

ROTTNEST ISLAND AUTHORITY



OPERATION OF WATER SERVICES

CUSTOMER CHARTER

2009

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1. Introduction

1.1 Rottnest Island Authority Mission Statement

Rottnest Island is conserved and enhanced as a unique island destination rich in environment, culture, and heritage, offering a relaxed holiday experience for Western Australian families and other local, interstate and overseas visitors.

1.2 The Role of the Customer Charter

This Customer Charter sets out the principles terms and conditions upon which the Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) intends to provide water services to its customers in accordance with the licence issued to the RIA by the Economic Regulation Authority under the *Water Services Licensing Act 1995*.

The charter informs RIA's customers of their rights in accordance with the provisions of the license, including service interruptions, levels of service, and complaint procedures.

A copy of the operating licence is available on request from the RIA or from the Economic Regulation Authority.

1.3 References

The Charter has been compiled with reference to the directions of the National Health and Medical Research Council which reviews public health issues within Australia, the Australian Water Resources Council '*Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality in Australia*' and associated regulations and relevant industry codes.

1.4 Customers

RIA customers can be divided into three main groups:

- Visitors - receive water services but are not charged directly.
- Residents - are employees of the Rottnest Island Authority and contractors on the Island that receive water services and are charged for water use.
- Lessees - are commercial business operators on the Island who are provided with water services and are charged a separate water usage charge.

1.5 Commitment to Service and Supply

The Rottnest Island Authority will provide its service in a manner that is professional, courteous, and prompt with a focus on consultation with the customer, respecting your rights, and meeting your reasonable expectations.

The Rottnest Island Authority will supply you with water that is safe for all visitors, businesses and residents to drink and that complies with the directions on drinking water quality made by the Minister for Health.

1.6 Services provided

The RIA will:

- a) provide the production, distribution and retail supply of potable water to your supply address, manage your accounts and answer any queries you have regarding the supply of water; and
- b) collect, treat and dispose of domestic sewerage and waste water discharge from each customer's premises or public amenities through the Island's sewer system.
- c) Provide and maintain a drainage system to accommodate storm water runoff and minimize the risk of flooding, including the use of road and street drains, soakwells and open grate drainage systems. The RIA will engage experts in this field as required to continually improve drainage services.

Keeping rubbish and foreign objects (e.g. litter, cleaning products, nappies, food scraps, cooking oil and grease, medicines, chemicals) out of the drainage system will assist with the quality of the water and the efficiency of the system.

The RIA (through its facilities manager) is equipped with machinery and parts that in most cases can remedy drainage problems promptly should they occur. Sections 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 provide contact details in these situations.

1.7 How to Contact the Rottnest Island Authority

Address: Reception, Level 1, E Shed Victoria Quay Fremantle 6160

Office Hours: 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday

Telephone Number: (08) 9432 9300

Customers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can call through the National Relay Service:

- TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for 08 9432 9300
- Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay) users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 08 9432 9300
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS (see www.relayservice.com.au for details) and then ask for 08 9432 9300.

To use an interpreter over the telephone (multi lingual services):

- Telephone: 131 450 and quote telephone number 9432 9300 (client code 769477)

1.8 Emergency Assistance

Due to the different types of customers using the water services provided, two procedures are required for emergency response to best serve customers on the Island, one for visitors to the Island and one for lessees and residents on the Island.

1.8.1 Visitors

All incidents can be reported to the accommodation office either in person or by telephone on (08) 9372 9730 during office hours.

After hours emergencies can be reported to the Rottneest Island Authority Accommodation Office on (08) 9372 9728.

The Accommodation Office will notify the facilities management contractor of the incident. The facilities management contractor will advise the Accommodation Office of the nature and timing of the action to be undertaken and this information will be relayed to the customer by Accommodation Office staff within 1 hour of the visitor reporting the incident.

Accommodation Office	During office hours	(08) 9372 9730
	After hours emergencies	(08) 9372 9728

1.8.2 Lessees / Residents

All incidents should be reported to the facilities management contractor by telephone on (08) 9292 5233 during office hours.

After hours emergencies can be reported to the facilities management contractor by telephone on 0437 417 083.

The facilities management contractor will, within one (1) hour, advise the Lessee/Resident of the nature and timing of the action to be undertaken.

