

# NEW WATER METER APPROACH FROM JULY 2021



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The City of Cape Town has revised its approach to domestic metering, and a new system has been phased in since July 2021. This went through public participation and was approved by Council as part of the 2021/22 budget.

Over time, when Water Management Device (WMD) meters capable of restricting daily volumes of water reach the end of their expected lifespan, they will be replaced by conventional meters. The technology used in conventional water meters can be seamlessly incorporated into the City's long-term metering strategy to provide a wide range of customer benefits.

Remaining stock of WMDs in the City's stores will be installed where meter replacements are required, but set to 'open flow', during the transition period.

Over the coming months, existing WMDs already in use will be set to unrestricted 'open flow'. All registered indigent households will receive an allocation of up to 15 000 litres (15 kℓ) of water per month at no charge. The related sanitation cost (calculated at 70% of this water cost) is also provided at no charge. This is the largest allocation provided at no cost to indigent households in the country.

## CUSTOMERS WHO QUALIFY FOR INDIGENT BENEFITS

Existing WMD meters already in use are being set to 'open flow' over time since 1 July 2021. It will not happen immediately for all meters, but will be done in phases. Customers will be notified when the settings of their meters are changed.

These customers will now be required to keep their monthly water use within a limit of 15 000 litres per month (which is an average of 500 litres per day) as approved by Council.

If water usage on the residential property is higher than 15 000 litres a month (daily average of 500 litres) for two consecutive months, a warning letter will be sent asking for the usage to be lowered to required levels by the following month.

If usage is higher than 15 000 litres a month (daily average of 500 litres) for a third consecutive month, despite the issued warning, a flow restricting disc will be inserted in the meter to limit water supply to a trickle flow.

These discs are designed to allow 6 000 litres (6 kℓ) per month to the property, which is aligned with the free basic allocation provided for in South Africa's national water standards. **This disc will remain in place for the following 12 consecutive months.** After the 12-month period has passed, the disc will be removed and the same process for the property will start again.

Customers who are currently exceeding the usage limit will be informed and are being to ensure further awareness of the new procedures. This will also give them time to reduce their usage during the first two billing cycles within the new financial year before warning letters are sent.

As leaks on private plumbing will be counted by the meter as part of usage, property owners must act quickly to fix leaks. Households should check their monthly bills and usage each month for any significant spikes or high monthly usage as this could indicate a potential underground leak (the City will still assist with once-off fixing of leaks on the indigent property where this has not been provided previously). See the 'find and fix leaks' guide at [www.capetown.gov.za/savewater](http://www.capetown.gov.za/savewater).

## NON-INDIGENT CUSTOMERS

Some non-indigent customers have existing WMD meters which may still have restricted flow. Since July 2021, these WMD meters have been systematically reset to 'open flow'. Customers will be notified when the City intends to make the changes as homeowners/tenants will be responsible to pay the standard tariffs for all water used on their property.

It is important to remember that non-indigent customers whose accounts are in arrears for non-payment of municipal-related services will have to settle their account in full or enter into an agreed payment arrangement in response to the debt management warning letters. Failure to do so will result in their water supply being restricted or reduced to a trickle flow using a flow-restricting disc. This is in line with the current debt management procedure in the City's Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy.

