Water Management Devices – Water Saving and Revenue Protection through installation of Water Management devices.

Water and Sanitation                     May 2016
Introduction

Cape Town,

- a **water scarce** area where changing weather patterns and economic development is increasing the demand upon available water resources to provide for daily needs.
Caring City

Reaching out to Indigent homeowners
Basic service delivery

The City of Cape Town is reaching out to:

• Indigent households with high water arrears

• opportunity to improve household situation dramatically.

• Properties of R300 000 or less qualify automatically, or

• Combined household income of R3500 or less of both the owner and spouse or partner from all sources

• Must be the registered owner of only one property used for residential purposes
Offer and benefits

Voluntary offer
What is this offer and benefits to households?

• Fix all household water leaks **free of charge (once off)**

• Install a water management device (WMD) **free of charge**

• Install a prepaid electricity dispenser where applicable by the Electricity Department **free of charge**

• Household have daily access to **350 litres** of water

• Opportunity to manage future water consumption

• Writing off of all arrears- **(once off)**

• Receive Indigent Grant
Water Management Devices
What is a water management device (WMD)?

- **NOT** a pre-paid meter
- **Electronic device** installed with the water meter
- **Programmable** to provide daily allocation of water
- Programmed to open daily at 04h00 and provide a daily allocation
- Any unused allocation is carried over and accumulates
- WMD will shut-off when daily allocation has been exhausted
Identifying Suitable Experienced contractors
Identifying suitable contractors

• Contractors are appointed through a competitive tender process.
• Experience in previous plumbing maintenance and projects is of fundamentals in identifying contractors for these projects.
Training of Contractors and Facilitators
Training of Contractors and Field Staff

Comprehensive training process followed which includes:

- Pre-assessment questionnaires
- Overview of Water and Sanitation – DVD
- Water Management Device - detailed presentation
- Role and conduct of contractors and facilitators
- Post assessments, monitoring and evaluation
Overcoming language barriers

Understanding the project and benefits key to successful rollout

- Training primarily in English with translators at hand for the common languages in Cape Town
- Facilitators recruited from specific area and language use considered when appointed
- Awareness and Education provided in preferred choice of language of owner
- Brochures provided in all three languages
Awareness and Education Process with installation of WMD’s

Contract with homeowner
TO BE SIGNED AFTER THE INSTALLATION

I CONFIRM THAT:
- the water leaks on my property have been repaired free of charge as a once-off opportunity to assist me to reduce my water consumption and my monthly bill;
- the WMD has been installed on my property in order to help me to manage my water consumption and ensure that I do not pass a high bill or accumulate arrears;
- I understand how the WMD works, and that I will be able to use 350 litres per day and carry over whatever I do not use from day to day for up to one calendar month;
- I may use a total of 10.5 kilolitres of water per month;
- I will always keep a standby supply of water;
- I understand how to keep my water consumption within my monthly allocation;
- I understand how to keep my water consumption within my monthly allocation;
- I understand that plumbing repairs have been carried out to my satisfaction;
- I have received a full explanation of the information in the pamphlet and this agreement that I have signed.

- If I run out of water:
  - I fully understand what to do;
  - I understand that I will be without water supply for the rest of that day;
  - I understand that I will only be able to find out the reason the next day;
  - I will wait until the next day to see if the water supply is restored, and only then can I call the 24-hour call centre;
  - I will not tamper with the WMD, or the water meter and understand that I can be held accountable for any damages;
  - I understand how to keep my water consumption within my monthly allocation;
  - I will apply for an additional monthly quota if the free monthly quota is insufficient and know that I will have to pay for any such additional water consumption and sewerage disposal and I understand that I will lose this quota if I fail to pay for the additional quota for two months.

Signature of resident: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

DATE INSTALLED: ___________________________ SETTING: ___________________________

COMPANY: ___________________________ PLUMBER: ___________________________

METER NO: ___________________________ DEVICE NO: ___________________________

Contact details

24-hour call centre: 0860 103 089
SMS: 31373 (up to 160 characters)
E-mail: WaterTOC@capetown.gov.za
Installation of a water management device (WMD) on your property

The City is bound by the National Water Act, and recognises that the ultimate aim of water resource management is the sustainable use of water to the benefit of all residents. According to the Integrated Water Leaks Programme, your property possibly has water leaks. We will fix your water leaks and install a water management device (WMD) on your water connection free of charge, if you accept it voluntarily.

