



CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

April 2008

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CRC Water and Waste Committee Minutes Excerpt:

CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES

WATER & WASTE COMMITTEE

19 JUNE 2008

1. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS 1
Jacqueline Perkowicz JP: 24/1/5-31: #1704633

LANSKEY / LESINA

That the updated Customer Service Standards be endorsed.

carried

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CRC WATER AND WASTE'S CUSTOMER COMMITMENT

Customer Service Standards

CRC Water and Waste is a commercialized business unit of Cairns Regional Council charged with the responsibility of providing water, wastewater and solid waste services to the Cairns Regional Community. These services are provided to over 160,000 residential customers and tourists, in addition to over three thousand commercial and industrial customers.

This Customer Service Standards document provides details on the following:

1. Obligations of CRC Water and Waste in delivering the water, wastewater and waste services;
2. Expectations we have for our customers;
3. Levels of service to be provided to our customers based on performance indicators and goals;
4. Processes for establishing new services, billing, metering, customer consultation, lodging complaints and dispute resolution.

CRC Water and Waste's Mission is:

To deliver quality and reliable water, wastewater and waste services that meet the needs of our community.

CRC Water and Waste's Vision is:

By 2010 CRC Water and Waste will be recognised as a customer focused provider of quality services to the Cairns community that:

1. Values innovation and continuous improvement in the delivery of our services, and
2. Fosters input from staff and the community into our decision-making processes.

Our Obligations

CRC Water and Waste must plan for, establish, operate and maintain systems for the following:

- Collection and treatment of raw water and distribution of drinking water;
- Collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of wastewater;
- Provision of treated wastewater for beneficial reuse;
- Collection, treatment, disposal or recycling of domestic solid waste.

In providing these services CRC Water and Waste must pursue the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan, comply with Council policy and local laws, and satisfy all statutory requirements with respect to management and operation of Council's water, wastewater and waste business activities.

Expectations of Our Customers

In addition to paying for water supply, wastewater and waste services in accordance with Cairns Regional Council's schedule of fees and charges, CRC Water and Waste expects our customers to assist us in providing services by:

Applying to CRC Water and Waste, and receiving approval before connecting to CRC Water and Waste's systems

- Using water in a 'waterwise' manner;
- Maintaining internal property pipes and fittings (water and wastewater);
- Engaging a licensed plumber to do work internal to your property;
- Providing access to the water meter, sewer manholes and other infrastructure within and adjacent to their property;
- Not building structures over water or sewer mains and selecting garden vegetation that won't damage water supply and sewerage infrastructure;
- Not covering sewer manholes with soil and or mulch;
- Notifying us of any faults that you have encountered so that we can rectify the problem as quickly as possible;
- Taking care not to discharge unauthorised substances into sewers;
- Applying to us for a trade waste permit (industrial and commercial customers) to discharge trade waste to sewers;
- Follow the Waste Hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle;
- Only place appropriate material in the domestic and recycling bins

PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES

The water supply system in the Cairns Region has been designed to provide you with water and wastewater services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, under certain circumstances, such as those described below, we may need to interrupt or limit these services:

- If we need to inspect, maintain, repair or replace any part of the system;
- When new mains are being connected to the system;
- When there are periods of declared water supply restrictions; and
- If there is a possibility of a significant health risk arising from the continuance of the service.

Except in emergencies and short duration interruptions, we will give you 48 hours notice of interruption to your service by delivery of a written notice placed in the mailbox or under the front door of each affected property.

We will make every reasonable effort to limit disruption to services caused by operations and maintenance activities. However, it is not possible to provide notice of service disruption caused by unplanned events. Where we are unable to provide prior notice we will complete all work as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise disruption to the daily activities of our customers.

The following performance indicators reflect the level of service we intend to provide to our customers for water and wastewater services.