Rottneest Island facilities contract manager	During office hours	(08) 9292 5233
	After hours emergencies	0437 417 083

2. Billing and Payment Information

2.1 Billing Cycles

Statements of account for outstanding charges are issued on a regular basis.

In addition, the RIA will supply additional statements of account on request by a Customer. A fee applies for this service.

An account will be regarded as having been delivered when it is transmitted to a customer at the address notified to the RIA by the property holder. It is the property holder's responsibility to notify the RIA of any change of address.

The RIA requests that you provide three (3) business days notice of your intention to change address, to ensure you will not be charged for water usage costs incurred after you have vacated.

Where changes in tenancy or property ownership occur, a special water meter reading can be requested to determine the amount of water used. A fee applies for this service.

2.2 Contents of a Bill

Unless you request otherwise, your bill will include:

- (a) The customer's name and account number.
- (b) The supply address and any relevant mailing address.
- (c) A meter identification number.
- (d) The date and result of the current meter reading or estimate.
- (e) Total consumption or estimated consumption.
- (f) The dates on which the account period begins and ends and the number of days covered by the bill.
- (g) The relevant tariffs and the amount of any other fees or charges and details of the service provided.
- (h) A reference to any concessions that you may be eligible to receive and the amount of concessions provided to you.
- (i) Advice that an additional late payment fee may be imposed and an explanation as to how you can avoid this fee.
- (j) Average daily consumption and cost.
- (k) The amount due and due date.
- (l) A summary of the payment methods.
- (m) Advice regarding the procedure to follow in case of payment difficulties.
- (n) A telephone number for billing and payment enquiries and complaints.
- (o) The RIA's 24 hour telephone number for faults and emergencies.
- (p) The amount of arrears or credit.
- (q) Payments made and the amount outstanding under an installment plan.
- (r) Our number for the hearing impaired (TTY) services;.
- (s) To the extent that the data is available, a graph or bar chart illustrating the amount due or consumption for the period covered by the bill, the previous bill and the bill for the same period in the previous year.

2.3 Pricing, Fees and Consumption Charges

Your consumption will be determined by a reading of the meter placed at your supply address.

Prices for the RIA's water services are provided in the Schedule of Water Fees and Charges. The RIA determines the water supply fees and charges annually.

Fees determination:

- a) Penalty fees – based on industry standard penalty fees (Water Corporation)
- b) Service fees - determined by evaluating the cost of providing each water service (meter reading, disconnection, connection) delivery by the facilities contract manager.

Water use charges are determined by the RIA by evaluating the cost of producing and

supplying the water per kilolitre.

2.4 Estimations

The RIA will calculate water consumption charges based on an estimate of your usage where:

- (a) A water meter is shown by test to be recording inaccurately;
- (b) A water meter ceases to register; or
- (c) Access to the water meter is prevented.

This estimate will be based on:

- (a) The amount of water you used during the same period in the previous year;
- (b) If you do not have a prior billing history, the average usage of comparable customers;
- (c) Your reading of the water meter; or
- (d) A test of the water meter.

2.5 Review of a Bill

You may at all times request the RIA to review a bill.

If an error is made resulting in you paying more than the correct amount, the excess amount will be refunded to you, or credited to your account.

If an error is made in the charges, which results in you paying less than the correct amount, you may be required to pay the correct amount upon request. However only charges relating to the last twelve months will be recovered.

2.6 Payment Date and Methods

You will be given at least twelve (12) business days to pay a bill. The payment methods offered are:

- (a) in person at the address shown on the bill
- (b) by mail to the address shown on the bill;
- (c) by Centrepay;
- (d) electronically by means of BPay or credit card;

2.7 Late Payment Fee and Other Charges

The RIA may charge you a late payment penalty fee if you do not pay your bill on or before the due date.

If your cheque is not honoured for any reason, the Rottnest Island Authority may pass on any costs incurred.

2.8 Payment Difficulties and Financial Hardship

The RIA can make special financial arrangements to assist you if you are experiencing hardship in the payment of your accounts.

To seek information on the options call the telephone number shown on your account.

3. Your Rights and Obligations

3.1 Your Rights to Water Services

The RIA will provide:

- Potable water to meet the criteria for quality and safety in accordance with the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council.
- Response to reports of poor water quality by investigating the matter and advising the customer of the outcome within a reasonable time period or such time period as is agreed with the customer.

