

WATER CHARGES, DENHAM

**447. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister Assisting the Minister for Water Resources:**

Given that the government is spending millions of dollars on a desalination plant to provide water to the metropolitan area, I ask -

- (1) Is the minister aware that the charge for desalinated water in the town of Denham is 45c a kilolitre for the first 35 kilolitres, \$3.30 a kilolitre for the next five kilolitres and \$10.30 a kilolitre after 40 kilolitres have been used?
- (2) Is the minister aware that Denham residents also pay more for saline artesian water than other towns pay for fresh water?
- (3) Is the minister aware that average household water usage is 457 kilolitres?
- (4) Is the minister aware that some families are paying up to \$1 000 every four months for water - as much as city families pay a year?
- (5) What is the minister doing to ensure that Denham families have cost parity with city families for desalinated water, instead of paying three times as much?

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

On behalf of the minister representing the Minister Assisting the Minister for Water Resources, I thank Hon Ken Baston for notice of an excellent question. Because it is a detailed question, there is a detailed answer, which might take up a lot of the time of the house. I seek leave to have the answer incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated -

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- 1) Yes. Denham Desalinated Residential Charges 2004/05 are as follows:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Up to quota                                    | 45.0 c/kL   |
| Over quota by less than 1 kL per 7 kL of quota | 330.7 c/kL  |
| Over quota by more than 1 kL per 7 kL of quota | 1030.5 c/kL |

The quota generally equates to 105 kL per year, which is split into three lots of 35 kL per billing cycle. This quota is based on a household with 4 permanent residents, and larger families may apply for a higher quota (an additional 7 kL per billing cycle per additional permanent resident).
- 2) I am aware that charges for water are based on the uniform tariff policy and are equal across the State up to 350 kL. The difference in Denham is that they have a dual water supply system and some of this water is saline rather than fresh. Charges above 350 kL are related to the cost of supplying water to a particular town. Towns in WA are divided into five classes. Denham pays charges for saline water based on the Class 3 tariff, which is greater than towns in Classes 1 and 2 but less than towns in Classes 4 and 5.
- 3) I am unable to verify this information at such short notice.
- 4) I am unable to verify this information at such short notice, however a bill of that magnitude would imply that a customer is over-using desalinated water, and could dramatically reduce their charges by more prudent use of the saline scheme.
- 5) Denham families are not paying more than Perth families for their normal water requirements.

Desalinated water is made available at a concession rate of 45 c/kL.

The penalty charges for exceeding quota are designed to ensure that the more expensive desalinated water is only used where it is essential.

When desalination and saline consumption charges are taken together, Denham customers generally pay less than Perth customers. In fact a Denham household which does not exceed their quota would pay \$46.60 less for 457 kL of water than a Perth family.

**NOTE:** Information relating to Water Corporation's water supply charges can be found on the Water Corporation's webpage. [www.watercorporation.com.au](http://www.watercorporation.com.au)

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