



# WILLIAMTOWN WATER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HUNTER WATER IS PROVIDING RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE INVESTIGATION AREA ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER



## WHO WILL BE ABLE TO CONNECT TO THE WATER SUPPLY NETWORK?

Approximately 165 properties within the Williamstown Contamination Investigation Area, as defined by the Environment Protection Authority, will be provided with access to Hunter Water's water supply network.

Hunter Water will provide one connection per existing residential property or commercial development.

## WHY ARE ONLY PROPERTIES WITHIN THE INVESTIGATION AREA BEING CONNECTED?

The investigation area has been determined by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). This project will ensure properties within the investigation area have access to a safe water supply.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PROPERTY IS IN THE INVESTIGATION AREA?

A map of the investigation area provided by the EPA is at [www.hunterwater.com.au/williamtown](http://www.hunterwater.com.au/williamtown)

## MY PROPERTY IS OUTSIDE THE INVESTIGATION AREA. CAN I STILL CONNECT TO THE WATER SUPPLY NETWORK?

If your property is outside of the investigation area determined by the EPA you may still be able to connect to the water supply network. The cost to provide the connection will vary depending upon the location of your property and the location of available water mains. The property owner will be responsible for the cost of installing all pipes and fittings, and if necessary costs involved with extending existing water mains.

## MY PROPERTY IS INSIDE THE INVESTIGATION AREA. DO I HAVE TO CONNECT TO THE WATER SUPPLY NETWORK?

You can choose whether or not to connect your property to the water supply network. If you choose not to connect at this time Hunter Water will install a termination point at your property boundary. In the future if you do decide to connect you will be responsible, at your own expense, for installing all pipes and fittings on your property to enable the connection.

## HOW DO I LET HUNTER WATER KNOW I'D LIKE TO CONNECT TO THE WATER SUPPLY NETWORK?

If your property is inside the investigation area and you are interested in connecting to the water supply please contact Hunter Water as soon as possible. Email your name, property address and contact details to [williamtown@hunterwater.com.au](mailto:williamtown@hunterwater.com.au) or, if you do not have email access, call 1300 657 657 during business hours. If you are not interested in connecting it would also be appreciated if you let Hunter Water know.

## WHAT ABOUT VACANT LAND WITHIN THE INVESTIGATION AREA?

For vacant lots Hunter Water will install a water point terminated at the property boundary. Customers will be responsible for installing any pipes and fittings, at their own expense, should they will to connect their property in the future.



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THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR OWNERS OF PROPERTIES INSIDE THE INVESTIGATION AREA WHICH ARE TO BE CONNECTED TO THE WATER SUPPLY NETWORK

## **WHEN WILL PROPERTIES INSIDE THE INVESTIGATION AREA BE CONNECTED?**

Water connections to properties inside the Investigation Area will be provided in stages, based on the location of the properties. It will be relatively straightforward to connect properties located near existing water mains so these connections will be available first. To provide access to the water supply in other areas Hunter Water needs to complete investigations including geotechnical, groundwater and Aboriginal Heritage studies, then construct more than 12kms of new water mains. Design and planning for these new watermains is currently underway. The first customers able to be connected to the water supply will be those located in Fullerton Cove Road, because an existing water main is located nearby. Connections to the water supply network for these properties will be available from the end of April 2016. It is likely that properties along Lavis Lane will be able to connect later in 2016. For properties in Salt Ash, new watermains need to be constructed and these customers will be able to connect during the first half of 2017. All customers within the investigation area will have access to the water supply network by June 2017.

## **WHAT TYPE OF WATER CONNECTION CAN I HAVE?**

Property owners have two options. They may choose to connect the new water supply to the existing plumbing within their house, or they may have the water supply connection on their property but not connected to their existing plumbing (Hunter water will install a standard outdoor tap on the property). This is an option for property owners concerned their existing plumbing may not meet Australian Standard AS/NZS3500. The tap can then be used for irrigation or to fill rainwater tanks etc. Please note that a site containment backflow prevention device may still be required in both situations.