Water Services Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Performance measure	Target
Day to Day Continuity	Number of connections experiencing unplanned interruptions	Per 1000 connections / year	150
	Number of connections experiencing planned interruptions	Per 1000 connections / year	15
	Time for restoration of service	% of Services Restored < 5 hrs	95%
	Response/reaction time to incidents (emergency)	% of Response to Emergency < 30 min	95%
	Response/reaction time to incidents (all events)	% of Response to incident <24 hours	95%
	Connections receiving 1 interruption per year	% of connections	12%
	Connections receiving 2 interruptions per year	% of connections	2%
	Connections receiving 3 interruptions per year	% of connections	0.50%
	Connections receiving 4 interruptions per year	% of connections	0.20%
	Connections receiving 5 or more interruptions per year	% of connections	0.10%
	Average interruption duration – planned	Hours	2.4
	Average interruption duration - unplanned	Hours	2
	Relative incidence of planned and unplanned interruption water incidents (events)	Ratio	1:11
Adequacy and quality of normal supply	Minimum flow expectation at property boundary	Litres per minute	25
	Percentage of properties below minimum flow	% of properties	0
	Minimum pressure at property boundary	kpa	220
	Maximum pressure at property boundary	kpa	500
	Percentage of properties below minimum water pressure	% of connections	0
	Drinking water quality complaints	Per 1000 Connections / Year	<10
	Drinking water quality incidents	Number of Incidents	<5
	Urban / Rural Supplies – E-Coli	Nil per 100mL	98%
	Urban / Rural Supplies - Turbidity	< 5NTU	95%
	Urban / Rural Supplies – pH	6.5 to 8.5	98%
Urban / Rural Supplies - Colour	Up to 15.0	98%	
Continuity in the long term	Water main breaks and leaks	Per 100km / year	<17.9
	System water loss	Litres/connection/day	250

Wastewater Service Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Performance measure	Target
Effective transport of sewage	Sewage overflows	Per 100km / year (gravity and rising main)	<15
	Sewage overflows to customer properties	Per 1000 connections / year	4
	Odour complaints	Per 1000 connections / year	<3
	Response/reaction time to incidents (all events)*	% of Response to All Events < 24 hrs	95%
	Response/reaction time to incidents (emergency)	% of Response to Emergency < 1 hour	95%
	Priority One Events When Service Restored within 5 Hours	% restored within 5 hours	95%
Continuity in the long run	Sewer main breaks and chokes	Per 100km / year	<10
	Sewer inflow and infiltration	Ratio of Peak Day Flow to Average Day Flow	4

PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR SOLID WASTE SERVICES

CRC Water and Waste provides kerbside waste and recycling collection services (weekly and fortnightly respectively) for all residential dwellings in the Cairns Regional Local Government area. These services are provided via separate commercial contractors who own and operate the transport vehicles for collecting waste and recyclable material.

Domestic waste is delivered to a waste recovery facility operated by CEC Resource Recovery Pty Ltd. This facility processes treatable waste into a composted product suitable for beneficial reuse. Recyclable material is sorted at a CRC Water and Waste operated materials handling facility and on-sold to market for recycling.

CRC Water and Waste also provides a general waste service for all Council Facilities. These services are provided via separate commercial contractors who own and operate the transport vehicles for collecting waste which is delivered to a waste recovery facility operated by CEC Resource Recovery Pty Ltd.

The following performance indicators reflect the level of service we intend to provide to our customers for waste services.

Waste Services Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Performance measure	Target
Effective Collection of Residential Waste	New bin delivery	Number of overdue service requests for bins not delivered within 24 hours	<5
	Missed Services - kerbside waste	Number of missed services per month	<100
	Response time to missed services - kerbside waste	Number of missed service requests that take >24hrs	<5
	Missed services - kerbside recycling	Number of missed services per month	<50
	Response time to missed services - kerbside recycling	Number of missed service requests that take >24hrs	<5
	Response time to repair/replacement requests - kerbside waste and recycling	% of requests completed within 48 hours	100%

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PERFORMANCE GOALS

CRC Water and Waste has several customer assistance performance goals that we endeavour to provide but at times are either unable to, or are currently not able to accurately measure performance against. These goals will become performance targets in time as reporting and operational systems improve.

