

# A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR RATES NOTICE 2025/2026

## How General Rates are Calculated

How much you pay depends on the land value and the land usage (rating category).

### Your land value

Land values are determined by the NSW Valuer-General. This valuation usually occurs every three years. The latest revaluation was completed 1 July 2024 and has been used in the calculation for your 2025/2026 rates.

For more information regarding land valuation go to [www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au](http://www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au) or phone 1800 110 038.

### Rating category

In Upper Hunter Shire there are four land categories: Residential, Business, Farmland and Mining. The category of your land is identified in the first entry of your rates notice. If you do not agree with your category, you can apply to have it reviewed.

### Calculating your general rate

The 2025/2026 general rate is calculated under a base system which applies a fixed base amount plus a rate in the dollar calculated on the land value of the property.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal NSW (IPART) determines the maximum percentage amount by which a council may increase its general rating income for the year. Councils have discretion to determine how to allocate the rate peg increase between the different ratepayer categories. Council has applied the IPART approved permanent cumulative Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 10.0% for the next three years commencing the 2025/2026 year.

## Additional Annual Charges

Your annual rates notice will itemise additional charges that are relevant to services provided to your property. These fees will cover costs of providing infrastructure, upkeep and treatment for each service.

### Hunter Catchment Contribution

Council collects contributions on behalf of the Local Lands Services through its rates. Funds collected are forwarded to the Authority to carry out catchment projects. The Local Land Services contribution for 2025/2026 is \$0.00657 of a cent in the dollar of the land value.

The revenue generated from this contribution enables the Catchment Authority to meet its legislative obligations under the Water Management Act 2000.

### Water

The annual water access charge is based on the size of each water meter installed on the property. Water meter sizes are typically 20mm for residential.

A lower flat fee is charged to unconnected services on land within 225 metres of a water main which is capable of being connected.

### Sewerage

An annual sewerage fee is charged to cover the costs of maintaining and improving sewerage systems.

A lower flat fee is charged to unconnected services on land within 75 metres of a sewer main which is capable of being connected.

### Waste Management

Annual waste charges pay for your waste facilities, kerbside bin collections and annual bulky waste collection, if available in your area. For 2025/2026 a three tier waste charge applies. These charges are shown on the annual rates assessment as one amount, determined by the level of service provided.

#### Example:

No access to kerbside waste collection..... TIER 1 = \$60  
No kerbside collection but access to services... TIER 1 + TIER 2 = \$115  
Full kerbside collection service..... TIER 1 + TIER 2 + TIER 3 = \$773

#### TIER 1: Waste Management Charge: \$60

Applied to all rateable and non-rateable properties as authorised by sections 496 and 501 of the Local Government Act 1993. This charge contributes towards waste management facility operations and site improvements, environmental monitoring, provision of ancillary waste services including electronic waste, household chemicals, mattress and tyre recycling and contribution towards the development, closure and rehabilitation of future landfill sites.

#### TIER 2: Waste Management Access Charge: \$55

Applies to all developed residential, commercial and business properties, whether occupied or unoccupied, including land categorised as 'residential' and 'farmland' that are provided access to kerbside waste and recycling collection services. This charge contributes to the cost of providing access to the kerbside waste and recycling service throughout the Shire.

#### TIER 3: Waste Management Service Charge: \$658

As required by section 496 of the Local Government Act 1993, a domestic waste management service charge applies to all developed residential properties, whether occupied or unoccupied, including land categorised as 'residential' and 'farmland' that are within the collection area or receiving the service. This charge will entitle the ratepayer to the fortnightly collection of residual waste using a 240 litre wheelie bin (red bin), the fortnightly collection of material for recycling using a 240 litre wheelie bin (yellow bin), the weekly collection of Food Organics and Garden Organic (FOGO) waste using a 240 litre wheelie bin (green bin) and an annual bulky/garden waste clean-up service. Residential properties cannot opt out of this service.

