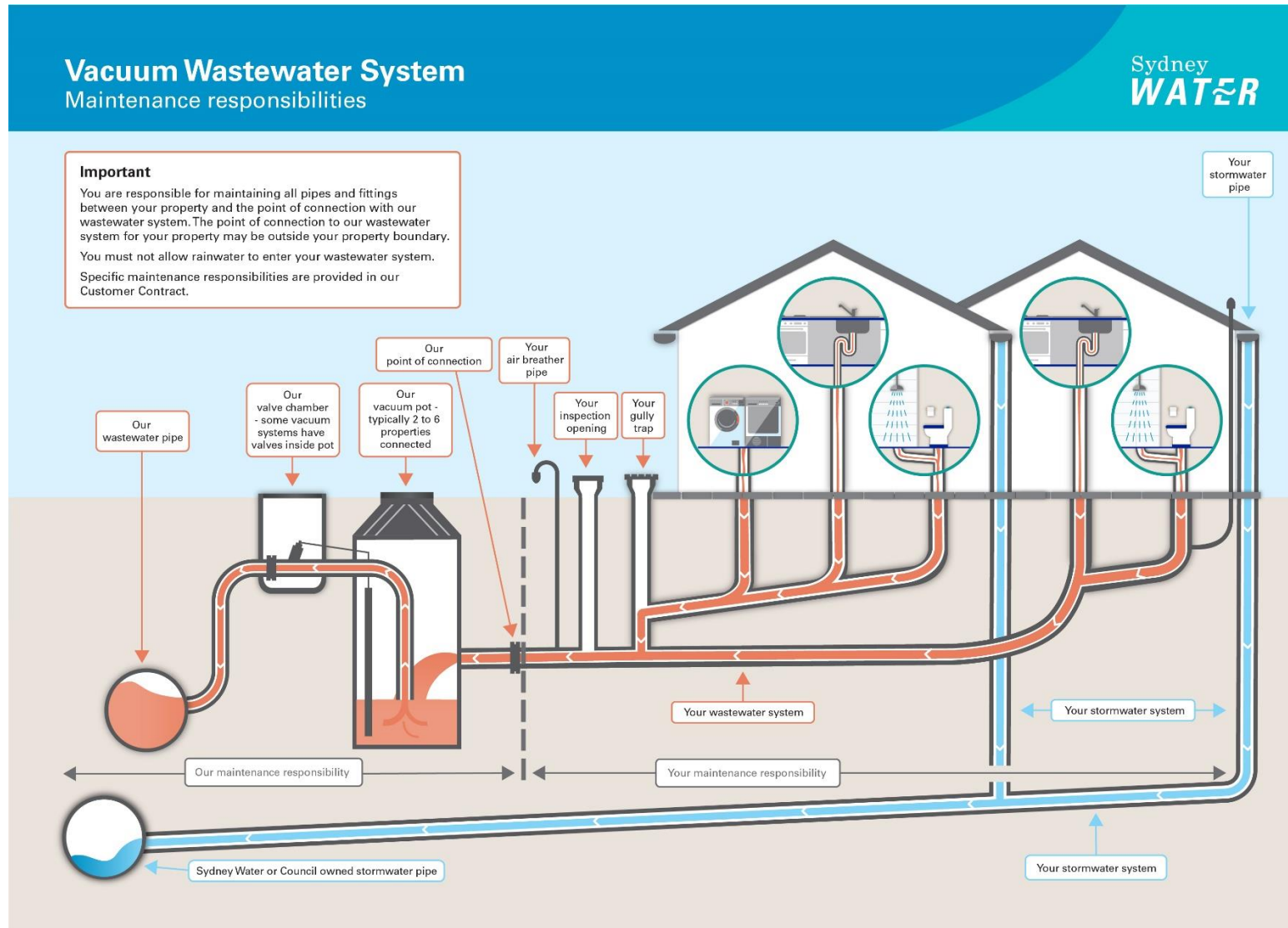


Figure 5: Typical pressure sewerage equipment maintenance responsibilities – Sydney Water owned equipment