	Performance Indicator	Performance measure	Goal
Customer Assistance Performance Goals	Install new residential water connection	Working Days	20
	Minimum advance notice for planned water and sewerage works	Hours	48
	Average time taken to respond to customer calls	Seconds	30
	Customer contacts responded to within 5 working days	Working Days	95%

CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCEDURES

New Services

New Water Supply and Sewerage Connections

If customers wish to apply for a water or sewerage service connection within the serviced area, they will need to submit the two following forms together with the appropriate fees to CRC Water and Waste:

1. Application for Compliance Assessment
2. Proposed Plumbing and Drainage Work

These forms are available from any Council Customer Service Centre, the CRC Water and Waste website (www.cairns.qld.gov.au) or by calling 4044 3044. Once the appropriate fee and form have been lodged CRC Water and Waste will endeavour to install the new connection within 14 days.

Please note that under current Council policy, if a sewerage system is available for the property, the property owner is required to connect to the system.

Community Title Development

Community Title Development is a form of development where allotments are individually owned, with all associated infrastructure being privately operated. All associated infrastructure is to be of CCC standard and approved as a Development Application. CRC Water and Waste has an obligation to ensure that all services meet its statutory obligation at the property boundary for the Development as a whole. Further information on Community Title Development can be gathered by contacting CRC Water and Waste on 4044 3044.

Water Meters

A water meter will be installed as part of a new water service connection and will remain the property of CRC Water and Waste. The meter will be used as the basis of any consumption component of water charges.

CRC Water and Waste will maintain water meters within industry standards limits of accuracy (ie ± 4).

Where a customer has reason to doubt either the accuracy or reliability of their water meter, CRC Water and Waste will offer to test the meter for the fee prescribed in Council's fees and charges. If the meter is found to be defective and resulting in overcharging, the overcharged amount will be refunded and no fee will be charged for the meter test.

Disconnection of Water or Sewerage Services

If a customer no longer requires a water supply or sewerage services, they have the right to apply for disconnection. Customers should submit an application to disconnect the service using the Proposed Plumbing and Drainage Work form. This form is available from any Council Customer Service Centre, the Council website (www.cairns.qld.gov.au), or by calling 4044 3044.

Reconnection of Water or Sewerage Services

If customers wish to reconnect water or sewerage services, customers will be required to pay a fee to cover the reconnection service. Customer services can be reconnected by a licensed plumber/drainer with the design and inspection of the works undertaken by a CRC Water and Waste Plumbing Inspector. (Please note that an additional fee is levied for this service).

New Waste or Recycling Services

To apply for a new domestic or recycling bin customers will need to fill in a Request for New Cleansing Service form available from any Council Customer Service Centre, the CRC Water and Waste website or by calling 4044 3044.

Restricting Water Supplies

CRC Water and Waste has permanent water conservation measures in place as follows:

- No manual or automated sprinklers, microspray or drip watering systems to be used on Mondays.
- Odd numbered houses, sprinklers allowed on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, between the hours of 5am and 9am and 5pm 9pm only.
- Even numbered houses, sprinklers allowed Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays, between the hours of 5am and 9am and 5pm 9pm only.
- Hand held hoses, fitted with a trigger nozzle, watering cans or buckets can be used at any time.

In certain instances, additional water supply restrictions may need to be imposed by CRC Water and Waste. These circumstances may include:

- Possible bulk supply limitations
- During a drought, or on the anticipated approach of a drought where the water supply needs to be protected
- To ensure continuity of supply where there are short term problems with system capacity and asset performance
- Council imposed policy beyond the control of CRC Water and Waste.

CRC Water and Waste will implement the following water restrictions in accordance with the Cairns Council Drought Management Plan:

Trigger levels for water restrictions

Restriction Level	Trigger Guide Copperlode Falls Dam Capacity	Target Consumption
0	100%	500 L/p/day
1	80%	450 L/p/day (10%)
2	70%	425 L/p/day (15%)
3	60%	400 L/p/day (20%)
4	50%	375 L/p/day (25%)

Charges and Customer Accounts

Rates, Fees and Charges

Rates, fees and charges will be set annually by Council resolution. Water services are subject to an annual connection fee and volumetric fees based on water consumption. Different rates exist for residential and commercial volumetric use. Water meters are read approximately every 4 months with invoices sent at the same frequency.