## MANAGE YOUR WATER USE WISELY

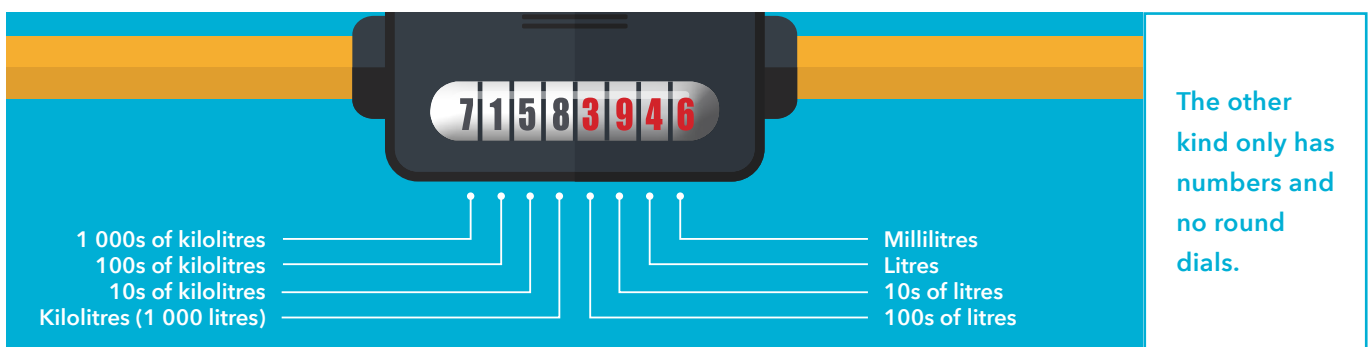
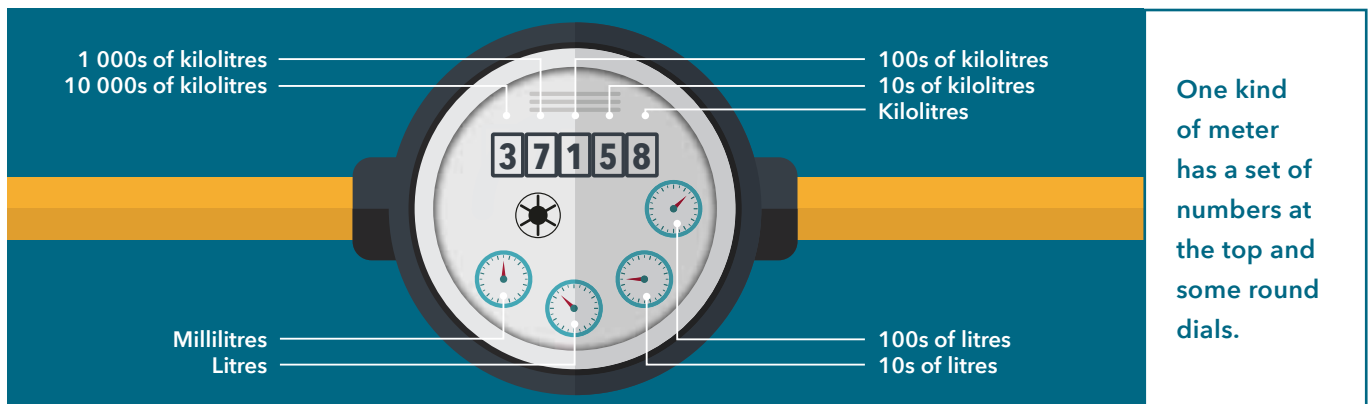
Residents are encouraged to manage their water usage as part of our collective effort to maintain a sustainable level of water use.

Residential property owners with tenants (including landlords with backyard tenants) should pay close attention to total/ overall water usage on their property, and ensure it remains below the approved limit. This is the responsibility of the property owner.

For useful guides on how to save water, find and fix leaks, and use grey water safely, see: [www.capetown.gov.za/savewater](http://www.capetown.gov.za/savewater).

# HOW TO READ YOUR WATER METER

Reading a water meter is not difficult. Open your water meter box - your meter is likely to look like one of two kinds used in Cape Town. Both record the same thing, but display the information slightly differently.



## MONITOR YOUR WATER USE TO MANAGE IT BETTER

You can monitor your meter readings to check how much you're using or to confirm a leak. On the face with round dials, the small volumes are indicated by the dials for litres or millilitres (or tenths of litres). On the meter with numbers only, look to the far right of the set of numbers, where the litres (second from the right) and millilitres (furthest to the right) are. Check how much the numbers go up by on a regular basis, e.g. weekly or monthly. To check if you have a leak, first stop all water use in the house and note how much the meter reading is. Then wait about 15 minutes, and check the meter reading again. If the numbers have gone up, it means you have a leak.

## REPORT BROKEN OR FAULTY METERS

**Online:** [www.capetown.gov.za/servicerequests](http://www.capetown.gov.za/servicerequests)

**Email:** [water@capetown.gov.za](mailto:water@capetown.gov.za)

**SMS:** 31373, giving the location and contact phone number in a maximum of 160 characters

**Call:** 0860 103 089

**Visit a walk-in centre:** [www.capetown.gov.za/facilities](http://www.capetown.gov.za/facilities)

If the call centre is experiencing high call volumes, please try one of the other reporting channels.



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