

## Meter tampering is dangerous and illegal

Tampering with a water or electricity meter is a crime and poses serious health and safety hazards not just to those who modify the meter but also to the rest of the community.

Metering allows Power and Water to effectively and efficiently measure and record customer usage to allow for effective management of the power and water supply systems. Metering also allows for fair and reasonable billing of individual customers.

### Electricity meters

Tampering with electricity meters and electricity theft carries deadly risks but the danger does not end with those who engage in the illegal activity. They carry the potential to harm consumers on the same line; people (including children) who may come into contact with the meter box; as well as Power and Water staff and contractors who work on the lines.

Attempts to bypass or tamper with electricity meters can cause serious injury or death from electric shock. It can also result in wiring overloading or arcing which may cause explosions and fires. Fires may not happen instantly it can build up and start in the middle of the night when the occupants are sleeping and unaware.

### Water meters

Water meter tampering and water theft is illegal as they greatly increase the risk of contaminating the public water supply.

To help provide a good quality safe and reliable drinking water supply, Power and Water metering installations have backflow prevention devices fitted.

Backflow is the unwanted reverse flow of water from a customer's premises to the public water supply system. Backflow prevention is important as events in Australia and overseas have, in the past, resulted in serious cases of poisoning as well as several fatalities.

### Meter tampering is a crime

**Meter tampering is illegal and carries a fine of up to \$53 200 for individuals and \$266 000 for corporations or imprisonment.**

Those who tamper with their electricity or water meter can be prosecuted under the [Electricity Reform Act](#), [Water Supply and Sewerage Services Act](#) and [Criminal Code Act](#).

Each year an average of about 50 Power and Water customers are caught tampering with their meter or engaging in water or electricity theft. The majority of cases are discovered by Power and Water however they are also regularly reported by the public.

If you think that an electricity or water meter has been tampered with please contact Power and Water. All reports will remain confidential as you may choose stay anonymous.

Phone: 1800 245 092  
Email: [customerservice@powerwater.com.au](mailto:customerservice@powerwater.com.au)  
Online form: [powerwater.com.au/my\\_account/report\\_a\\_fault](http://powerwater.com.au/my_account/report_a_fault)