Unmetered properties will be charged a fee based on the deemed reasonable consumption for the particular premises.

Sewerage services are subject to an annual charge per residential property and per water closet for commercial properties.

Waste services are subject to an annual cleansing charge that covers the cost of all waste services provided by CRC Water and Waste.

Additional statements of account will be available to customers on request. However, a fee will be charged for this additional service.

CRC Water and Waste may charge customers interest on overdue accounts as prescribed in Council's Revenue Policy (refer to Schedule 4 for details).

Dishonoured Cheques

If customers pay by a cheque which is not honoured for any reason, CRC Water and Waste may include any costs incurred in the process of receiving payment with the next account.

Assistance with Paying Accounts

The Council has a range of payment options and can negotiate special financial arrangements to assist customers experiencing hardship in the payment of accounts. Information on these options is available from Council's Customer Service Centres or by calling 4044 3044.

Special Meter Reads

When customers sell their home or there is a change of tenancy, customers can request a special water meter reading to determine the amount of water used. Customers will be charged a fee to cover the cost of this service.

Estimation of Water Consumption

In certain circumstances, CRC Water and Waste may need to estimate customer water consumption charges. Such estimation will be based on either past usage records or use by similar customers under similar circumstances. This estimate may be necessary where:

- A water meter is shown by test to be recording inaccurately
- A water meter ceases to register
- Access to the water meter is prevented
- An illegal connection has been made.

In circumstances where the meter is located within the customers property, it will be the customer's responsibility to ensure their water meter is accessible to meter readers (ie not overgrown with vegetation or otherwise accessible).

Water Leaks - 50/50 Rebate

Residential customers who have experienced a sudden increase in water consumption due to unseen or hidden leaks (leaks underground) on their property may request assistance from CRC Water and Waste in the form of a payment caused by the increase in a water invoice. CRC Water and Waste may provide assistance of fifty percent (50%) of the total of the water consumption invoice for the period read. CRC Water and Waste will not provide any assistance for any plumbing costs associated with location and repair of a leak.

Customer Assistance

Customer Consultation

CRC Water and Waste will inform customers on matters relating to water supply, sewerage and waste services and on other issues such as charging and complaints handling. Customer communication may include distribution of published brochures, local media bulletins to advise customers of any system change that may have a significant effect on local service levels (eg water restrictions), or other options as appropriate.

CRC Water and Waste is committed to involving its customers on issues relating to its programs and services. As such, CRC Water and Waste may seek community involvement in service planning and decision-making processes through various forums, such as focus groups and customer surveys. These will be developed on a needs basis with specific focus and objectives.

Customer Contacts

In the interests of improving customer service, customers are encouraged to contact CRC Water and Waste for assistance on matters such as service difficulties and faults, account inquiries, general and technical inquiries, and suggestions.

CRC Water and Waste will respond promptly to customer inquiries, complaints and requests. CRC Water and Waste's performance goal is 90% of contacts responded to within 5 working days. CRC Water and Waste will monitor telephone and correspondence response times (using the PPS system) and has a performance goal of answering 90% of all customer calls within 30 seconds.

Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution

If customers have a complaint regarding customer service standards, CRC Water and Waste will investigate the complaint and take all reasonable action to solve the problem or address the issue promptly and effectively. CRC Water and Waste undertakes to respond to 95% of customer contacts, including complaints within 5 working days of being lodged.

If the issue or difficulty proves more complex, development of a solution will follow Council's complaints resolution process. The key steps in the process are:

- A representative of CRC Water and Waste will respond within not more than 10 working days after a complaint has been lodged
- Where this response indicates the need for further assessment, customers will receive a second written reply within a further 10 working days

- Where complaints are not resolved within these 20 working days, the customer may refer the complaint to the General Manager CRC Water and Waste for conciliation, investigation and resolution. This step will be available to customers provided they have previously registered their complaint with CRC Water and Waste
- The General Manager CRC Water and Waste, in consultation with all parties, will investigate the complaint and recommend a resolution. This may or may not require a formal meeting with the customer and appropriate representatives of CRC Water and Waste.

