

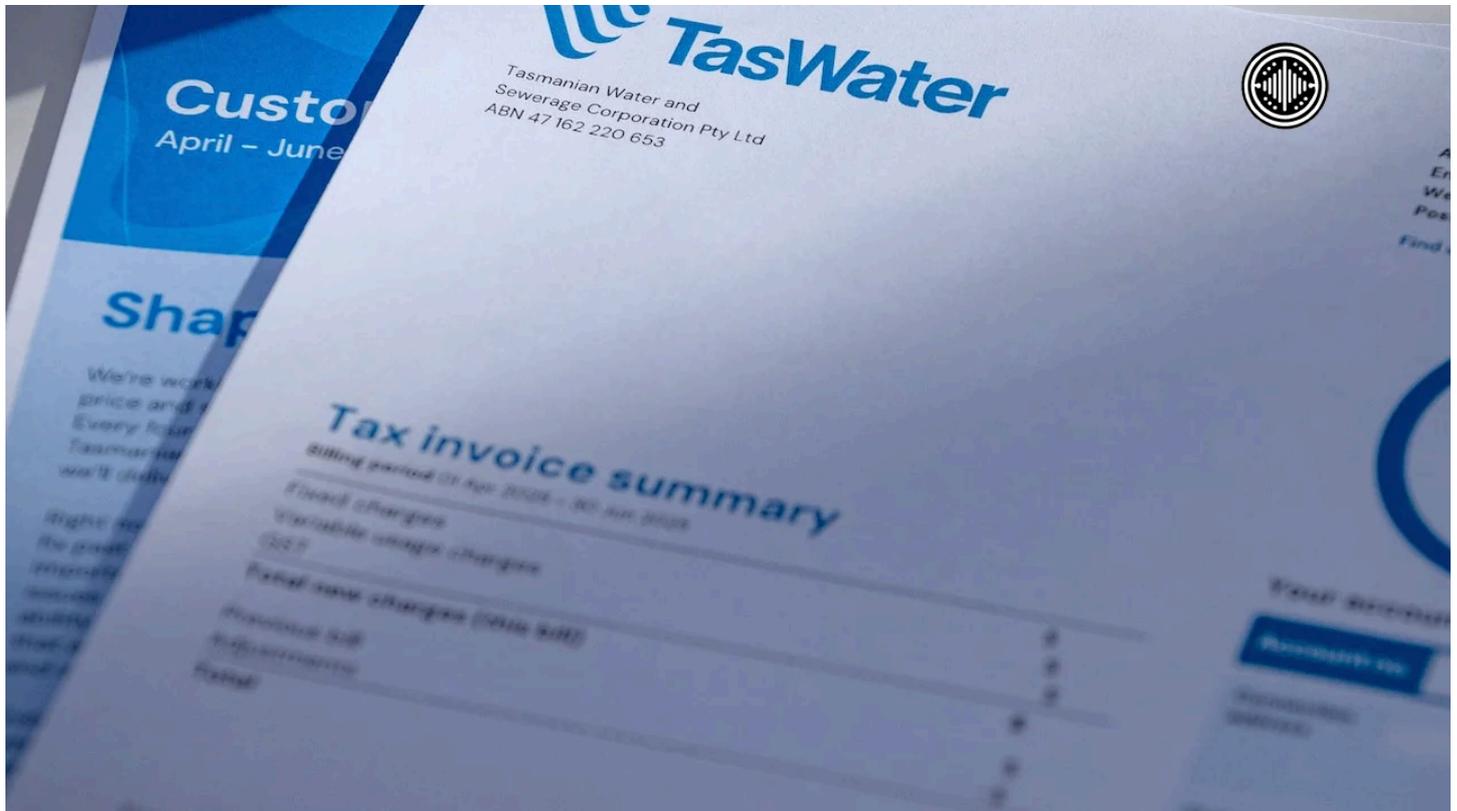
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## TasWater Bill Hike to Fund Critical Infrastructure Upgrades

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TasWater, Tasmania’s state-owned water and sewerage utility, has proposed a price increase of approximately 35 to 40 percent over four years, beginning in July 2026. The plan, submitted to the Tasmanian Economic Regulator (TER), outlines annual increases of 8.8 percent, potentially raising the average household bill from around AUD 1,410 to AUD 1,929 by 2030. The proposed hike aims to generate AUD 1.7 billion to fund critical infrastructure upgrades across the state’s aging water and sewerage systems.

A key focus of the plan is improving environmental compliance. Currently, only nine percent of Tasmania’s sewage treatment plants meet all Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) licence conditions. The proposal includes projects such as major upgrades to Ridgeway Dam in Hobart and Pet Dam in Burnie, along with a AUD 100

million initiative to reduce water leakage, which accounts for 24.5 percent of treated water loss annually. Over AUD 600 million is also earmarked for the Selfs Point and Launceston Sewer Transformation programs.

To encourage conservation, TasWater is shifting its pricing structure. Fixed charges will initially decrease by about AUD 176 per household in the first year, while usage-based variable charges are set to rise significantly, from AUD 1.26 to AUD 2.33 per kilolitre by 2030. TasWater also plans to expand its hardship support program, TasWater Assist, with AUD 2.4 million in funding to provide tailored payment plans for customers facing financial difficulties.

The proposal has drawn mixed reactions. Local government leaders and infrastructure advocates argue the investment is essential to support future housing and economic development. However, community organisations such as the Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS) and the Tenants Union of Tasmania have raised concerns about affordability, particularly for low-income households and renters, many of whom are not eligible for concessions. The TER is expected to release its draft decision in early 2026, with a final ruling anticipated by May 2026.