

Hello,

I am a citizen of Broken Hill. I am very concerned about how we are going to afford an increase in water charges.

My husband and I are aged pensioners and on a very tight budget already; so how can we afford an increase? I can't see how we can cut down our water consumption any more that we have. We have no lawns and have chosen garden plants that need the least watering.

The increase in water charges will also result in increased Council Rates and charges. Many of our parks and ovals have been let run down already due to lack of funds. Our population includes of a large percentage of aged, disabled and unemployed. We are mostly responsible people who wouldn't dream of defaulting on utility account payments, but in future we may have to swallow our pride and do so. It is no use telling us to arrange for time payments - that is not the solution at all.

Is it realized that we have a real and ongoing danger of high lead levels in Broken Hill? The mining companies are doing their part by having put in place systems to keep there work places and transport of ore at an acceptable level of dust emission. This is not the only precaution we need to take. We need to grow a lot of trees, ground cover, shrubs etc to cover to keep down the dust in our dry arid region. Much of our soil is contaminated with lead dust. We have had several severe dust storms of late and the sparkling in the dust show it contain dangerous minerals. We have no option other than to squirt down our verandas, paths, pavers and garage floors. If our yards - as many do - contain dirt or cracker dust we need to sprinkle with water to keep down the dust also. The adverse affects of lead ingestion on the development of children is well known. Adults are also affected with resulting serous medical problems, let alone increase of Asthmas and other respiratory diseases.

Please reconsider increases in water charges and consider our special circumstances out here in the Far West of N.S.W.

Regards

Janine Jones  
Broken Hill