

Frequently asked questions

Response to questions identified through the 90 day program

How do SA Water charges for trade waste compare to interstate utilities?

As part of the 90 day Project related to trade waste and the food and beverage industry, data from four industry segments, Beverage, Dairy, Poultry and Meat Processing/Smallgoods was used to compare trade waste charges in South Australia and interstate.

The benchmarking activity was used only to compare the interstate contaminant based trade waste charges and does not include any comparisons of cross subsidies, concessions or other charges which may be applied interstate. It represents a snapshot in time and does not capture any individual contracts that may be in place with interstate utilities for large trade waste contributors.

The benchmarking activity for the food and beverage industry has found that the overall SA Water trade waste charges for this sector are significantly lower than those trade waste charges levied by the interstate water utilities sampled. This primarily is a result in the contaminant charges at SA Water being far lower than interstate utility charges.

The final results are summarised in the tables below:

Industry Segments	SA Water	TasWater	City West Water	Water Corporation (WA)	UnityWater (Qld)
Annual average trade waste charges (\$) for the average trade waste customer representing an industry segment					
Beverage	\$37,772	\$131,687	\$134,490	\$178,639	\$354,570
Dairy	\$67,716	\$191,541	\$171,679	\$264,488	\$511,038
Poultry	\$186,723	\$800,740	\$700,408	\$972,683	\$2,038,840
Smallgoods	\$13,669	\$32,145	\$28,690	\$40,827	\$88,689

Industry Segments	SA Water	TasWater Increase %	City West Water Increase %	Water Corporation (WA) Increase %	UnityWater (Qld) Increase %
Annual trade waste charges increase (%) for the average trade waste customer representing an industry segment					
Beverage	Benchmark	249 %	256 %	373 %	839 %
Dairy	Benchmark	183 %	154 %	291 %	655 %
Poultry	Benchmark	329 %	275 %	421 %	992 %
Smallgoods	Benchmark	135 %	110 %	165 %	549 %

What is the basis for trade waste Volume & Load- Based (VLB) charges?

SA Water's trade waste charges are implemented and calculated in line with *National Water Initiative* pricing principles. SA Water uses a Long Run Marginal Cost (LRMC) methodology as the basis for prices. This ensures that the true cost of processing Trade Waste pollutants are appropriately levied. This methodology has been verified as best practice by independent experts. Charges are determined for each individual site from regular site monitoring and sampling data. The charges reflect the actual performance during the billing period and are applied retrospectively.

What is the basis for Audit and Sampling/Monitoring charges?

The trade waste audit charge reflects the time, on average, needed to travel to, conduct and complete the compliance audit.

SA Water requires the majority of trade waste customers to have their trade waste discharges to sewer sampled for charging and/or compliance reasons.

The overall sampling/monitoring charge for a trade waste customer takes into consideration the travel and sampling time, and varies from site to site, depending on the site location and the number of sampling points.

Where several sites are serviced in one geographical area, the efficiencies of scheduling audits and sampling at the same time across this area have been factored into these charges.

Please refer to [Pricing Policy Statement - Excluded Retail Services](#) (SA Water website) for more details.

Does SA Water maintain its sewerage infrastructure adequately?

SA Water performs preventative maintenance on the sewer network and wastewater treatment plants on a regular basis. Planned maintenance activities are prioritised in accordance with a Decision Support System, and are programmed to account for many factors. When programming maintenance, consideration is given to the historic performance of the asset, the number of incidents (e.g. overflows or blockages), the frequency of incidents, customer complaints, asset condition and asset criticality. Typical maintenance

activities on wastewater assets include mains cleaning, pump station cleaning, CCTV inspections or installation of debris traps.

For the current regulatory period, SA Water’s capital expenditure on wastewater assets is in the order of \$107 million per annum. Of this, approximately \$57 million is to be invested at the Wastewater Treatment Plants, and \$50 million on wastewater network upgrades.

Around 85% of VLB trade waste discharges in South Australia are treated at Bolivar WWTP. Significant plant upgrade works are underway at Bolivar to ensure the plant has the capacity to treat wastewater to a quality that meets requirements for discharge to the marine environment and for reuse.

