

Fresh water supply



Users: Residential and commercial water consumers; rural residents connected to the supply

General Benefit: Public health, fire fighting, garden city image

Rationale for assigning benefits

Users of the water supply system receive a direct benefit. The community receives general benefit from the contribution clean water makes to public health. The availability of high pressure water for fire-fighting provides a direct benefit for property owners and a general benefit for the community. A reliable supply of water is also essential for maintaining the Garden City character of Christchurch. Christchurch has the natural advantage of water from subterranean aquifers, which can be used without chemical treatment. The high standard of water provided makes an important contribution to the quality of life in the City.

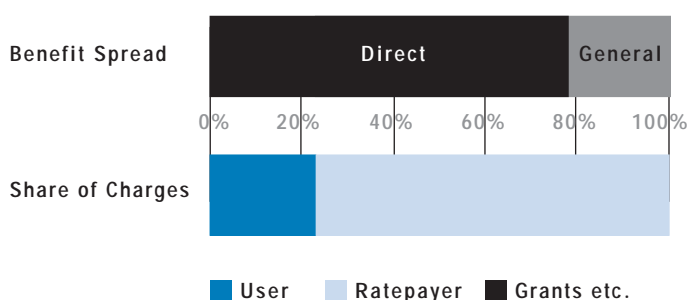
Other considerations

Security and quality of water supply, along with equitable access to fresh water, are important considerations in arriving at Council policy. This policy is that the most fair and effective method of paying for the water supply system is through rates. The Council has no policy to charge directly for water, and does not propose such a policy. Any departure from the present funding policy for water supply would need to consider the economic and social impacts of such changes. Issues surrounding separate meters for multiple tenancies such as flats would also require consideration, making it likely that any possible future introduction of direct charges for water supply would take place over a number of years. It is appropriate however to fund the direct benefit for fire protection from a capital value rate.

Christchurch City Council supplies fresh water to 95,000 residential and 5,800 commercial water users at an annual cost of \$13 million. Customers each receive a direct benefit from the service.

The high quality of the service also provides a general benefit by helping to maintain public health standards. If the service was not provided, not readily available or was of a lower standard, the general benefit would be reduced. Freely available water also contributes to the positive Garden City image that Christchurch has.

Who should pay?



Who benefits?

