



## CHANGES TO THE USE OF SHIRE WATER STANDPIPES FROM 1 JULY 2019

The Shire of Narrogin currently has nine (9) fixed water standpipes located within the Shire for use by the Shire, for fire fighting purposes and the community. The Water Corporation recently contacted rural Western Australian Local Government Authorities (LGA) and advised them that as of 1 July 2019, new water charges will apply to fixed standpipes based on the category of the standpipe and requested that all LGA categorise their standpipes.

The Water Corporation presented options for LGAs to categorise their standpipes into, for the purpose of water usage billing. These options were discussed at Council's 26 September meeting. To view Council minutes please use this link <https://www.narrogin.wa.gov.au/documents/minutes/2018-minutes>

### **Summary**

Due to the significant increase in the commercial service water charges being introduced by the Water Corporation, the Shire of Narrogin has chosen to classify eight (8) of the nine (9) existing standpipes as Local Authority standpipes and padlock them using the Shires standard fire control padlocks as of 1 July 2019. These standpipes can only be used by the Shire, during emergency fire events and declared times of drought. By doing so, the Shire will be able to conduct future road construction and maintenance programs without significant increases in water costs. Water availability for a fire emergency will remain the same, with all Fire Control Officers (FCO's) being issued with a key to unlock the fire control padlocks.

The need to have a standpipe to provide water to the community is important. The standpipe identified to provide this service is to be the one located on Highbury West Road near the intersection of Chomley Road Narrogin. This standpipe will be classed as a commercial standpipe for the purchase of water and will attract a higher charge for water consumption than that of the eight (8) other Local Authority standpipes.

Customers wishing to purchase water from the commercial standpipe will be able to via an electronic standpipe management system using a swipe card. Swipe cards will be available for purchase at the Shire's administration office. These swipe cards can be credited by attending the Shires administration building in person or by phoning the Shire and requesting staff to credit your swipe card (credit card details will need to be given over the phone).

For firefighting access, nominated Shire staff will remotely switch the commercial standpipe system to "Fire Control" whereby the need for a swipe card is not required and water is available to fight fires. There is no charge for water used during a fire event.

The proposed changes in water charges by the Water Corporation on rural fixed water standpipes have necessitated LGA to make changes on the way they manage their standpipe assets so as to:

- Recognise that water is a valuable, but scarce commodity;
- Provide a cost efficient standpipe service to the public and other users with a user pay system that can be effectively monitored;
- Provide water during fire emergencies; and
- Provide water to farmers in times of declared drought.

The changes to standpipes are planned to take effect from 1 July 2019 with the current arrangement for standpipes to remain in place until that time.

Should you need further clarification or wish to comment then please direct your emails to [enquiries@narrogin.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@narrogin.wa.gov.au).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Why are the Standpipes being locked?**  
Due to the new charges being introduced by the Water Corporation on Local Government standpipes starting from 1 July 2019, Local Governments will need to categorise their standpipes in order to minimise costs. Water will be available for purchase from a commercial standpipe located on Highbury West Road near the intersection of Chomley Road Narrogin.
- **Which standpipes can I use for firefighting?**  
All standpipes can be used for firefighting. All standpipes, except the commercial standpipe, will be fitted with a standard Shire fire control padlock. FCO's will be issued a standard fire control pad lock key to unlock the padlock during a fire incident.
- **Which standpipes can I use to purchase water for my property?**  
There will be one (1) standpipe where you can purchase water. The standpipe is located on Highbury West Road near the intersection of Chomley Road. A swipe card will be required to operate this standpipe to purchase water. Swipe cards can be purchased from the Shire's administration building 89 Earl Street Narrogin.
- **Who will have access to swipe cards?**  
Anyone wanting to access and purchase standpipe water. Swipe cards will be registered in a customer's name and details will be recorded. Any water purchased will be recorded to that swipe card and registered owner.
- **In the event of a fire how will a standpipe be unlocked and who will have keys?**  
In the event of a fire, all FCO's will have keys to all eight (8) Local Authority standpipes. All eight (8) Local Authority standpipes will be fitted with standard fire control padlocks. The one (1) commercial standpipe located on Highbury West Road near Chomley Road, will be remotely switched to "Fire Control" by Shire staff whereby swipe cards will not be required to gain access to water.
- **What happens in the event of a declared Water Deficiency Event (Drought)? Can I access water for stock and do I have to pay?**  
During a declared Water Deficiency Event (drought) made by the State Government, farmers are able to access the water at a concessional rate in accordance with the declaration from any standpipe.

- **Can I fill up my firefighter tanks free of charge from standpipes for preventing outbreak of fires on my property?**  
NO....! You should fill up your firefighter tanks with a local water source from your property and not utilise potable water for that purpose. In the event of a fire, you can use any standpipe to fill your unit.
- **When will these changes take effect from?**  
The changes to standpipes will take effect from 1 July 2019. Further advertising will take place leading up to this time so the community is well aware of the changes. The current arrangements for standpipe use will remain in place until that time.
- **What if the Shire was to keep the current system arrangement with the standpipes and not make the Water Corporation changes?**  
Local Government must categorise their standpipes by 1 July 2019 as requested by the Water Corporation. If no change was made, all standpipes that are accessible to the public will be charged at the new commercial rate.
- **How much will water cost from the Commercial Standpipe?**  
The Shire has not set a fee yet, however the rate will not be less than the rate to be charged by the Water Corporation. That is up to \$8.855 per kilolitre.

Further information from the Water Corporation on Fixed Standpipes can be accessed on their website <https://www.watercorporation.com.au>.

[Fixed Standpipes FAQ](#)

[Using a fixed standpipe in regional Western Australia](#)