

DRAFT

POLICY



**Central
Tablelands
Water**

Unconnected Vacant Land Availability Charge Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Title		Unconnected Vacant Land Availability Charge			
Policy Number		CTW-PR052			
Responsible Officer		Executive Management Accountant			
Reviewed by		Executive Management Team			
Date Adopted		17 December 2025			
Adopted by		Council			
Review Due Date		December 2029			
Revision Number		1.0			
Versions	Date	Description of Amendments	Author	Review/ Sign Off	Minute No: (if relevant)
1.0	Oct 2025	New policy draft	EMCS	EMT	
1.1	Nov 2025	Updated references, format and refer to Council	EMT	Council	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles and framework applied by Central Tablelands Water (CTW) in determining availability charges for unconnected vacant land. It ensures equitable contribution by all property owners who benefit from service availability, enables financial sustainability, and develops fairness and transparency in application of charges

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all unconnected vacant land within CTW's reticulated service areas where water is available or can be reasonably provided. It excludes land outside the reticulated service areas or exempted by legislation.

POLICY STATEMENT

Unconnected vacant land within CTW's reticulated service areas benefits from the availability of water infrastructure, even where services are not connected. To ensure equitable cost recovery for maintaining and providing capability and capacity, such land is subject to quarterly water availability charges in line with Section 552 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and associated regulations.

These charges contribute to:

- The ongoing operation, maintenance, and renewal of existing infrastructure.
- The equitable distribution of costs across property owners who benefit from service availability.
- The financial sustainability of CTW's water supply service.

Principles

CTW's approach to charging for vacant land is guided by the following principles:

- **Equity:** All property owners who benefit from service availability contribute to system costs.
- **Cost Reflectivity:** Charges reflect the contribution to maintaining service capacity and network readiness.
- **Transparency:** The basis for charging is clear, publicly accessible, and applied consistently.
- **Encouragement of Development:** The framework supports timely connection and efficient land use.
- **Compliance:** The policy operates within the legislative and pricing framework governing local water utilities.

Charging Framework

Service type	Charge type	Applicability	Charging basis
Water supply	Water availability charge	Unconnected vacant land within 225 metres of a CTW reticulated service area water main, AND the land can be reasonably serviced by CTW if a connection was requested by the customer.	50% of the standard 20mm water availability charge as per CTW's annual Fees and Charges schedule, billed quarterly.

Exemptions

Availability charges do not apply to:

- Land outside CTW's reticulated service areas.
- Land beyond 225 metres of CTW's reticulation network.
- Land that cannot reasonably be connected due to topography or infrastructure constraints e.g. separated by a water body or railway line.
- Public reserves, roads, and non-rateable Crown land.
- Land that is prohibited from development by a constituent council's documentation.
- Land owned and operated by a Constituent council for the benefit of the community and categorised as community land (upon annual application).
- Any other land exempted by legislation.

Definition

Reticulated Services Area: This applies to the CTW pipe network that is within a town or village area, where water is supplied from a Reservoir.

Unconnected Vacant Land: A property or parcel of land that is within 225m of the CTW reticulated service area that is not currently being charged the availability charge.

Zones: For the purposes of this policy, unconnected vacant land within the following zones as defined in Land Zoning Maps shown in *Constituent Council Local Environmental Plans* will be assessed against this policy:

- B2: Local Centre
- B5: Business Development
- B6: Enterprise Corridor
- IN1: General Industrial
- IN2: Light industrial
- R1: General Residential
- R5: Large Lot Residential
- RE1: Public Recreation
- RU5: Village
- SP2: Infrastructure

Governance and Implementation

CTW will apply and review unconnected vacant land availability charges annually as part of its Revenue Policy and Fees & Charges schedule.

Land subject to the availability charge will be reviewed and updated when modifications to CTW's reticulation network are completed. CTW will monitor all modifications to ensure ongoing compliance with this policy.

The Executive Management Accountant is responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every term of Council (4 years), or more frequently if needed, with reference to any relevant legislation, best practice guides, or other related factors.

REFERENCES

- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) – Sections 501–552
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
- Water Management Act 2000 No 92
- Regulatory and Assurance Framework for Local Water Utilities 2022
- CTW Revenue Policy
- CTW Annual Fees and Charges

VARIATION

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy.

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