



Plain-English Billing Summary

IPART's review of prices for Central Coast Council's water and sewer services from 1 July 2026

September 2025



Water
and Sewer

Council's IPART pricing proposal

Central Coast Council's (Council) pricing proposal to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for its water and sewer services was lodged on 30 September 2025. The submission covers Council's forecast of future operating costs, capital investment and price proposals.

This document provides a brief overview of Council's proposed prices and an impact summary of what the changes will mean to non-residential and typical residential customers.

The results of the customer engagement have been threaded through Council's proposal in relation to expenditure, service levels, outcomes, and accountability.

The design and the effort invested in the customer engagement journey resulted in key findings that allowed Council to understand customer priorities. The key priority relating to cost of living (keeping prices low) while still maintaining appropriate service standards.

Council has reviewed all forecast revenue requirements understanding that:

- Maintaining and where possible improving asset performance efficiently without jeopardising service standards.
- Keeping a focus on the future regarding growth and water resilience
- Protecting the environment
- Keeping prices at a level that considers cost of living pressures and
- Delivering on the actions identified in the submission and being accountable to the community in order to build trust.



Background

Council has calculated water and sewer prices that allow for the recovery of proposed target revenues. The proposed pricing allows Council to recover the revenue between residential and non-residential customers via the fixed and usage charges for water and sewer.

This pricing reflects IPART's best practice principles and past IPART decisions.

The bills have been calculated to remain consistent in real terms throughout the proposed determination period. This was evidenced by the recent community engagement where participants preferred flat and steady bills. In addition, there was preference for any additional costs to be geared towards the usage charge to allow better control and affordability.

Bills are calculated by summing up the total revenue required for the proposed 5-year determination period and smoothing the billing evenly so the only increase will be the application of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) per annum.

When establishing Council's pricing for the 2026 determination period, the community was engaged to gather feedback on proposed increases to pricing for specific issues regarding community values related to water quality, reliable services and a rebate program related to water conservation.



Community consultation

Beginning in 2023, Council initiated engagement with our community regarding:

- Their values in relation to the Council's water and sewer services.
 - Water Quality
 - Reliable service
 - Quality treatment
 - Effective planning
 - Affordability
 - Transparency and education.
- What the most important value is regarding services delivered.
- Service level targets and performance.
- If the community was willing to pay for improving performance and reducing service level targets.

During each engagement, values were revisited to determine if there was a shift in importance however, these values remained constant.

The community also indicated that a flat steady price is preferred as well as having more control over their water bills with any additional costs to be geared towards the usage charge. This would also assist affordability.

Proposed pricing

- The proposal sees an average residential household bill have a one-off increase, in the first year, of 8% for water and sewer services.
- Each year after that would see an increase in line with inflation.

What is Council proposing?

In summary, Council is proposing the following:

- Water usage price is increased from \$2.70 to \$3.18 per thousand litres (kL)
- Water service charge is decreased from \$366.04 to \$222.92 per year
- Residential sewer service charge be increased from \$561.19 to \$766.64 a year (includes a 75% discharge allowance)
- Sewer usage charge is decreased from \$1.12 to \$0.92 per thousand litres (kL)
- Residential sewer discharge volume is set at 125kL per year for houses
- Residential sewer discharge volume be set at 80kL per year for apartments (multi premises)
- Exempt properties will continue to pay both water and sewer usage fees
- Non-residential water service charges will be determined according to the size of the water meter
- Non-residential sewer service charges will be determined according to the size of the meter
- Non-residential sewer discharge volume will be based on water consumption with discharge factor applied relevant to the type of business.

Note: All prices quoted are in \$2026-27

Council is also proposing that:

- IPART determines Council's charges for a five-year period from 1 July 2026 - 30 June 2031.
- IPART limit annual increases in final prices for the next determination period (2026-2031) to the rate of inflation only.
- Retirement villages continue to be billed as non-residential, which is meter-based charging.

How will this affect my bill?

Residential customers

Residential customers will see their total water and sewer bills increase after 1 July 2026.

In Table 1 below, comparison is shown between the current bill with the proposed 2026-31 bills for typical residential customers.

Table 1: Current and proposed typical residential bills (\$2026-27)

Assumptions 3 bed house 1x20mm meter Annual metered water usage of 180kL*	2022 - Current Determination 2025-26 Central Coast Council LGA (\$2026-27)	2026 - Proposed Determination 2026-27 Central Coast Council LGA (\$2026-27)
Water service	366.04	222.92
Water usage (kL x usage charge)	486.00	572.40
Sewer service (includes usage @125kL x usage charge)	701.19	881.04
TOTAL bill	\$1,553.23	\$1,676.36^f

*kL = kilolitre = thousand litres, sewer service charge for residential includes 75% discharge allowance. Stormwater drainage has been removed as this is no longer part of the proposed determination period.



Non-residential customers

Non-residential customers will be affected in different ways depending on how much water they use, if they are connected to the sewerage network, the size of their property and whether they use trade waste services.

Non-residential customers will see an increase in their water usage and sewer service charges.

Trade waste customers will see a small change in charges, depending on the category they fall within.

A typical non-residential bill using both 25mm and 40mm meters is shown in Table 2 (does not include trade waste charges). For larger meter sizes refer to Table 3.

