

MULTI-METERING OF WATER SUPPLY FOR NEW UNITS

What is multi-metering?

Multi-metering of water supply is the provision of a separate water meter to each unit in a multiple unit development. A unit is as defined in the *Unit Titles Act*.

Previous practices adopted by Power and Water Corporation only allowed a single common meter to be installed to service all units in a multiple unit development. A single water account would thus be forwarded to a body corporate in the case of unit title developments. For unit title developments the body corporate is responsible for paying the water account, generally funded from body corporate fees paid by unit owners.

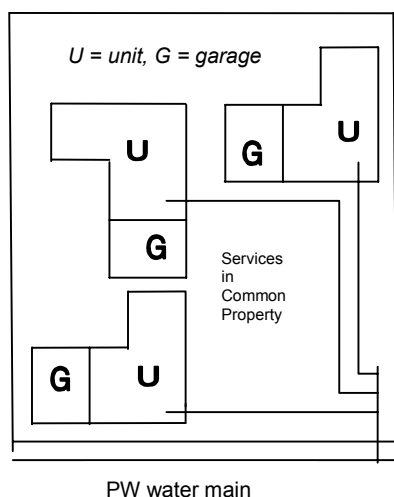
Amendments made to the *Water Supply and Sewerage Act* in 1998 allowed a change to offer customers in some residential unit developments the choice of having individual metering and billing.

Which customers are best suited to multi-metering?

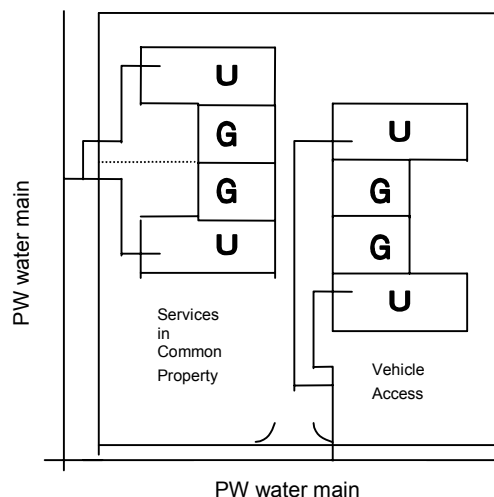
Multi-metering is best suited to new multiple residential dwelling developments where each dwelling is detached. Some semi detached dwellings may also be suitable. Multi-metering is only permitted for multi-dwelling developments having up to 12 units and which are unit titled. New multistorey block building developments having dwellings on different storeys are not suited for multi-metering. This is due to the prohibitive cost of providing separate plumbing to each unit.

Typical layouts for water services under multi-metering are shown in the examples below.

Example A: Multi-metering for 3 units



Example B: Multi-metering for 4 units using 2 separate water main tapings



What is the “all or none policy”?

Power and Water’s multi-metering policy requires that the developer of a multiple dwelling development that elects to utilise multi-metering to:

- Provide a separate water meter for each unit and for the common water usage; and
- Ensure that all the meters can be installed at the same time.

Who is responsible for multi-metering implementation?

Installation of all building plumbing to allow for separate meters for each unit and a meter for common water usage is the responsibility of the developer. Following its formation, the body corporate is responsible for all matters relating to the charging of common water usage. The developer is required to notify Power and Water as soon as the body corporate is formed for the units. Following the sales of the units and ability to occupy, accounts for each unit’s water supply and meter are the responsibility of each unit owner. The developer shall give consent to the installation of individual meters for each unit and the installation of a separate meter for the common water usage at the time of application for the water service property connection.

What changes does multi-metering require to plumbing and pipework?

All plumbing both internal and external to each unit must be separate from that of other units. No shared or interconnected plumbing between units is allowed.

Separate plumbing is also required for a meter for the common water usage.

Who provides changes to property services?

Where a new water service property connection is required for a redeveloped lot that was previously serviced, Power and Water will locate the main on-site where required and install a breaching piece, tapping bands and ferrule taps. The developer must arrange exposure of the main prior to tapping, the supply of materials required for tapping, as well as the supply and installation of property service piping incorporating a meter manifold. This work must be undertaken by a self certifying plumber. On completion of the water service property connection, Power and Water will install a meter for each unit and a meter for the common water usage.

How will water supply charges alter under multi-metering?

Power and Water will charge an application fee for each separate meter installed for multi-metering. Each meter also attracts a fixed daily charge. These two charges make the provision of a multi-metering system much more expensive than the provision of a single metering system.