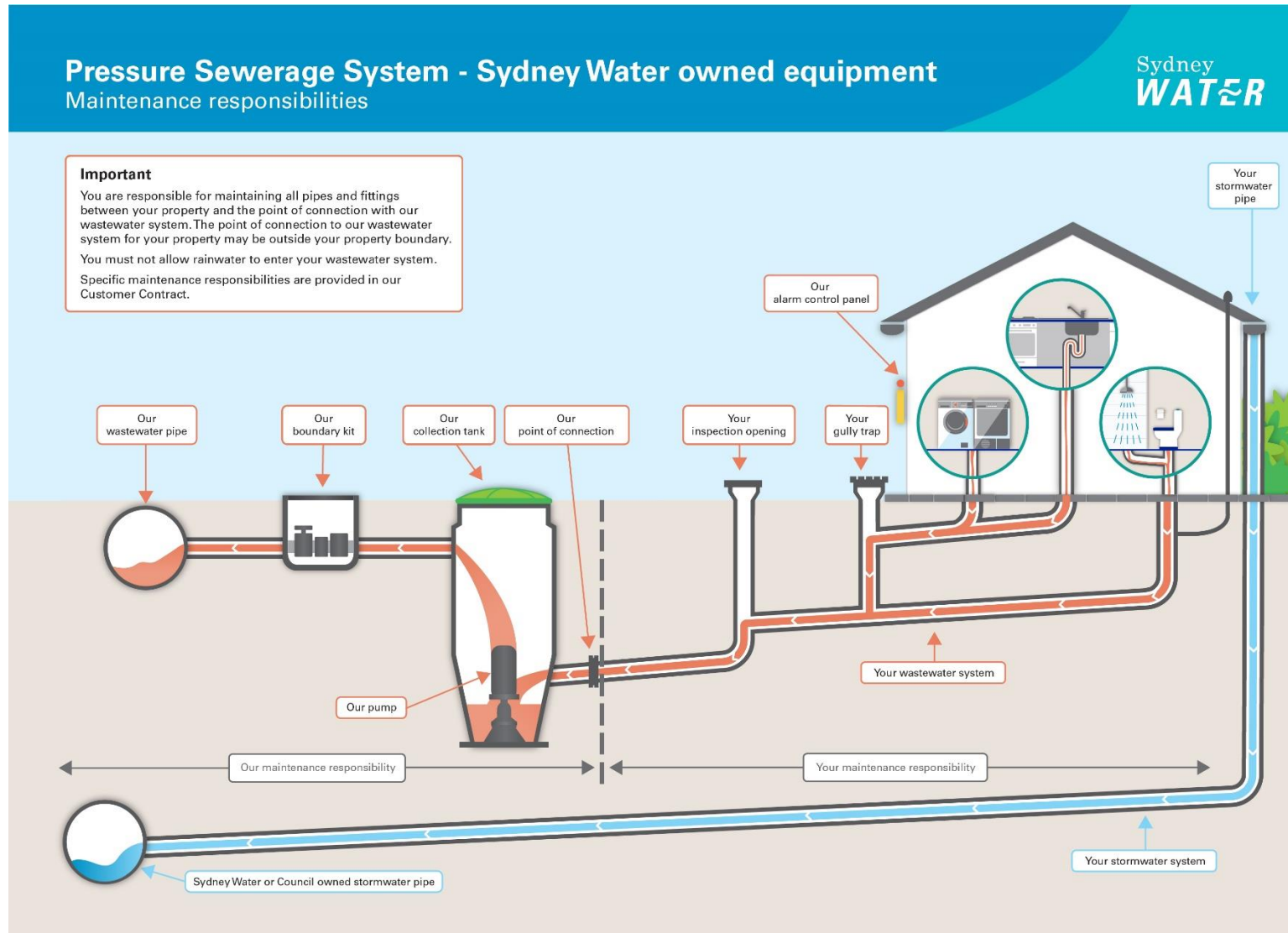


Figure 6: Typical pressure sewerage equipment maintenance responsibilities – Privately owned equipment