Table 2: Current and proposed typical bills (\$2026-27) 25mm and 40mm. Current prices are shown in (\$2026-27)

Charge description	Unit \$/kL	Current 2025-26 Central Coast LGA	Unit \$/kL	Proposed 2026- 27 Central Coast LGA
25mm				
Water service charge		571.93		348.31
Water usage (assumes 300kL)	2.70	810.00	3.18	954.00
Sewer service charge (25mm)		1,073.62		1,597.16
Sewer usage charge (assumes 280kL 93% discharge factor on water consumption)	1.12	313.60	0.92	253.37
Total		2,769.15		3,152.84
40mm				
Water service charge		1,464.14		891.68
Water usage (assumes 300kL)	2.70	810.00	3.18	954.00
Sewer service charge (40mm)		2,760.44		4,088.72
Sewer usage charge (assumes 280kL 93% discharge factor on water consumption)	1.12	313.60	0.92	254.47
Total		5,348.18		6,188.87

The proposed pricing for non-residential customers is provided in Table 3. Note this pricing is indicative only as each business varies in its water and sewer usage.

Table 3: Proposed charges (\$2026-27) Current prices also shown here in \$2026-27

Charge description	Unit	Current Central Coast LGA ^b	Proposed Central Coast LGA
Water			
Usage			
Residential and non-residential	\$/kL	2.70	3.18
180kL Residential water usage (assumed usage only) ^h		486.00	572.40
300kL Non-residential water usage (assumed usage only) ^h		810.00	954.00
Service			
Residential			
Houses, flats and units	\$/dwelling	366.04	222.92
Non-Residential			
20mm	\$/meter	366.04	222.92
25mm	\$/meter	571.93	348.31
40mm	\$/meter	1,464.12	891.68
50mm	\$/meter	2,287.69	1,393.25
65mm	\$/meter	3,866.25	2,354.59
80mm	\$/meter	5,856.50	3,566.72
Other (meters greater than 80 not shown above)	\$/20mm equiv^c		
Sewer			
Usage			
Residential and non-residential^d	\$/kL	1.12	0.92
280kL sewer usage (assumed usage only) ^g		313.60	257.60
Service			
Residential			
Houses, flats and units	\$/dwelling	561.19	766.64^e
Non-residential			
20mm	\$/meter	748.25	1,022.18
25mm	\$/meter	1,169.14	1,597.16
40mm	\$/meter	2,993.01	4,088.72
50mm	\$/meter	4,676.58	6,388.63
65mm	\$/meter	7,903.37	10,796.78
80mm	\$/meter	11,972.04	16,354.88
Other (meters greater than 80mm not shown above)	\$/20mm equiv^c		

Trade waste			
Annual fee			
Category 1	\$/occupancy	172.48	161.56
Category 2	\$/occupancy	537.00	526.21
Category 3	\$/occupancy	2,015.73	2,061.08
Category S	\$/occupancy	251.96	501.97

Notes:

- a. The amounts shown in the table are in \$2026-27 terms and are proposed to change in line with actual inflation in future years.
- b. Current prices are for 2025-26 and shown in \$2026-27 using a CPI of 2.9% estimates provided for comparative purposes only. Current prices published on Council's websites.
- c. This is the charge for a 20mm meter equivalent. Customers with larger meters will pay a multiple of this charge depending on the size of the water meter. Charges for larger meters can be calculated as the service charge shown in the table multiplied by (meter size)²/ 400. A full list of meter sizes and proposed charges are available in Council's submission.
- d. In the current 2022-26 determination, the deemed sewer usage for residential properties is 125kL (\$140.00) in addition to the service charge shown above for houses and 80kL (\$89.60) for apartments. Non-residential discharge is based on water consumed with a discharge factor.
- e. Residential sewer service charges are shown above with a 75% discharge factor. This is what currently occurs and is proposed for the 2026-31 regulatory period.
- f. Total bill is based on 125kL sewer usage * 0.92 usage charge = \$115.00
- g. Non-residential sewer usage of 280kL shown above is indicative of an average bill. Sewer usage varies depending on the type of business and water consumption.
- h. Non-residential and residential water usage of 300kL and 180kL shown above is indicative of an average bill. Water usage varies depending on the type of business and water consumption. The figure shown needs to be added to the service charge.
- i. Non-residential numbers are the service charge before discharge factor applied.

Additional activities proposed

Council is proposing an investment of \$577.8M to deliver an accelerated program of upgrades to the water and sewerage networks and treatment plants throughout the Central Coast over the 2026-31 determination period, including:

- Charmhaven Treatment Plant upgrade
- Gwandalan Treatment Plant upgrade
- Charmhaven (12) Sewer Rising Main and Sewer Pump station upgrade
- Kiar Ridge Water Supply Reservoir
- Bateau Bay Treatment Plant upgrade
- Water and sewer mains renewal program.

What happens next?

IPART is now preparing to set prices for water supply and sewer services on the Central Coast.

In assessing Council's pricing proposal, IPART will consider the efficient cost of providing water and sewer services.

Council's pricing proposal will be placed on IPART's website. They will then release an Issues Paper in October 2025, highlighting any of their key issues. They will be accepting submissions from the public and other stakeholders on the pricing proposal and their Issues Paper until late-October 2025.

IPART will then hold a public hearing in November 2025, providing the community with another chance to have their views heard. These locations and times will be advertised in local newspapers, on IPART's website and via Council's communication channels.

IPART will then release a draft Report and Determination in March 2026 detailing prices. The community then have further opportunity to respond to the draft reports by making submissions to IPART.

In May 2026, IPART will release their Final Report and Determination on prices that come into effect on 1 July 2026.

For information on Council's current water and sewer prices and how and where these charges are applied, please visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

Remember, the prices IPART ultimately sets may be different to those proposed in Council's submission.

How can I have my say?

Information on how you can provide comments to IPART on these prices and any other aspect of Council's submission can be found at: www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Reviews/Have-Your-Say

IPART have invited stakeholder and public comment until late October 2025.

IPART can be contacted on (02) 9290 8400.

Details of the public hearing including location and times, will be advertised on IPART's website.