Water Supply – Connections Policy

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Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
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Due date of next Review	<date>

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1. Purpose

This policy provides information on the process Council follows when assessing an application for connection or disconnection to its water supply and details your options should you wish to have a decision reviewed.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all applications to Council for:

2.1.1 Standard water connections from its network to your property (as explained in this document); and

2.1.2 Disconnections from its network.

2.2 This policy outlines the application process to alter existing connections.

2.3 Applicable fees and charges are set out in Council's Fees and Charges Register.

2.4 Council will not accept applications for connection or disconnection from any party other than the owner of the property or a person authorised by the owner of the property. By submitting an application you acknowledge that you are the owner of the property or are authorised to submit a request on behalf of the owner. Council will communicate to the party who submits the application. It is the responsibility of that party to communicate with the owner/s or occupier/s of the property.

3. Definitions

3.1 A **Council staff member** means any person that is employed full-time, part-time or casually by Council who receives remuneration for their work. (example)

4. Policy

4.1 Connections

4.1.1 If you are moving into an existing property with a water supply service you are already connected to Council's network and do not need to apply for a connection. Your conveyancer will advise Council of the change of ownership and you can immediately begin using the services. Council will commence billing the owner from the date of purchase of the property.

4.1.2 If the property does not have a metered water connection to the Council network, you may want to apply for a water supply service connection. Council's Standard Customer Contract is applicable for connecting to its water supply network.

4.1.3 When subdividing an existing property, or for community title division, Council will automatically assess your land division for new connections after your division has been lodged with Plan SA and referred to Council for comment.

4.2 Fees & Charges

To connect to Council's network, you will be required to pay a connection fee. You may also be required to pay for an extension of the mains or upgrades to the supply network. These charges are explained further in section 4.2.1 of this policy.

You will be advised of the fees and charges that apply to your connection upon assessment of your application. Further information is provided below to assist you in understanding which fees and charges may apply to you.

4.2.1 Connection fees

Standard connection fees are listed in the Fees and Charges Register. This register is updated annually as part of Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget process and is available at http://www.claregilbertvalleys.sa.gov.au/.

If it is determined by Council's assessment that a non-standard connection is required to connect your property at the location deemed appropriate by it, you will receive an approval letter which will include the full estimated cost of providing the requested connection/s to your property which will be valid for 60 days. More information on non-standard connections is provided below.

Please be aware there is an administration fee payable by the customer when a non-standard connection or main extension is required.

4.2.2 Extension fees and charges

If an extension is required to connect your property, Council will explain this process to you. Council will:

- Contact you prior to progressing your application to advise an extension is required,
- Charge you the relevant application fee to undertake investigations and designs for the extension in order to provide you with an estimate. This application fee includes processing of the application, investigation and design of the works required, and the provision of a quote for the works requested and provide you with an estimate for the cost of works,
- Should you choose to proceed, Council will issue you with an Invoice and an approval letter for the connection along with a concept design for the extension.

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4.2.3 On payment of the invoice Council will deliver the work detailed in the Invoice to enable your connection.

4.3 Application Process

To request a new or to alter water service connections, submit your request in writing to Council. There is no application form however your request should also include a site plan showing your preferred water supply connection point.

A lodgement fee is payable prior to your request being considered. This fee covers the costs associated with assessing your application. This fee will be deducted from the final construction cost if your project goes ahead.

4.3.1 Assessment of your application

When all relevant information has been submitted, Council will assess your application and will complete it within 20 business days.

If Council's mains need to be extended to provide your connection, or its network needs to be upgraded, it will advise you that a connection is possible subject to an extension of our main, upgrade of our network or both at this time. If you still wish to proceed with investigations into the costs to provide a connection through mains extension and/or upgrades to the network, a fee is payable by you before any investigation work commences. If you proceed with the quoted works with the same concept design the investigation costs will be deducted from the final required fees and charges.

Council may need to conduct a visit to the site to assess your application. It will contact you if you need to meet a Council representative at the site. You can also request a meeting on site if you would like to discuss your application. The cost that you will be required to pay will be set out in a fixed quotation, valid for 60 days, provided in Council's offer to connect.

If Council is unable to fulfil your request for the connection requested due to serviceability issues and/or needing an upgrade or extending the infrastructure, it will contact you to discuss potential alternative solutions.

4.3.2 Offer to connect

Once your application has been assessed and Council can provide a service, it will respond with an offer to connect. An offer to connect will detail the following:

1. The type of connection available:
    - Standard water connection
    - Non-standard water connection
    - A connection is not available without extension of, or upgrades to, the existing supply network.
2. The type of service available to your property once you are connected:
    - Standard service
    - Standard service with special characteristics
3. The required fees and charges payable for your type of connection;
4. The construction program associated with the design and construction of your connection;
5. Any approvals you are required to obtain and any preconditions for Council to do the work, e.g.
    - Keeping the connection site clear and accessible.
6. Any post-construction requirements:

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- Any requirements of the Office of the Technical Regulator, e.g. installation of an isolation valve and/or back-flow prevention device.