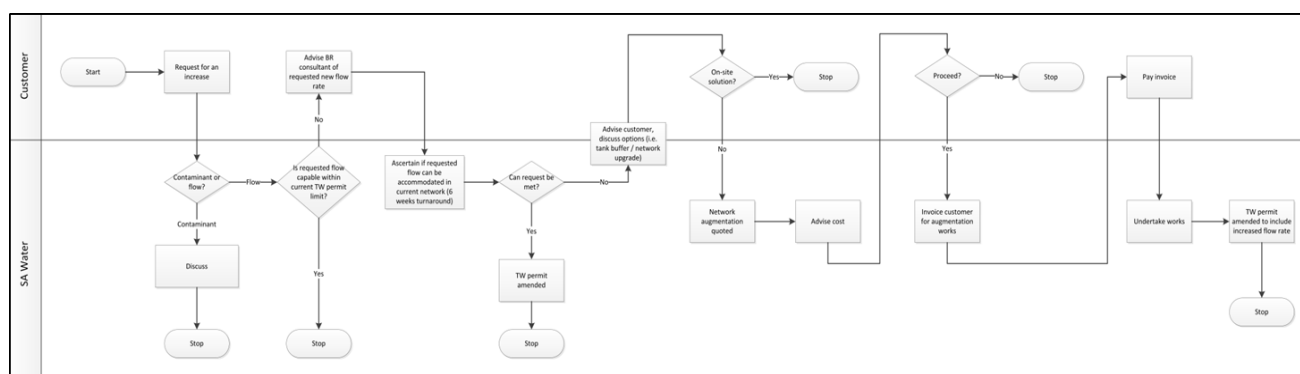
SA Water is currently preparing its submission to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) for funding for the period 2016-2020.

How does SA Water incorporate future growth for trade waste and more broadly?

SA Water takes a number of aspects into consideration when planning maintenance schedules and infrastructure upgrades for the future. A capital expenditure proposal is submitted to the ESCOSA for funding to support the plan. For wastewater systems in particular, existing discharge trends from residential and business customers are used to forecast future capacity needs, as are any known changes resulting from new developments or significant business production increases or decreases. The 30 year growth plan for the state is used to identify where infrastructure is likely to require augmentation over this time horizon to support growth across the state. Asset performance and condition is also monitored closely and maintenance and upgrades are scheduled to keep operation at optimum levels.

What is the process for engagement with SA Water on requiring increased services?

All Food SA members with a VLB Trade Waste Authorisation have an allocated Business Relations Consultant for their business. Any business seeking to increase services provided by SA Water (water or wastewater) can commence this process by contacting and discussing their plans/requirements with their consultant. The chart below highlights this process:

