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Hunter Water investing in its customers and community

Hunter Water plans to invest more than \$871 million in its infrastructure, technology and services over the next five years, while maintaining one of the lowest bills in the country.

In its 2020-25 Pricing Proposal to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), Hunter Water has outlined its intention to make significant capital investments in upgrading the region's water and wastewater systems, as well as continuing to focus on water conservation initiatives and reducing leakage. If approved, it would be the biggest capital spend since 2011.

Hunter Water Acting Chief Executive Officer Darren Cleary said the proposal reflects Hunter Water's commitment to deliver even better services, while offering value for money for its customers.

"We believe we have the balance right in terms of investing more in our infrastructure and services to maintain efficient and high quality services for our customers while keeping costs down.

"Over the next five years, Hunter Water is proposing to spend \$424 million, or half of its total investment, on improving and upgrading the wastewater system to service growth in the region and to minimise the impact of our wastewater system on the environment.

This will ensure we can reliably service our fast-growing region into the future and will also help drive even better environmental outcomes by maintaining the health of our waterways.

"Among the major infrastructure investment is \$259 million in our water supply system to service growth, reduce leakage, renew assets and ensure the continued delivery of safe, high quality drinking water.

"In addition, we will continue to focus on driving down water consumption through our Love Water campaign and invest in recycled water and energy efficiency projects.

"Even with significant investment in our capital program, if approved, we'll maintain one of the lowest bills in the country. We anticipate the bill of an average household would increase by approximately \$60 per year, or \$1.15 per week.

"Hunter Water is here to serve our community, and we believe our level of investment will help avoid longer term price increases and will improve the service and experience for our customers," said Mr Cleary.

IPART will review Hunter Water's proposal and undertake a public consultation process, with customers and community members encouraged to give feedback. It will release a draft determination in March 2020.

For more information visit www.hunterwater.com.au/priceproposal.