




In June 2023 the Essential Services Commission released its final decision on Central Highlands Water’s price submission. The final decision completes our review of the maximum prices that Central Highlands Water may charge for its services for a five-year regulatory period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2028.

Snapshot

Bills	Tariffs	Outcomes
		
Typical annual residential owner occupier water and sewerage bills for 2023-24 will be \$1,298 (including inflation), a 5.4 per cent increase from \$1,231 in 2022-23.	Central Highlands Water’s water and sewerage tariff structures will remain unchanged for the period between 2023–28.	Central Highlands Water worked with its customers to develop a set of outcomes and measures that reflect customer priorities. It added a fourth outcome commitment following the release of our draft decision. Rebates for guaranteed service levels will increase.

Information about, our price review process, our draft decision and Central Highlands Water’s price submission is available at www.esc.vic.gov.au/water-price-review-2023.

What are the changes to prices and tariffs?

A typical annual owner occupier water and sewerage bill for 2023-24 will be \$1,298 (including inflation), a 5.4 per cent increase from \$1,231 in 2022-23.

For each of the remaining four years prices will go up by 0.6 per cent (before inflation).

Central Highlands Water will double its funding to support vulnerable customers over the next five years. Residential and business customers can access Central Highlands Water’s customer support program for assistance with paying bills.

New customer contributions for New Growth Zone water will increase by 99 per cent in 2023-24 to \$3,000, then increase gradually for the remaining years to around \$4,121 by 2027-28 (before inflation). Central Highlands Water will also introduce new customer contributions for New Growth Zone sewer, Existing Growth Zone water and Existing Growth Zone sewer.

How will this affect your bill?

Prices and tariffs are only part of the bill. Your actual bill depends on factors such as the amount of water and services you use. Estimated typical bills for different customer groups and water volumes are below.

Typical water and sewerage bills (including inflation)

Customer Group	Average consumption (kL p.a.)	2022-23 annual bill	2023-24 annual bill
Residential (Owner occupier)	150	\$1,231	\$1,298
Residential (Tenant)	150	\$313	\$330
Non-residential (Small)	200	\$1,348	\$1,421
Non-residential (Medium)	1,000	\$3,944	\$4,157
Non-residential (Large)	10,000	\$33,148	\$34,942

What are the outcomes for customers?

As part of its price submission, Central Highlands Water consulted with customers to develop a set of outcomes to guide service delivery during 2023 to 2028. Central Highlands Water worked with its customers to develop three outcomes, with measures and targets to track its performance. Following our draft decision, we have worked with Central Highlands Water to expand its outcome



set to include measures and targets that reflect both core business performance, as well as measures that reflect customer preferences. This includes the addition of a fourth outcome 'reliable water and wastewater services' comprising key performance measures which continue from the current regulatory period.

Central Highlands Water's outcome commitments to its customers are:

- Customer care
- Equity
- Sustainability
- Reliable water and wastewater services

Central Highlands Water will maintain Guaranteed Service Level commitments for customers and to increase rebates to customers if guaranteed service levels are not met.

Central Highlands Water will also:

- enhance its support for customers experiencing vulnerability
- further develop partnerships with Traditional Owners.

What are the major works that will go on around you?

(\$ million before inflation)

Project	Detail	Total
Ballarat Sewer Growth Project – Southern Augmentation	This project is to cater for ongoing growth within Ballarat to ensure there is sewer capacity available in the area.	17.3
Ballarat Sewer Build – Ballarat East Trunk Sewer Augmentations	This project is to cater for ongoing growth within Ballarat to ensure there is sewer capacity available in the area.	14.5
Ballarat Sewer Build - Ballarat South Outfall Project	This project is to cater for ongoing growth within Ballarat and ensure there is sewer capacity available in Ballarat's central business district.	12.1

Ballarat Water Growth Project – Northern Augmentation	This project is to increase capacity and maintain service standards in order to cater for ongoing growth across Northern Ballarat.	13.0
White Swan Dam Safety Upgrade	This project is to upgrade the safety of the White Swan Dam and ensure alignment with national dam standards.	13.1
Digital Water Metering	This project seeks to provide digital meters for all customers and aims to provide better customer experience and increase efficiencies.	13.0

How much revenue is required from 2023 to 2028?

Our final decision for Central Highlands Water allows operating expenditure of \$357.7 million and gross capital expenditure of **\$250.9 million** to provide its services to customers over the next five years. To fund this, Central Highlands Water requires **\$537.2 million** in revenue.

Got a question?

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