In the first year of multi-metering there will be an application fee with having a separate meter and a shared meter for common water usage. In subsequent years there will be a charge increase due to the fixed daily charge.

The table below shows the water charges per unit per year. The example sets out the difference in cost between a complex which is multi-metered and if it had been metered with a single meter.

It is based on equal water consumption per unit and equal water consumption between multi-metering and single metering. The increase in the water charges with multi-metering is substantial.

Power and Water water charges per unit

Number of units	Multi-metering		Single-metering		Increase in cost per unit with multi-metering	
	Cost per unit for year 1 \$	Cost per unit for subsequent years \$	Cost per unit for year 1 \$	Cost per unit for subsequent years \$	Year 1 \$	Subsequent years \$
2	816	734	661	633	156	101
3	790	717	635	617	156	101
4	777	709	622	608	156	101
5	770	704	645	634	124	69
6	765	700	635	626	129	74
7	761	698	628	620	133	78
8	758	696	622	615	136	81
9	756	695	618	612	138	83
10	754	694	614	609	140	85
11	753	693	611	606	141	86
12	752	692	609	604	143	88

Assumptions: Each unit has 2.2 persons and per person consumption is 1100 litres per day.

Charges: Meter daily charge – multi-metering-\$0.2756 for each 20 mm meter. Single common metering - \$0.2756/ meter for 2 to 4 units, \$0.7056/ meter for 5 to 12 units. Water consumption charge-\$0.66/KL. Application for supply of water service-\$55.

Explanation: Consider an example of 10 units in a lot where a developer chooses between single metering and multi-metering. If the developer elects to have multi-metering then ten 20 mm meters are needed, as well as a 20 mm meter for the common water usage.

Single metering cost:

Year 1:

Application for supply of water service
= \$55
Consumption cost = $10 \times 2.2 \times 1100 \times 365 \times 0.66 / 1000$
= \$5829.78
Fixed cost = 0.7056×365
= \$257.54
Total cost per unit = $(55+5829.78+257.54)/10$
= \$ 614.23

Year 2 on:

Consumption cost	= $10 \times 2.2 \times 1100 \times 365 \times 0.66 / 1000$
	= \$5829.78
Fixed cost	= 0.7056×365
	= \$257.54
Total cost per unit	= $(5829.78 + 257.54)/10$
	= \$ 608.73

Multi-metering cost:

Year 1:

Application for supply of water service	= 11×55
	= \$ 605
Consumption cost	= \$ 5829.78 (same as before)
Fixed cost	= $11 \times 0.2756 \times 365$
	= \$1106.53
Total cost per unit	= $(605 + 5829.78 + 1106.53)/10$
	= \$ 754.13

Year 2 on:

Consumption cost	= \$ 5829.78 (same as before)
Fixed cost	= \$1106.53 (same as before)
Total cost per unit	= $(5829.78 + 1106.53)/10$
	= \$ 693.63

Increase in cost per unit with multi-metering in year 1
 = $754.13 - 614.23$
 = \$139.90

Increase in annual cost per unit with multi-metering in subsequent years
 = $693.63 - 608.73$
 = \$84.90

What should be provided to Power and Water?

The developer is required to provide Power and Water with the following:

1. An initial application for multi-metering to include:
 - Drawings showing pipework and plumbing.
 - A letter of acknowledgment requesting multi-metering
2. As required, an application for any changes to the property service.
3. An application for installation of separate water meters. The application is to include a certificate of compliance from a self certifying plumber stating that after installation there were no connections between pipes serving separate units.
4. The certificate of compliance shall also include a statement that the completed water service property connection complies with Power and Water's requirements.

What about other charges?

Developers redeveloping existing allotments may incur additional charges. Where upgrading of water service capacity is required charges will apply under the Water and Sewerage Extension Policy (WASSEP). The WASSEP assessment will account for the total flow requirement for the entire allotment.

Power and Water will charge for application for the following:

- Tapping of water mains for installation of a new property service.
- Installation of each new meter to the meter manifold.
- Special meter reading by customer request.

We can assist you

Prior to commencement of any multi-unit development where it is proposed to install multi-metering please contact the Water Engineering Branch in your region to discuss individual requirements.

For further information contact us

Darwin Water Engineering Branch		89247470
Katherine Water Engineering Branch		89739559
Tennant Creek Water Engineering Branch		89517312
Alice Springs Water Engineering Branch		89517312