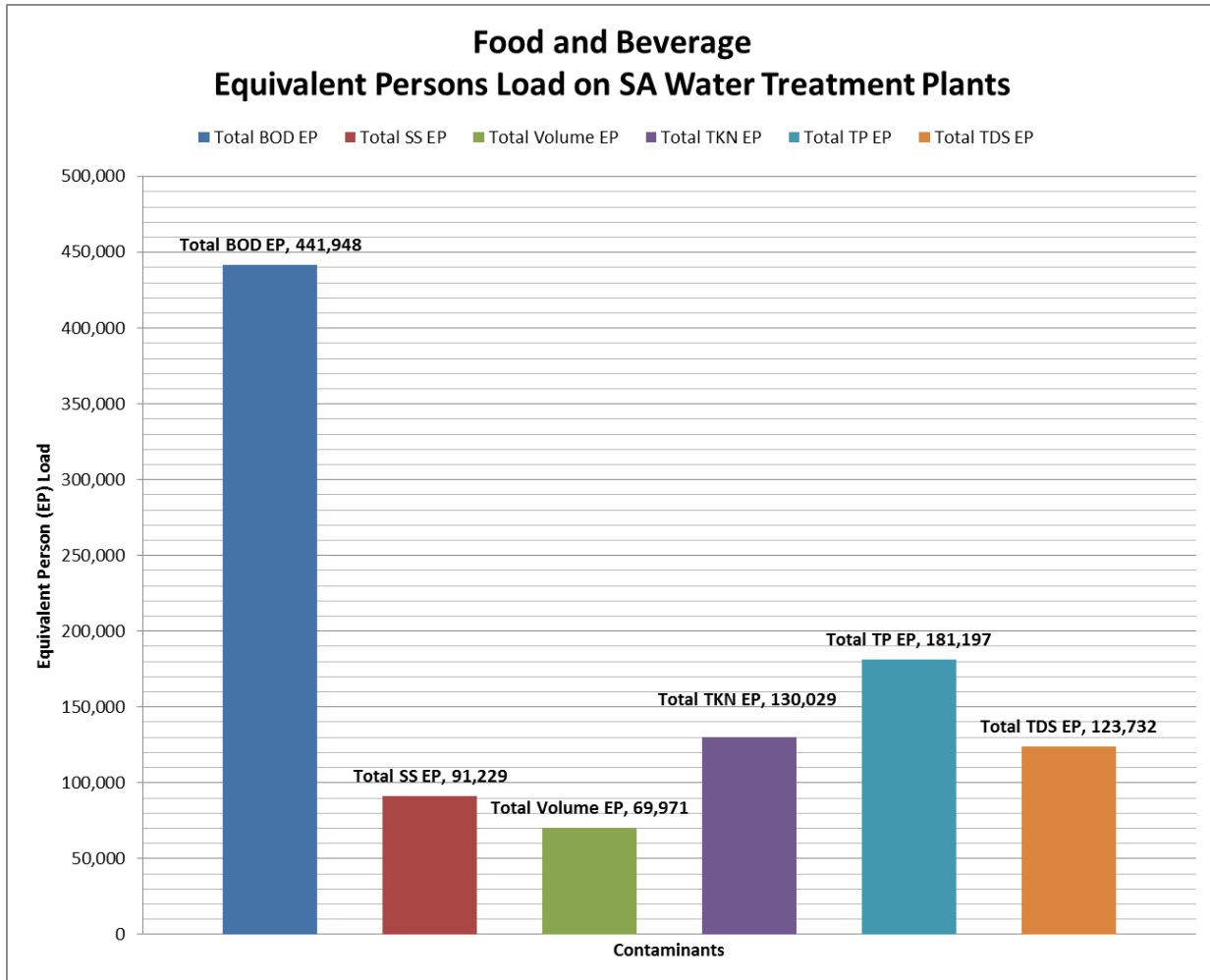


What is the expected ‘equivalent person’ (EP) load of food and beverage trade waste discharge?

To help put discharge quantities into perspective, they are often compared to the discharge to sewer of a ‘standard’ person, or 1 EP. The expected equivalent person load for the total food and beverage trade waste discharge are detailed below (calculated for specific contaminant loadings):

- Total Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) EP: 441,948

- Total Suspended Solids (SS) EP: 91,229
- Total trade waste volume EP: 69,971
- Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) EP: 130,029
- Total Phosphorus (TP) EP: 181,197
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) EP equivalent: 123,732



What is the link between EPA and SA Health requirements, the Adelaide Coastal Water Quality Improvement Plan, and trade waste customers?

Under the Environmental Protection Act, SA Water is required to take “all reasonable and practicable measures to minimise any resulting environmental harm” from its wastewater treatment activity. SA Health also requires SA Water meet various conditions to ensure recycled water is safe for use. To meet these requirements SA Water treats wastewater to meet quality standards appropriate to the technology available, the assimilation capacity of the receiving environment and the end use requirements for recycled water. Failure to meet these standards could lead to adverse impacts on the environment and recycled water users.

The Adelaide Coastal Water Quality Improvement Plan (ACWQIP) is seeking to significantly reduce the amount of nitrogen and suspended solids discharged from Adelaide’s metropolitan wastewater treatment plants in the future. This means that SA Water will be required to increase the amount of nitrogen removed, increase the amount of reuse or a combination of the two.

Each particular wastewater treatment plant has limits on the amounts of pollutants, e.g., organic materials (as measured by BOD), suspended solids and nitrogen that it can process whilst still attaining the required effluent quality. As trade waste discharges represent significant loads on SA Water's wastewater treatment plants, minimisation of trade waste discharges is critical to ensure that treatment capacity is not exceeded and effluent quality requirements are met.