## **SHOULD I KEEP MY EXISTING RAINWATER TANK?**

If you have an existing rainwater tank you may choose to keep it. Keeping your rainwater tank may mean you need a site containment backflow prevention device with a higher rating, especially if the tank is below ground. The rating of the site containment backflow prevention required will be determined before your water supply connection is finalised. You may also like to keep your existing rain water tank to ensure you comply with Council's BASIX regulations. Contact Port Stephens Council for more information.

## **SHOULD I KEEP MY EXISTING BORE?**

If you have an existing bore you may choose to keep it. It is likely that electing to keep using your bore will mean you need to have a site containment backflow prevention device with a higher rating installed. The level of site containment backflow prevention will be determined before your water supply connection is finalised.

## **HOW WILL CHANGING FROM TANK OR BORE WATER TO HUNTER WATER'S SUPPLY AFFECT MY SEPTIC SYSTEM?**

Like most other water utilities, Hunter Water uses chlorine to disinfect its water supply and protect public health. Chlorine is anti-bacterial, however the amount used is small and the effect on septic tanks is negligible. The bacterial balance in your tank will quickly adjust to the new water supply without your needing to take any action. For example, it is not necessary to feed your system with additional bacteria. There are other areas in the Hunter which also have a combination of reticulated water and septic tanks, including Brandy Hill, Heatherbrae, North Rothbury, Patterson, Seaham, Wallalong and Wyee.



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## DO I NEED A BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICE?

A site containment backflow prevention device is required on all properties with potential cross connections to other water sources. This device is to prevent the possibility of water from these cross connections entering Hunter Water's network. The need for such devices, and the type of device required, is evaluated on a property by property basis. Depending upon the level of site containment backflow prevention required the device may need an annual certification by an accredited tester.

The need for a site containment backflow prevention device is based on possible hazards that exist on the property. Hazards may include bore water, below ground water tanks, irrigation systems and stock watering troughs. A site containment backflow prevention device may still be required if you decide to install a single hose tap, rather than have the water supply physically connected to your existing plumbing. This is because a hose connected to the tap may still enable a backflow into Hunter Water's water supply system to occur. The need for site containment backflow prevention is not unique to the Williamtown area but applies to all new and existing customers. For more information see the Site Containment Backflow Prevention Device Fact Sheet.

## AS A CUSTOMER OF HUNTER WATER WHAT WILL I BE RESPONSIBLE FOR?

Following completion of this project the property owner will assume responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the pipes and fittings on their property. As per the standard customer contract\* all Hunter Water customers are responsible for the pipes and plumbing systems on their side of the water meter. As a Hunter Water customer you will be responsible for paying your water bill, which will be sent to you every four months. For more information see [www.hunterwater.com.au/contract](http://www.hunterwater.com.au/contract)

## HOW MUCH WILL I NEED TO PAY?

Hunter Water will waive the usual water service connection fee. After connecting to the water supply system you will be charged for the amount of water you use. Between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017 this rate will be \$2.25 per kilolitre. (A kilolitre is 1000 litres.) This is the usual rate for all Hunter Water customers. The average water used by a residential customer is 172 kilolitres per annum, equating to \$1.06 per day. An annual water service charge will also be payable. Between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017 the annual charge for residential customers will be \$25.69. From 1 July 2017 the annual water service charge will be \$51.12. Hunter Water's pricing structure is determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), an independent NSW government agency that sets prices for a range of government services including water, public transport and aspects of gas and electricity charges. For more information on current prices visit "Your Account" at [www.hunterwater.com.au](http://www.hunterwater.com.au)

If required, an annual inspection and certification of the backflow prevention device by an accredited certifier may also be payable. The type of backflow prevention device needed, and the cost associated with testing/certification may change on a property by property basis.

## WHAT WILL THE NEW WATER PRESSURE BE?

The water pressure supplied to your water meter will be a minimum of 20 metres pressure as required under Hunter Water's Operating Licence.

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

For up to date information visit [www.hunterwater.com.au/williamtown](http://www.hunterwater.com.au/williamtown)

For more information email [williamtown@hunterwater.com.au](mailto:williamtown@hunterwater.com.au) or ring Hunter Water during business hours on 1300 657 657. For after hours emergencies call 1300 657 000.