If you experience a significant change in the usual water quality you should advise the RIA immediately.

The RIA will investigate and advise any action it has taken, within a time period agreed with you.

3.2 Your Rights to Consultation and Information

The RIA is committed to involving its customers on issues relating to its programs and services.

Community involvement in Rottneest Island service planning and decision-making processes will be sought through the Rottneest Island Business Community (RIBC) which holds regular meetings.

The RIA will use local media bulletins to advise customers of any system change that may result in significant variation in its service levels.

The RIA will publish and make available at its premises information on matters relating to its water supply services and other aspects such as charging and complaints handling. Information regarding these matters can be obtained from the RIA's business office.

The RIA's representatives will provide formal RIA identification when engaged in business discussions with customers.

3.3 Your Rights to Assistance, Redress and Compensation

If the RIA's activities have caused damage to your property or disruption to you, the RIA will deal with the matter in a fair and business-like manner, whether or not a complaint is received, and may rectify damage and, as necessary and reasonable, compensate you subject to assessment on a case by case basis.

3.4 Enquiries, Suggestions, Complaints and Disputes

The RIA values your enquiries and suggestions on ways that it can improve its services.

If you have an enquiry or require a copy of the Customer Service Charter you can telephone the RIA on (08) 9432 9300 during business hours. You will receive prompt, courteous service and will be informed as to who is handling your enquiry.

3.4.1 Enquiries Procedure

Telephone calls to the emergency numbers will be answered promptly and advice will be provided of what action is to be taken and timing given within one (1) hour of your call. General written correspondence will be replied to as soon as possible within five (5) business days.

Over the counter and general telephone enquiries will be responded to within one (1) hour.

3.4.2 Complaints Procedure

When you lodge a complaint, either in writing, or verbally, the RIA will address the issue in a timely and efficient manner. A representative of the RIA will acknowledge the complaint within ten (10) business days and will resolve the complaint within fifteen (15) business days.

If you are not satisfied with a solution offered or action taken on a complaint, you may seek referral to the RIA's Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will investigate the complaint, assess the appropriateness of RIA's response and either confirm or amend the RIA's proposed solution or action.

If the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction within fifteen (15) business days, you may refer the matter to:

Department of Water
The Atrium, 168 St Georges Terrace
Perth, WA 6000

Phone: (08) 6364 7600
Fax: (08) 6364 7601

Website: www.water.wa.gov.au

Or

Customer Services Officer
The Department of Water
Water Industry Support Branch
PO Box K822
PERTH WA 6842

WISBcomplaints@water.wa.gov.au

The Department of Water will seek a detailed explanation of the nature of the complaint, the solutions/actions offered by the RIA and the reasons why these are not acceptable to

you.

The Department of Water will respond with its opinion on the matter and suggest a solution to the parties involved.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit the matter to arbitration by an Arbitrator selected by you from a list provided by the Department of Water. The Arbitrator's decision, including award of costs, will be binding on both parties and will preclude further action on the matter. You may elect to bypass the arbitration process and take legal action to resolve the matter if you desire.

3.5 Discharge of Unauthorised Substances

It is your responsibility to ensure that unauthorised substances are not discharged into the Rottnest Island sewers.

Certain waste products are not suitable for disposal in the RIA's waste water system because of their nature and ability to pollute. Specialised disposal procedures are required for the disposal of substances such as:

- Cooking oil and grease;
- Paint, paint thinners, dry cleaning fluids, engine oil, solvent, acids, alkalis; laboratory chemicals, kerosene, garden poisons, polishes, cleaning products;
- Other products including such items as disposable nappies, panty hose, sanitary napkins, cotton buds, toilet deodorant packs, razors.

4. RIA's Rights and Obligations

4.1 Entry to Your Residence or Premises

There may be circumstances where RIA representatives may require entry to your residence or premises to carry out investigations and/or work on the water supply system.

Any such entry will normally occur during business hours, except in cases of emergency.

For planned work within a residence or premises, the RIA will provide written notice to the occupier not less than five (5) days in advance.

In cases of emergency, notice of entry to attend to the situation is not required and may not be given. Should this be necessary the RIA or its agent will respect your property and will be present for the minimum time required. The occupier, if present, will be informed of the repairs to be undertaken and the anticipated length of time for the work to be completed.

