

## **Industrial Waste Frequently Asked Questions – Permits**

### **Why am I receiving an Industrial Waste account?**

Industrial waste accounts are issued to businesses that are connected to and discharge industrial wastewater to the Water Corporation's wastewater system. The wastewater discharged by restaurants, fast food outlets, laundries, service stations, metal finishers, wholesale food processors, laboratories and many other businesses is classed as industrial waste under local Government by-laws.

It is compulsory under these by-laws for any business discharging anything other than wastewater from staff amenities, to hold an industrial waste permit.

It is likely that your business paperwork involved completing an industrial waste application form before you got connected. .

You may have only recently taken over the business, and signed so much paperwork that you forgot to apply. Or maybe your plumber arranged the connection, and all you did was sign some paperwork (we hope they told you what it was for!).

### **I am a country customer, why is this charge being introduced?**

Our wastewater services are based on a 'user pays' principle and a recent review of our wastewater operations concluded that industrial waste permits for small businesses need to be uniform throughout the State. Businesses equivalent to yours in the Perth metropolitan area and a number of franchised businesses in the country areas already pay a charge for their Industrial Waste Permit.

The permit allows us to monitor the type of waste entering the system, which was primarily set up to deal with domestic wastewater. Incompatible industrial waste discharging to the sewer can damage our assets and can affect the operation of our wastewater system. In some cases it can even threaten the health and safety of our employees.

As an existing business with a permit, no establishment charge will be levied.

### **I already pay sewerage charges, by charging for industrial waste. It seems that the Water Corporation is double billing.**

Your commercial sewerage charges cover your normal 'domestic-like' sewage for toilets, and showers, lunch rooms, wash basins and the like. Your 'process' wastewater from commercial kitchens, laundries, manufacturing activity or the like has a different make-up to normal domestic sewerage, and is not covered by your normal sewerage charges. Instead, this wastewater is charged as Industrial Waste.

If you have a volumetric component to your normal sewerage charge, and quality-quantity charges for Industrial Waste, then your charges for normal sewerage are adjusted to account for the volume charged as Industrial Waste.

If you are only charged a Permit Fee for Industrial Waste, without any usage charges, then this only covers the costs associated with our administration of the service, and making the Industrial Waste facility available to you. Your usage charges for treatment and disposal within our system are covered by our normal sewerage charges.

Therefore, there is no overlap. Even though you have only one physical sewer connection for all of your wastewater, we charge for your 'domestic' and 'process' wastewater streams independently under two separate services.

**I have received an account for industrial waste, but I no longer own the business.**

The business owner was required to notify the Water Corporation (in writing) within 14 days of selling or closing a business. It may be the case that you forgot to do this or that our records were not updated in time.

You need to contact us as soon as possible so we can contact the new proprietor or tenants at your old site. Please call our Sundry Debtors Officers (ph 08 9424 8526), or email [cust\\_centre@watercorporation.com.au](mailto:cust_centre@watercorporation.com.au)

It is helpful if you can advise us of the date you sold or closed your business, and the details of the new proprietor (if known). It is vital that we advise them of the necessary controls and conditions on their discharges that are required to protect public health and the environment.

Industrial waste technical staff may need to inspect the premises and will issue a new permit to the new business owner.

**I have received an industrial waste invoice but my business is not yet operating and I am not discharging any waste! Is this correct?**

Your permit fee is charged from the date indicated on your permit. This is the date you nominated on your application as the date you would start your business operation.

This permit gives you the right to discharge your process wastewater to sewer under the conditions specified, and the permit fee covers our costs of managing this permit system.

Your permit charge applies from the time that your permit is valid. It is independent of any usage charges, which will only apply when you actually start discharging your wastewater to sewer.

If you think we have made a processing error, or if you are being invoiced for usage (Quality-Quantity) charges, or if your commencement date is significantly delayed and you want to change your permit details, please contact us to find out how we may assist.

**My annual permit fee account shows an Open Area charge, which I did not receive in previous years. Why am I being charged this additional fee?**

Under the Industrial Waste Tariff Reforms introduced in 2001-02, any unroofed wash bays and uncovered bin storage or wash areas with floor drains connected to sewer attract a charge to cover the cost of disposal of contaminated wastewater generated by stormwater flowing to the sewer from these areas.

Stormwater is not normally allowed to be discharged to sewer, as it denies the environment of its natural rainfall recharge. Consequently, the public wastewater system is not normally designed for the extra peak flows of stormwater collection, and a 'peak' capacity charge is necessary.

These charges have been in place in the Perth metropolitan area since 2002 and the Water Corporation is now rolling out similar charges to the country areas in order to ensure equity in its charging.

**I own a coin-operated laundry or small commercial laundry, and was previously charged a fixture fee for each washing machine on my premises. What happened to these charges?**

Under our tariff reforms, which are being implemented progressively on an industry-by-industry basis, washing machine charges were removed from the Industrial Waste Tariff in 2001-02 financial year.

**When do you expect these charges to be implemented?**

Charges for Industrial Waste Permits and Open Areas are already in place for Perth metropolitan area and these charges in the regional areas will start from 1 July 2007.