A non-domestic waste management service charge will apply to each developed commercial and business property, whether occupied or unoccupied, as authorised by section 501 of the Local Government Act 1993. This charge will entitle the ratepayer to the fortnightly kerbside collection of residual waste using a 240 litre wheelie bin (red bin) and the fortnightly collection of materials for recycling using a 240 litre wheelie bin (yellow bin) and the weekly collection of Food Organics and Garden Organic (FOGO) waste using a 240 litre wheelie bin (green bin). Non-domestic properties may opt out of this service.

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The Waste Management Service Charge covers the cost of the pick-up and disposal of materials collected from kerbside waste, recycling and annual bulky clean-up.

## Additional Waste Services

For those ratepayers receiving an additional service a separate charge for this service will show on the annual rates notice.  
Additional Waste \$203.00, Additional Recycling \$203.00, Additional FOGO \$203.00

## Stormwater

In accordance with the Local Government Amendment (Stormwater) Act 2005. These funds are used for the development of appropriate stormwater management plans and projects over and above the average level previously funded from Council's general funds.

## On-site Sewage Management

This annual fee is for the approval to operate an On-site Sewage Management System. This covers the cost of one inspection, monitoring and maintaining records. Any further required inspections will be charged.

## Payment Due Dates 2025/2026

First Instalment..... 31 August 2025  
Second Instalment .....30 November 2025  
Third Instalment .....28 February 2026  
Fourth Instalment .....31 May 2026

## How To Pay Your Rates

Council provides many convenient ways for you to pay your rates. You may request a direct debit and never miss a payment again. You can use Bpay for phone and internet banking - **ensure you use the correct reference number**, make a payment in person through Australia Post, or at any Upper Hunter Shire Council administration office, or post a cheque payable to Upper Hunter Shire Council, PO Box 208, Scone NSW 2337. See the back of your rates notice for more information.

## Pensioner rebates

Pensioner rate rebates are available to pensioners on a quarterly basis. Bring your rates notice and current Pensioner Concession Card to any Council administration office during business hours for assistance with completing an application form.

### Pensioner rate rebate maximum amounts:

General rate and domestic waste management charge	50% discount up to \$250pa
Sewer annual access charge	50% discount up to \$87.50pa
Water annual access charge	50% discount up to \$87.50pa

## Having trouble paying?

If circumstances prevent you from paying your rates by the due date Council may enter into a payment agreement with you to allow payments by regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly amounts.

Overdue rates balances will incur daily interest charges at 10.5% p.a.

Council may reduce or waive interest charges if it is of the opinion that a person is unable to pay accrued interest for reasons beyond their control, or payment of accrued interest would cause hardship. Contact Council's rates department on 6540 1100 or visit a Council administration office to discuss your options.

## Change of Address

To change the mailing address for your Rates or Water notices complete the change of address section on the back of the rates notice and return it to a Council administration office. A change of address form is also available on Council's website.

## Have your notices emailed to you

Choosing to have your water and rates notices emailed is a convenient solution. It saves time, paper, postage costs, and helps make your bills easier to find and manage.

Complete a change of mailing address form, available on Council's website or on the back of your notice.

All change of address notices must be provided in writing.

## Financial Counsellors and Other Legal Advice

If you require financial assistance, help is available. Please refer to the following service providers

**Hunter Valley Project Financial Counselling Services** Provides a free financial counselling service.  
Phone: 4933 8999

### Financial Rights Legal Centre

Debt management services, financial counsellors and other legal advice.  
www.financialrights.org.au or 1800 007 007

### Legal Aid NSW

Find a Legal Aid NSW advice service.  
www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au or 1300 888 529

### Administration offices:

**Scone:** 135 Liverpool Street, Scone  
**Merriwa:** 34-40 Vennacher Street, Merriwa  
**Murrurundi:** 47 Mayne Street, Murrurundi