Emergency Assistance

CRC Water and Waste will maintain a 24-hour emergency contact service (4044 3044) for emergency events related to service systems such as a burst water main or sewerage overflow.

Entry to Private Property

In certain circumstances, representatives of CRC Water and Waste may need to enter a customer's property to carry out investigations and/or work on the water supply and sewerage transportation systems. To limit any inconvenience, CRC Water and Waste will attempt to carry out this work during business hours or at other times convenient to commercial customers, except in emergencies.

For planned work within a property, CRC Water and Waste will provide customers with a minimum of 48 hours advance notice. In an emergency, CRC Water and Waste will inform the occupier, if present, of the repairs to be undertaken and the anticipated duration of the work. We will also endeavour to inform customers when the work is complete.

All representatives of CRC Water and Waste will be readily identifiable from their staff identification badge and from wearing the CRC Water and Waste logo on clothing.

Other Services

Additional Services Available

In addition to the standard services available, CRC Water and Waste can also provide the following services upon request:

- Planning, design, documentation and construction of water, wastewater and waste services infrastructure
- Demand management services including meter testing
- Hydraulic information on reticulation networks
- As-constructed plumbing plan information
- Miscellaneous maintenance services
- Recreational facilities at Copperlode Falls Dam
- A water-testing laboratory.

Special needs – dialysis etc

If you are registered with CRC Water and Waste as having a life-support machine requiring water we will endeavour to advise of planned interruptions and emergency situations. Contact CRC Water and Waste on 4044 3044 for more details.

Water Stand Pipes

CRC Water and Waste will lease metered stand pipes for the taking of water from the reticulated water network. There are short and long-term hire agreements with forms able to be collected from Council's Customer Service Centre. Further details can be attained by contacting Water Billing on 4044 3044 for hire rates and consumption charges.

Trade Waste Services

Industrial and commercial customers may discharge treated trade waste to the sewerage system provided the customer has first obtained a Trade Waste Permit or entered into a trade waste agreement with CRC Water and Waste.

CRC Water and Waste will accept trade waste only where there is no likelihood that the trade waste will harm the system and provided it meets the requirements of the trade waste policy (this document is available upon request).

Acceptance of Waste From On-site Treatment Systems

Properties with on-site sewage treatment and disposal systems (eg, septic tanks) will need to arrange for pump outs on a periodic basis. CRC Water and Waste will issue licenses to contractors for approval to provide sullage disposal services within the City. We will also require a disposal fee for pump outs that are disposed of into the sewerage system. Customers should contact private operators in the yellow pages of the Cairns phone book to arrange for pump-out of their system.

Commercial Recycling Services

CRC Water and Waste can provide a recycling service to commercial customers. The recyclable material is transported to the Council owned Material Recovery Centre for sorting and on-sale to the market.

To apply for a commercial recycling service customers will need to call 4044 3044 to discuss with Council officers the requirements for the service.

Red Spot Bin Service

For customers that have difficulty in placing bins on the kerbs for collection they may be eligible for assistance via this service. Contact CRC Water and Waste on 4044 3044 for more information.

CRC WATER AND WASTE CONTACT DETAILS

Website: www.cairns.qld.gov.au

Email: cairnswater@cairns.qld.gov.au

Customer Service Centres:

- Council Chambers, 119-145 Spence St, Cairns
- Stockland Shopping Centre, Mulgrave Rd, Earlville
- Gordonvale Library, 88 Norman St, Gordonvale
- Smithfield Library, Cheviot St, Smithfield
- Mossman, 14 Mill St

Office Hours Contacts: 07 4044 3044

After Hours Emergency Phone: 07 4044 3044

Facsimile: 07 4044 8228

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