4.3.3 Payment of Connection Fees and Charges

Once your application has been approved and you fulfill any prerequisite requirements, you will receive an invoice along with your approval letter which sets out the fees and charges payable and how to pay them. This invoice will be valid for 60 days. If payment is not received within 60 days, Council will assume you do not wish to proceed.

A new application may need to be made when you are ready to commence with revised fees applicable as at the time of proceeding.

Full payment is required prior to Council commencing construction.

4.3.4 Construction and connection

Council is committed to delivering connection services in accordance with any regulatory service standards. After you have paid your invoice it will use its best endeavours to construct/activate your service within the following timeframes to meet regulatory service standards:

- A standard water connection within 25 business days
- A non-standard water connection within 35 business days

Connections that also require extension or upgrade of the supply network may take longer in the construction phase because they are dependent on extension or upgrade works separate to the connection works. Council will communicate the expected construction timeframe once payment of Council construction works has been received.

4.4 Disconnections

Council is able to permanently disconnect your water supply service at your request. Details of the circumstances permitted are set out below along with the process and the applicable fees and charges.

4.4.1 Customer request for permanent disconnection

If you no longer require a water supply service, you can apply to have it disconnected. A disconnection may only be requested by the landowner. Council will only disconnect your service if fulfilling your request or dealing with an emergency.

This process will cease the flow of water into the supply address.

Council will not disconnect a property where Council knows, or suspects, that there is a person or persons living lawfully or unlawfully in the premises.

Although this process ceases water supply services to your property, if your property still abuts a water main the relevant supply charge and/or rates on property value will still be payable by you. This is referred to in Council's Standard Customer Contract as the Availability Charge, which the property owner pays for the service to be available to the property.

Please be aware, should you require a new water service at any time in the future, you will need to submit a new connection application and the applicable fee to lay a new connection and install a meter will be paid for by you.

4.4.2 Fees and charges for disconnection

Fees and charges for permanent disconnection are listed in the Fees and Charges

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Schedule, which is updated annually and available on Council's website.

4.4.3 Application process for disconnections

To request a disconnection of a water supply service, your request must be in writing to Council.

4.4.4 Assessment of your application for a disconnection

Council will assess your application for disconnection and reply to you in writing within 20 business days.

4.4.5 Payment of Disconnection

Once your application has been approved, you will receive an invoice along with your approval letter, which sets out the fees and charges payable and how to pay them. This invoice will be valid for 60 days. If payment is not received within 60 days, Council will assume you do not wish to proceed and close the application. A new application will need to be made when you are ready to commence.

Full payment is required prior to disconnection/decommissioning commencing.

4.4.6 Disconnection/decommissioning

Once your payment has been received, Council will decommission its infrastructure.

Council will use its best endeavours to decommission your service within the following timeframes to meet regulatory service standards:

A standard water connection within 25 business days

A non-standard water connection within 35 business days

4.4.7 Notification that a disconnection is not approved

Council may advise you that a disconnection cannot be accommodated if:

- The disconnection may impact other customers.
- The supply address is occupied by tenants or unauthorised occupants.

4.5 Unauthorised Connections

Council does not allow unauthorised connections. These may include;

- connecting to its network without an authorised connection process
- installing a water meter not recorded by it
- not reporting a stolen or missing meter from the property
- connecting to its network without a meter or bypassing the meter

In accordance with the *Water Industry Act 2012*, penalties may apply for unauthorized connections.

4.5.1 Managing unauthorised connections

If Council identifies an occupied property without a water meter connected, the full cost of the meter as per its Fees and Charges Register will be added to the next quarterly water bill and a meter will be fitted at the premises.

In addition, as a requirement under the *Water Industry Act 2012* a maximum penalty of $20,000 can be imposed for unauthorised connections. It is also an expiable offence, attracting a $750 fine. The Act also provides for Council to recover compensation for losses resulting from an illegal connection.

4.5.2 Enquiries and dispute resolution

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If you have enquires about a future connection, customer requested disconnection or a connection/disconnection request, please contact Council:

Email: admin@cgvc.sa.gov.au

Phone: (08) 8842 6400

5. Delegations

5.1 The Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, is authorised to supply water to the customers, subject to the application of this Policy.

5.2 Council or its officers with delegated authority will, when implementing decisions under this Policy, act in accordance with financial delegated authority, Council's budget, relevant policies, strategies, plans, agreements and resolutions.

6. Policy Responsibility

The Director Work & Infrastructure is responsible for ensuring the proper operation of this Policy.

7. Availability/Accessibility

7.1 This Policy and Council's *Fees & Charges Register* are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: www.claregilbertvalleys.sa.gov.au.

7.2 This Policy is available for inspection at Council's offices during ordinary business hours. Hard copies, for a fee in accordance with Council's schedule of *Fees & Charges*, can be provided upon request.

8. Legislative Framework / Other References

8.1 *Local Government Act 1999*

8.2 *Water Industry Act 2012*

9. Document History

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every four (4) years or more frequently if legislation or Council requires. (adjust this paragraph to suit)

Version	Adopted	Minute	Description of Change
1	<date of meeting>	<minute>	Adopted

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