Apart from the aforementioned pollutants, there are numerous other pollutants such as heavy metals and hydrocarbons that can upset the processes employed to treat wastewater and thereby also lead to the inability to achieve required treated wastewater quality standards. This is another reason SA Water needs to actively manage trade waste inputs.

Why did the thresholds change for trade waste customers qualifying for VLB charges?

In 2002/03 VLB charges were implemented for trade waste customers who exceeded respective waste discharge loading thresholds. This aimed to recover a portion of the cost for treatment of waste from the highest polluters discharging trade waste into SA Water wastewater networks. These annual thresholds remained at 20 tonne Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), 20 ML volume, 20 tonne Suspended Solids (SS) until 2011/12, where thresholds to qualify for these charges were decreased to 10 tonne BOD, 10 ML volume, 10 tonne SS and 20 tonne Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) (2012).

This change primarily sought to increase the recovery of costs associated with treatment from those discharging the waste.

It is important to note that SA Water is one of the last water retailers in Australia to have such large thresholds (up to 10 tonne per annum) where discharge fees are not recovered. Many retailers apply loading based charges with no thresholds.

Can you explain what appears on my VLB invoice?

The trade waste tax invoice comprises the following information:

First Page (Fig.1):

1. SA Water's address and contact details (top right corner)
2. The business name, correspondence address, contact name & Ellipse (SA Water system) customer number
3. Trade waste charges for the quarter and financial year
4. The invoice number, invoice date, pay by date & total due (\$)
5. Property address and trade waste discharge authorisation number (our reference)



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Adelaide SA 5001

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www.sawater.com.au

Enquiries: tradewastebranch@sawater.com.au

Phone: +61 8 1300 650 950

COMPANY NAME

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS <-- 2

SUBURB SA CODE

Attn: NAME

<-- 2

Customer No: XXXXX

Trade Waste

Tax Invoice

Trade Waste Charges Quarter 2 2014-15 <-- 3

Invoice Number: T00XXXXXX

Invoice Date: 29/01/2015

Pay by: 19/02/2015

Total Due: \$5,095.97

4 -->

Property Details

ADDRESS

<-- 5

Our Reference: XXXXXX

<--- TRADE WASTE AUTHORISATION NUMBER

Date paid / /

Amount paid \$



Billier Code: XXXX

Ref: YYYYYYYYYY

Payment slip

Invoice Number: T00XXXXXX

Invoice Date: 29/01/2015

Pay by: 19/02/2015

Total Due: \$5,095.97

Telephone and Internet Banking - BPAY ©

Contact your bank or financial institution to make this payment from your cheque, debit, credit card or savings account.

More information: www.bpay.com.au



(Fig. 2) – Invoice details

The trade waste charges are itemised on the last page/s of invoice. These charges are split per service and contaminant component loading (i.e. sampling and monitoring fees, trade waste audit fee, trade waste volume and contaminant loadings charges, any additional sampling and monitoring fees, administration fee, stormwater annual fee if applicable; the discount against sewer rates is also shown)

6. Monitoring fee represents the labour and travel time associated to a sampling event.
7. Sampling Fee reflects the laboratory analysis charges.
8. Total Phosphorus – charge for total phosphorus load discharged to sewer
9. Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) - charge for TKN load discharged to sewer. TKN is the combination of organically bound nitrogen and ammonia in wastewater.
10. TDS > 650 mg/L – charge for Total Dissolved Solids of load above 650 mg/L (concentration)
11. Suspended Solids < 500 mg/L - charge for Suspended Solids load up to 500 mg/L (concentration)
12. Trade Waste Administration Fee – associated to administrative work involving the calculation of trade waste charges and generating the trade waste bill.
13. BOD > 1000 mg/L – charge for Biochemical Oxygen Demand load above 1000 mg/L (concentration)
14. BOD < 1000 mg/L - charge for Biochemical Oxygen Demand load up to 1000 mg/L (concentration)
15. The volume refers to the total volume of trade waste discharged to sewer
16. Discount against rates – this is equivalent to one third of the sewer rate or half of volume and load based charges, whichever is the lower amount.
17. Trade Waste Audit - complex fee. All VLBC sites are categorised as complex. The trade waste audit charge reflects the time needed to travel to, conduct and complete the compliance audit.
18. Additional sampling fee – GST Inclusive. It refers to analysis charges only for additional non-routine samples taken.
19. The total \$ due is noted at the end of invoice.
20. The payment methods are detailed at the end of invoice.

