

E10/1130

The following is an index associated with the information on the history of the Sewer Access Charge since 2002 as implemented by Bathurst Regional Council.

On the pages noted are items that back our claims of corrupt conduct in regard to this matter.

The numbering for this index is at the bottom right hand corner.

2008

Page 1. The Bathurst Business Chamber asks BRC specifically about ET's

“Base sewerage access charges on the peak load the discharger places on the sewerage system. Such dischargers should therefore have the option of providing for Council's consideration, an expert report to establish the peak load in equivalent tenements (ET's) their operations place on the sewerage system. In the absence of such a report, the Council can determine the access charge on the basis of the square of the service connection size times the discharge factor. This is the method adopted by Council.”

We note your letter to the Chamber dated 20 June 2006 cites resolutions made by Council on 21 July 2004 to assist in the implementation of user-pays sewerage. However, I note in these resolutions there is no specific mention of any steps taken to advise businesses of the option available to them to have an expert report prepared which establishes their actual peak load, and have their charges adjusted accordingly. Further, I understand that letters providing usage charge estimates were issued to businesses who would experience an increase of greater than \$100 per annum, however it is not clear if this option was explained to businesses addressed by that letter.

26 March 2008

Mr Peter Sargent
President
Bathurst Business Chamber
PO Box 293
BATHURST NSW 2795

Dear Mr Sargent

Sewer Access Charges

I refer to your letter dated 12 March 2008, in which you raise matters relating to sewer access charges.

As you are aware, this matter has been under consideration since the introduction of these charges back in 2004. Council received many reports and advice in relation to the introduction of sewer access charges.

Information contained within your letter is correct in that Council did determine the access charge applicable to sewer access.

In relation to your fourth paragraph, I wish to advise that Council wrote to all businesses within Bathurst to advise them of the Sewerage Discharge Factor (SDF) that would be applicable to their business and to advise them that if they were dissatisfied with the percentage placed on their business they needed to advise Council and a review of this SDF would occur.

Many businesses took up this option and every business was individually categorised and any necessary adjustments were made.

In reply to the four questions raised I wish to advise the following.

- 1) Council elected to determine the access charge based on the square of the service connection size x the discharge factor method.
- 2) Council wrote to all businesses and advised them of their proposed SDF and advised of the appeals process.
- 3) Council wrote to all businesses advising them of the SDF.
- 4) Many businesses took up the option for a review of their SDF and the appropriate adjustments have been made.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The water meter size and the peak sewage load of the property was assessed to determine the appropriateness of the current water and sewer access charges currently being levied for the property. Based on our assessment we conclude that the existing property only requires a DN20 water meter. When the existing building is extended and requires a fire hose reel the water meter would need to be DN25.

As a comparison, the current annual water availability charge for a DN40 water meter is \$943.00, a DN25 water meter is \$367.00 and a DN20 water meter is \$235.00.

It is recommended that Council be asked to change the water meter size to 25mm diameter in order to reduce the water availability charge for the property. This change in meter size would be at Council's cost in accordance with the Council resolution.

The peak sewage load placed on the existing sewage system, based on actual water usage, was assessed to be range between 0.05 ETs and 1.49 ETs.

Council's revenue policy allows for a minimum sewer access charge equivalent to a DN20 water meter size (this is the normal size meter provided for a single residential property).

Based on the peak sewage load determined we conclude that this property should only be charged the minimum sewer access charge. As a comparison, the current annual sewer access charge for the property is 95% of \$1339.00, whilst the minimum charge would be \$334.00.

We trust that this information satisfies your requirements, however, if you require further information do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully
Heath Consulting Engineers



Per:
ROGER HEATH

- 7) This issue has been raised many times by a member of the Bathurst Business Chamber, and again I would like to reiterate that it was Council's decision to adopt the method they did. That is, the Council determined the access charge on the basis of the square of sewer connection size times the discharge factor.
- 8) As Council has adopted its method of charging then the option you refer to regarding the peak load in equivalent tenements (ET) is not available to Council's customers at the present time. However, as pointed out in item (6) each and every ratepayer has the right to make a submission on the Management Plan including the method of charging for sewer charges.
- 9) Council will invite and consider all submissions made in relation to...

NOTE .

Council told the Bathurst Business Chamber that if the ET method were to be used then the residential rate would have to be raised. This effectively ended the involvement of the Chamber in the matter. In effect and reality this Council (ie its staff) are very effective in letting most people know how Bathurst is run.