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Your submission for this review:

I have tried to cut and paste from a Word document and for some reason this box is limiting the number of words. I will now try to attach the document and hope that it works. Please confirm that this submission has been successfully transmitted and received. Thank you!

## Central Coast Resident's Feedback on Water Pricing

### **We are writing this submission to object to Central Coast Council's Stormwater Drainage**

**Residential Service Charge increase.** We are on a semi-rural property and do not have water or sewerage connected; anything water related - we have to pay for and maintain. Nor does our street have any sort of footpath or drainage, neither stormwater nor any other, and yet we have paid this stormwater drainage fee to date for years and paid without complaint as we assumed that it would be used judiciously in some stormwater/flood mitigation capacity.

Though the general water rate increase proposed by Council is 34%, for stormwater drainage the increase will actually be 68%. Currently we pay \$27 quarterly and whilst the increase from the annual fee of \$108 to the newly proposed fee of \$181 might not seem like a lot of money to some people, for us it will be another burden that has been imposed on us by Council in the last 12 months.

Our land rates have increased 40.6% this year. And now this ... I don't know what else to say beyond the fact that my husband and I retired 5 years ago and are on the pension.

In regards to the three questions posed in the "Information Paper".

[What do you think about funding stormwater services through the council's local government rates rather than through its charges as a Water Supply Authority?](#)

[2. Would you prefer to pay for stormwater services through the council's local government rates instead of through its charges as a Water Supply Authority? Why?](#)

[3. If stormwater services were to change to be funded through local government rates, when would you want this change to occur?](#)

Our answer would be based on the fact that this Council has little regard for its ratepayers. Nor does Council take into consideration the ratepayers' ability to pay for whatever council financial mismanagement has occurred in the past or is likely to occur in the future. Nothing, including the standing down of the councillors nor the actions of the two administrators in the past 12 months, has given us any confidence that things will improve.

So we would prefer funding stormwater services through **whichever** of the two options outlined - be it council's local government rates OR its charges as a Water Supply Authority - whichever of these has the most stringent fiscal restraints imposed so that council is not able to pass on a blanket increase charge to the ratepayers, just because it can. Central Coast Council has shown that, even when IPART approved via Special Variation Application to increase its general income from rates for three years only, it still insists that the increase should be extended to 10 years.

I have to admit that I've had to force myself to write this submission because it is the right thing to do, in terms of justice for ratepayers, even though past experience gives us little hope that it will make any difference. We wrote a lengthy detailed submission objecting to the proposed land rate increase, like many others, and were two of the more than 20,000 ratepayers who called for a judicial inquiry into the mismanagement of Central Coast Council. And it all came to nought!

We are being forced to pay for the inadequacies of a council, whether it be the councillors, the staff, the ■■■, ■■■, the auditors who failed to audit, whatever regulations should have been in place that

obviously weren't, and the questionable raison d'être of the Department of Local Government, whose website has the intro "The Office of Local Government is the NSW Government agency responsible for strengthening the sustainability, performance, integrity, transparency and accountability of the local government sector" - none of which has been evident in regards to Central Coast Council.

We have been made the scapegoats of a system that has obviously failed and nothing will come from the "public" inquiry which should have been a judicial inquiry, which at least might have been a real inquiry which might have unearthed some of the root causes of Council's financial disaster which, at the very least, might have been beneficial for our future and for that of other Councils' ratepayers.

Incredibly depressing!!