Fig. 2 – Example last page of invoice

Invoice Details

Trade Waste	Amount	GST	Total
Monitoring Fee <-- 6	\$450.00	\$45.00	\$495.00
Sampling Fee <-- 7	\$390.00	\$39.00	\$429.00
Trade Waste -Total Phosphorus <-- 8	\$112.19	\$0.00	\$112.19
Trade Waste -Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen <-- 9	\$12.21	\$0.00	\$12.21
Trade Waste -TDS> 850mg/L <-- 10	\$50.81	\$0.00	\$50.81
Trade Waste -Suspended Solids < 500mg/L <-- 11	\$171.35	\$0.00	\$171.35
Trade Waste Administration Fee <-- 12	\$63.18	\$6.32	\$69.50
Trade Waste -BOD >1000mg/L <-- 13	\$2,504.14	\$0.00	\$2,504.14
Trade Waste -BOD < 1000mg/L <-- 14	\$560.13	\$0.00	\$560.13
Trade Waste -Volume <-- 15	\$341.33	\$0.00	\$341.33
Discount against rates <-- 16	-\$136.39	\$0.00	-\$136.39
Trade Waste Audit- complex <-- 17	\$245.45	\$24.55	\$270.00
Additional Sampling Fee - GST Inclusive <-- 18	\$197.00	\$19.70	\$216.70
Total:	\$4,961.40	\$134.57	\$5,095.97

Additional Details

Trade Waste Charges

TOTAL DUE **19 -->** **\$5,095.97**

Paying your bill <-- 20



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Telephone and Internet Banking - BPAY - Call your bank or financial institution to make this payment from your cheque, savings, debit, credit card or transaction account.
More information: www.bpay.com.au



Paying Online - www.bpoint.com.au
Visit www.bpoint.com.au to make a payment using Visa or MasterCard.
Bill code 35477



Paying by Phone - 1300 276 468
Call us to make a payment using Visa or MasterCard - 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Bill code 35477



Paying In Person
You can pay in person at SA Water House, 250 Victoria Square / Tamtanyangga, Adelaide.



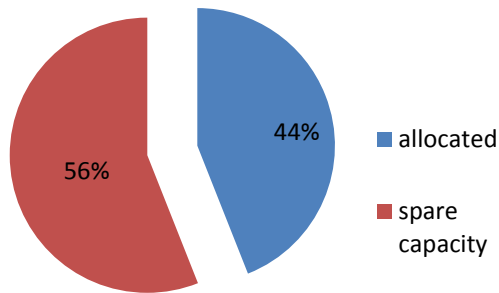
Paying by Mail
Detach the payment slip from your account and post it with your cheque or money order to:
SA Water GPO Box 1751 ADELAIDE SA 5001

For more detailed information on SA Water’s policies and procedures relating to authorising, accepting and managing the discharge of specific wastewater types into our sewerage system, please read the [Restricted Wastewater Acceptance Framework](#) document on our website www.sawater.com.au.

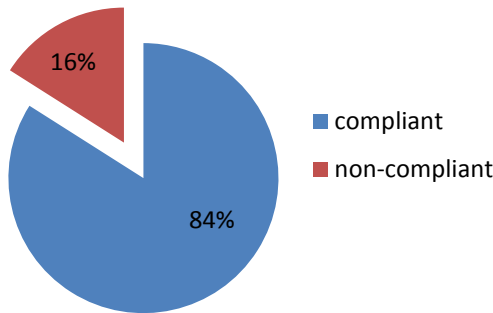


Other key statistics relating to 49 food and beverage VLB sites:

- Currently on an annual average F & B customers are only using 44% of the volume allocated to them in their respective trade waste authorisations.



- Food and Beverage degree of compliance with all quality / quantity limits. Average compliance is **84%** over a year period, with most compliant sector being poultry at 96% and least being Bakeries at 71%.



Food & Beverage compliance