With rights come responsibilities. Section 4(1) of Chapter 1 of the National Water Amendment Act, Act 45 of 1999, states that a person may use water in or from a water resource for purposes such as reasonable domestic chores, domestic gardening, providing water for animals, fire fighting and recreation. This initiative will help you, the resident, manage your own water consumption and ensure that your water and sewerage bill is affordable. It will also help prevent you from building up water and sewerage arrears.

A responsible water user only uses the water he/she needs, pays for water and sewerage used, while also reducing water consumption where possible and reporting water leaks, water wastage and unauthorised use of water in line with the City’s Water By-laws.

How will a WMD help you?

The City recognises that a large percentage of households struggle to pay for services such as water and sanitation, in line with its indigent policy. The City therefore offers households an opportunity to improve their situation by managing their water consumption within acceptable levels. The City has introduced a relief programme for indigent consumers whereby the consumers:

- consent to have a WMD installed free of charge;
- have all their household water leaks fixed free of charge; and
- have their water and sewerage arrears caused by the water leaks written off as bad debt.

What is a WMD?

A WMD is:

- a programmable electronic device;
- installed as part of your water connection in a water meter box; and
- programmed to provide you daily access to a predetermined volume of water based on affordability.

For indigent households, the current daily allocation is 350 litres of water. This is equal to 35 ten-litre buckets of water every day.

Should you need more water based on the size of your household or other people living on the property, you can apply at your nearest municipal office for a higher allocation in line with what you can afford.

Please remember, you need to be the registered property owner and provide your ID, copy of your bill and proof of income.

How does the WMD work?

The WMD is installed and programmed to start releasing residents’ daily allocation of 350 litres of water from 06:00 in the morning.

Once this allocation is used up at any time during the day, the WMD will stop releasing water and will reset the next morning to provide another allocation of 350 litres per day.

Any amount of the allocation that is not used during any day will be carried over to the next day and accumulate. This means that a resident can save up for a wash day, family gathering, etc.

However, unused amounts at the end of the month are not carried over and residents are only billed for what they have actually used.

How will this help you?

The WMD is installed to help you. It will allow you to:

- receive your allocation on a daily basis at the pressure and flow rate to which you have become accustomed;
- receive your free basic service (4 sucking litres of water per month, or 200 litres per day) as legislated by National Government;
- receive an additional amount of 150 litres per day, which will mostly be covered by the indigent grant;
- reduce your water and sewerage bill to within your means;
- know when there is a water leak, thereby cutting water wastage and preventing a high water and sewerage bill at the end of the month;
- prevent water and sewerage arrears from building up; and
- determine if you are using too much water and look for ways of reducing your water consumption to levels you can afford.

Indigent grant

If you qualify to receive the indigent grant:

- you need to apply first, using the application form available from your local revenue office; and
- it will be credited to your account every month – you will not receive any cash.

Lack of water every day

If you have a WMD but never seem to have enough water and you have checked that there are no water leaks on the property, there could be one of several problems:

- You are exceeding the water quota as set on the WMD; or
- The WMD is malfunctioning or has been tampered with.

Either way, your concerns can be addressed by calling our 24-hour call centre on 0860 103 089. Remember to always ask for the operator’s name and obtain a reference number.

Permission by resident for the installation of a water management device and the repair of water leaks on his/her property

I, _______, the resident of the property at

_________________________

Address

_________________________

Stand/ erf number

_________________________

Account number

_________________________

- confirm that this project was explained to me in my mother tongue

Yes [ ] No [ ]

- I am satisfied with the way this was explained to me.

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Any other comments

_________________________

I AGREE:

- to Council repointing the water leaks on my property;
- to Council installing a WMD on my property;
- to pay for future plumbing repairs on my property;
- to pay for any amount above the free monthly quota; and
- not to tamper with the WMD under any circumstances.

_________________________

Signature of resident

_________________________

Date
Step 1: Awareness and education with homeowner

Step 1: Awareness and Education

- Trained facilitator visits household, introduce project at the hand of a flipchart and brochure
- Project is explained in detail in preferred language of the household.
- If household accepts the offer, consent is given by signing part 1( *) of the agreement
- Homeowner is reminded of the leaks repairs and installation which will follow and importance of having someone responsible at home to sign
Step 2: Repairs and installation of device

Step 2: Repairs and Installation

- Contractor visits the household and repairs all water leaks free of charge as a once-off
- Water management device is installed free of charge and left on normal flow
- Homeowner is reminded of the undertaking and responsibility as per the agreement
- Details of the meter, installer, etc (  *  ) is entered on the homeowners copy of the agreement

Owner's copy:

Date Installed: 
Setting: 
Company: 
Plumber: 
Meter No: 
Device No: 

Contact details:

24-hour call centre: 0860 103 089
SMS: 31373 (up to 160 characters)
E-mail: WaterTOC@capetown.gov.za
Step 3: Setting device

Step 3: Setting and Sign-off

- Contractor visit household. If homeowner is satisfied with repairs, advice, installation and explanation, homeowner signs final agreement ( * )
- Device is set on applicable daily allocation
- Agreement is returned to Operations for capturing on the system.
- Arrears will only be written off once all the internal processes have been completed and captured correctly on the billing system

* Signature of resident  Date
Responsibilities of homeowners
What is expected from homeowners?

**Consent** to:
- have all their water leaks repaired free of charge
- Install a WMD free of charge

**Understanding** of:
- how to keep consumption within acceptable levels
- how to adapt lifestyle/behavioral patterns

**Responsibility** to:
- Continue to pay for future water consumption
- Regularly check and repair water leaks
- Always keep a supply of fresh water to hand for emergencies
- Wait until next morning for allocation to reset before calling in
What if households need more water?

- Can apply for a higher allocation at the nearest contact centre - application process in place – subject to affordability

- If given a higher allocation, consumers are liable for payment per the Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy

- Must continue to pay their monthly accounts or be subjected to the debt collection action

- NB! Only Finance can approve an increase in allocation
What if households need more water temporarily?

- Can call the City’s 24hr call centre on 0860 103 089 for further information or complete the required application form at the Contact Centre

- A minimum notice period of **48hrs** is applicable

- Special arrangements can be made to accommodate residents for exceptional circumstances such as burials

- Note that the extra water consumption for that period is payable at the prescribed tariffs

- Households need to be able to afford the additional allocation
What if homeowners do not want the device?

When they refuse the installation of a water management device and a prepaid electricity dispenser, the following will happen:

• Process referred back to Finance

• The debt collection process will continue

• Homeowners may face restriction of their water supply or disconnection of electricity supply

• They will continue to build up arrears which WILL NOT be written off

• Devices WILL NOT be installed

• Water leaks WILL NOT be repaired
Daily allocation

How much is 350 litres of water?
How much water is 350 litres?

- A normal toilet flushes 9 liters in one flush, which is half a water bucket
- An average bath takes about 180 liters of water, which is 9 water buckets
- Each household will receive a 20 liter water bucket free of charge to keep a daily standby supply of water for emergencies
- The daily allocation of 350 liters is equal to 17.5 water buckets of 20 liters each
How can households save water?

Water saving tips and the Water By-Laws
Water saving tips and the Water By-Laws

If the water device shuts off, close all taps immediately so that no water is wasted when the device opens again early in the morning

• Close the tap when brushing your teeth (save up to 20 litres) and when shaving (save up to 45 litres)

• Do not allow children to play with the hosepipe or water sprinkler.

• Sweep pavements and driveways. **Do not use a hosepipe to wash paved areas.** [City of Cape Town Water By-Law]
... more tips

• When washing your car, ensure that the water does not enter the stormwater pipes [City of Cape Town Water By-Law] Rather wash your vehicle on the lawn/sandy area and with a bucket.

• Hosepipes used to wash cars must be fitted with an automatic self-closing device [City of Cape Town Water By-Law]

• Water your garden only before 10am OR after 4pm on any day of the week [City of Cape Town Water By-Law]
... more tips

• When using a bath, fill up with just enough water to wash with - children can share bath water
• Re-cycle your bathwater to water grassed areas or to flush toilets
• Wait until you have a full load of washing before using your washing machine
• Contact a plumber immediately you detect a leak and have it repaired. [City of Cape Town Water By-Law]
What about new housing developments?

- All properties will receive a WMD from the onset
- WMD to be set per agreement with the property owner
- Awareness and education is done with homeowners
- **NB! Only Finance can approve an increase in allocation**
What is the succes of the project
Project achievements

- Total number of devices installed throughout the City of Cape Town since the inception of the project in 2007 - 161 062 devices.
- Total value of write-offs based on the 111 864 indigent households under the R300 000 threshold amounted to R1.25bn.
- Write-offs for the 2293 indigent properties based on income below R3500/month amounted to R45.5m.
- By the end of February 2016 there were 114 157 outstanding indigent properties to be addressed through this project.
- As estimated the City will have indigent properties within acceptable monthly water usage through the leak repair program and water management devices.
- In so dealing with the continuous escalating arrears and leaks at indigent properties.
Thank You