As soon as practicable after the event, notice in writing of the entry, the works carried out and any further relevant intention of the RIA will be given to the occupier.

4.2 Rectifying Defective Work

If the RIA becomes aware of the presence of any defective or improper work forming part of your water supply services and fittings which may impair the effective operation of the RIA's system, it may serve a notice requiring you to remedy any such defect or improper work within a specified time.

If the terms of the notice are not followed, the RIA or its representative may enter your property to remedy the defective or improper work. This action, if taken, will be charged to you.

4.3 Service Interruptions

Rottnest Island's water supply service is designed to be available twenty four (24) hours per day.

Except in emergencies, the RIA will give specific notice to customers of its intention to interrupt, postpone or limit the supply of water services for the purpose of regular maintenance or works programs. Notification will be given to both domestic customers and commercial/industrial customers at least three (3) days prior to the interruption or by agreement.

The RIA will endeavor to limit any disruption to water supply caused by service operations and maintenance activities to less than one (1) hour..

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit the matter to the Department of Water or the State Ombudsman in accordance with the Complaints Procedure in Section 3.4.2 above.

4.4 Water Restrictions

During conditions or circumstances that necessitate restrictions on water use on Rottnest Island, the RIA will ensure that sufficient water will be available to meet essential in house demand.

You will be advised by written notice of any water restrictions imposed by the RIA, including the restriction details, period of restriction and any penalties associated with breach of the restrictions.

Reasons that may cause the RIA to apply restrictions include:

- Supply limitations;
- During a drought or on the anticipated approach of a drought where the RIA needs to protect the Island's water resources;
- Compliance with terms and conditions of special agreements;
- Where continuity of supply needs to be maintained where a short term problem with system capacity or asset performance is experienced.

4.5 Maintenance

Standard water service connections, the reticulation pipework including the water meter remains the property and responsibility of the RIA. and will be maintained by the RIA.

Faults with the water supply service connection (meter, joints or pipework) involving significant water service outage or possible damage to property should be reported immediately to the facilities management contractor (refer contact numbers on page 5).

The facilities management contractor will be on site to repair the service within one (1) hour of receiving the fault report. Less urgent repairs will be carried out by a date arranged and agreed to by the customer and the RIA.

4.6 Water Meters

A water meter will be installed as part of a water service connection and will remain the property of the RIA.

If you suspect that a water meter is faulty, the RIA will test it on request. A fee applies for this service, which is refundable if the test results fall outside the Australian Standard AS 3565.1 accuracy of:

- Water meter >25 mm in size – accuracy range + or – 5%
- All other water meters – accuracy range of +5% to 10%

Consumption charges will be adjusted where an error in accuracy is proven.

You are requested to ensure the water meter is accessible to the RIA or its representative or to make suitable alternative arrangements with either party if accessibility is not available.

You are responsible for any damage you cause to the water meter.

4.7 Disconnection

The RIA may disconnect your potable water supply services in the following circumstances:

- If you do not pay, or meet and make arrangements to pay, overdue charges for the services, a reminder notice and a disconnection warning will be sent to you prior to disconnection. You will be given at least five (5) business days warning before the disconnection occurs. The supply will not be disconnected if arrangements for financial hardship are implemented in accordance with Section 2.8.
- If you deny access to the meter for twelve (12) months, a disconnection warning will be supplied to you at least five (5) business days prior to disconnection of the service.
- In the case of an emergency, the RIA will discontinue service immediately. However a twenty-four (24) hour emergency telephone line will be provided on which you will be given information regarding the nature of the emergency and an estimate of when your supply will be restored.

4.8 Connection

In the case of a disconnection having occurred, the RIA will reinstate the supply of water services on your request and in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Charter.

In the case of new water services, the RIA will connect water services on your request and in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Charter.

Where an existing water supply service is available for connection to the premises, water services will be connected within five (5) business days of the request being received by the RIA.

Where water services are not available within the reasonable vicinity of the premises the RIA will make the connection as immediately as practicable after receiving your request,

taking into consideration such issues as heritage, environmental and aboriginal approvals.

A fee will apply for the connection of water services.

Chief Executive Officer
Rottnest Island Authority
