

## **WATER AND SEWERAGE PRICES TO COME UNDER THE MICROSCOPE**

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has announced its intention to conduct an investigation into the prices Country Energy can charge from 1 July 2010 for the water and sewerage services it provides to the residents of Broken Hill, Menindee, Sunset Strip and Silverton.

IPART has regulated the prices of water and sewerage services in Sydney and the Hunter and Central Coast regions for many years but this will be the first time that it has embarked on a process to set water and sewerage prices for the Broken Hill area.

“In the latter part of last year the NSW Government decided to extend IPART’s powers to include coverage of water and sewerage services provide by Country Energy in the Broken Hill region” IPART CEO Mr Jim Cox said.

As part of its investigation IPART has released an Issues Paper which sets out the key issues that will be considered as part of the pricing review. Country Energy will be required to make a submission on its pricing proposals for the next several years. This submission is due to be received by IPART by no later than 11 September 2009.

IPART is also encouraging interested parties, including Country Energy’s water and sewerage customers, to make submissions. Submissions from members of the community are not due until 9 October 2009 so people will have the opportunity to consider and comment of the proposals put forward by Country Energy.

“The views of the customers and stakeholders of regulated agencies such as Country Energy are important to IPART so that it can benefit from a range of views on relevant issues and can gain an appreciation of matters of concern to local communities. I would therefore encourage all those interested to make their views known to us” Mr Cox said.

As is IPART’s usual practice, all submissions received will be published on IPART’s website [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au). The Issues Paper can also be viewed on the website or a copy obtained by contacting Ms Jody Thornton on (02) 9290 8478.

“IPART will also be conducting a public hearing into Country Energy’s pricing proposals during November 2009 where representatives of Country Energy and invited stakeholders will be able to outline their proposals and to put forward their points of view for the Tribunal to consider” Mr Cox said. Members of the public will also be given an opportunity to speak at this forum.

IPART will release a draft report for public comment in March 2010 and a final report in June 2010. The new water and sewerage prices will apply from 1 July 2010.

For further information, contact: Jim Cox, Chief Executive Officer and Full Time Member  
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