

Fact sheet

Information on renting a house, unit, caravan or moveable dwelling

Water charging

Lessors (landlords) are allowed to pass on the full water consumption costs to tenants provided all the minimum criteria have been met.

What are the minimum criteria for water charging?

Lessors are able to pass on the full water consumption costs to tenants if:

- the rental premises are individually metered (or water is delivered by vehicle), and
- the rental premises are water efficient, and
- the tenancy agreement states the tenant must pay for water consumption.

What is a water efficient rental premises?

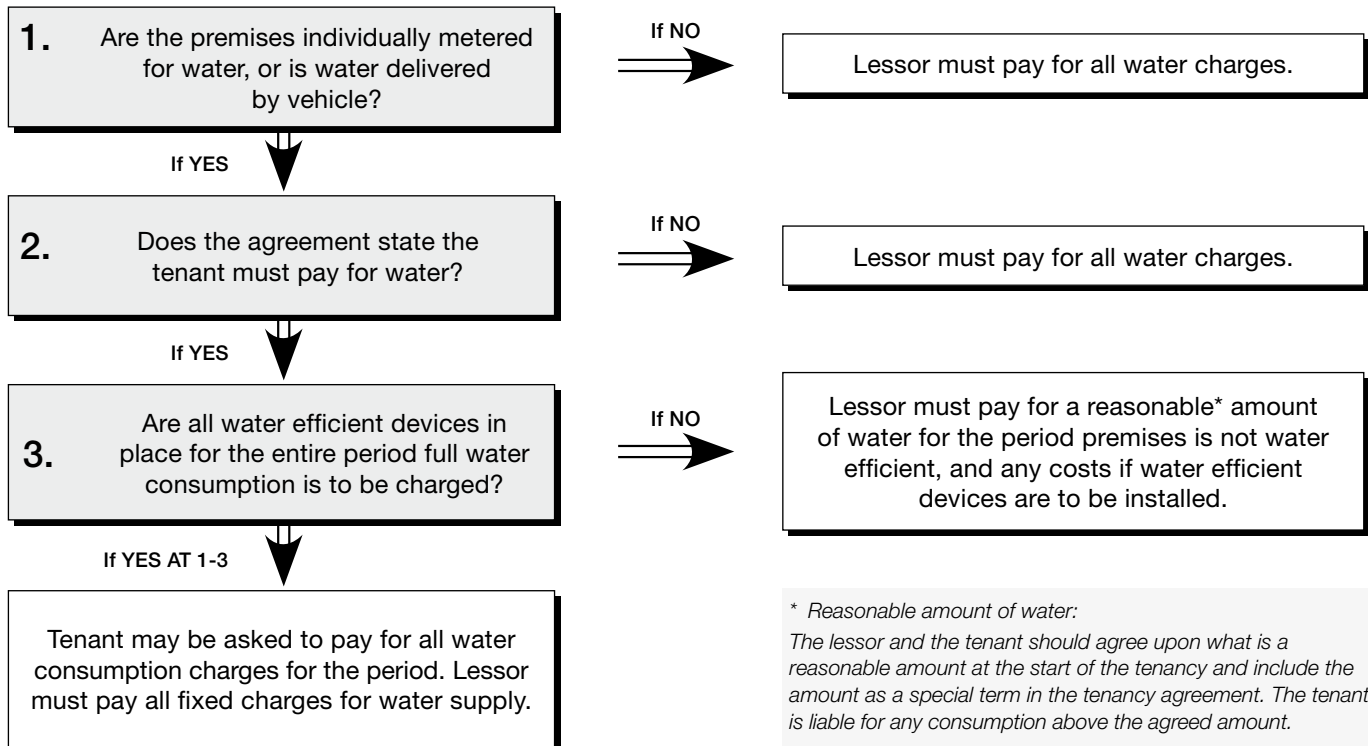
Water efficient rental premises are where required internal cold water taps, showerheads and toilets meet the performance standards for a three star WELS rating or higher. These water efficiency levels may be achieved through installing three star WELS rated products or through the use of add on devices, such as aerators or flow restrictors. For more information about the WELS scheme visit www.waterrating.gov.au.

Water efficient devices	Minimum water efficient standard required
• Internal cold water taps and single mixer taps (excluding bathtub taps and taps for appliances)	A maximum flow rate of nine litres per minute.
• Showerheads	A maximum flow rate of nine litres per minute.
• Toilets	A dual flush function not exceeding six point five (6.5) litres on full flush and three point five (3.5) litres on half flush and a maximum average flush volume of four litres (based on the average of one full flush and four half flushes).

Important points to note:

- tenants and lessors/agents should negotiate obligations at the start of the tenancy and put these in the tenancy agreement, for example, if the lessor is to contribute to water costs.
- it may be helpful to contact the local council about average local water consumption.
- water billing periods are unlikely to align with tenancy agreements. It's important that both the tenant and the lessor/agent make note of the water meter readings on the condition reports at the start and end of the tenancy to calculate water consumption.
- lessors will receive the water bill, pay the full amount and provide their tenants with a copy of any water bills or evidence of water consumption to verify the amount to be charged. Tenants will not be billed directly by water supply authorities.
- tenants have one month to pay the agreed amount for water consumption after the lessor provides evidence of the costs to the tenant. The lessor/agent can not require the tenant to pay more than the billable amount, or charge tenants late fees.
- if the tenant and lessor/agent cannot agree about water charges, the RTA's Dispute Resolution Service may be able to assist.

Who pays for water in a rental premises?



Water saving tips can be found on the Queensland Water Commission website www.qwc.qld.gov.au.

Further information

For more information contact the Residential Tenancies Authority on 1300 366 311.

Accessing RTA forms

The RTA's approved forms can be obtained by:

- visiting the RTA website at www.rta.qld.gov.au
- calling the RTA on 1300 366 311
- faxing a *Request for Forms* to 3216 2258
- visiting the RTA office at level 23, 179 Turbot St Brisbane
- calling the RTA's forms distribution service on 1300 136 939
- posting a *Request for Forms* to the forms distributor: Post Logistics, 52-54 Qantas Dr, Eagle Farm 4009.

A selection of the most commonly used forms are also available at Australia Post outlets around Queensland.



If you need interpreting assistance to help you understand this information, contact TIS on 13 14 50 (for the cost of a local call) and ask to speak to the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA).

Disclaimer

This fact sheet is prepared for information only. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 is the primary source on the law and takes precedence over this information should there be any inconsistency between the Act and this fact sheet.

March 2010
Version 212.05