Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) Expansion Policy

Council Policy

Renmark Paringa Council

Responsible Officer	Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services
Relevant Legislation	Local Government Act 1999 Planning Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 Water Industry Act 2012
Adopted	February 2026
Reviewed	
Next Review	February 2028

Overview

The Renmark Paringa Council acknowledges the critical importance of wastewater infrastructure in safeguarding public health, protecting the environment, and supporting sustainable development. While a Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) currently services the township, outer areas of the district rely on onsite systems that pose environmental and health risks if not properly managed.

To accommodate future growth and address planning constraints, Council is committed to strategically expanding CWMS infrastructure. This follows the upgrade of the Renmark wastewater treatment plant in 2025, which increased capacity to support new development. This policy outlines Council's approach to ensuring equitable, environmentally responsible, and planned expansion of CWMS services in alignment with Councils long-term growth objectives.

Definitions

Definitions for the purpose of this Policy are:

Allotment has the meaning given to that term in Section 3 of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.

Augmentation Charge/s means an amount charged to a Developer by the Council to reflect the cost of expanding infrastructure to support current and future development or a specific connection request.

Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) means any septic tank effluent drainage system or scheme provided or made available by Council for the collection, treatment, storage, reuse and disposal (including by sale of recycled water) of effluent water.

CWMS Connection Fee means a fee charged to the Developer by the Council per Connection Unit for Development, expansion and upgrade associated with the provision of Wastewater Services by a Council CWMS.

Developer means any individual, organisation or business entity that makes application to the Council for an Allotment/Development to be connected to a Council Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS).

Development means the division of an Allotment, a change in the use of the land and/or building work as defined in section 3 of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.

User Pays Principle means those who use or have access to the service pay for the service.

Wastewater Service/s means the collection, treatment, storage, distribution and disposal (including by sale of recycled water) of effluent or sewage respectively, via a Council Community Wastewater Management System.

Policy Objectives

This policy aims to:

- Enable sustainable growth within the Renmark Paringa Council area by expanding CWMS infrastructure in alignment with Council's Growth Strategy.
- Safeguard public and environmental health through improved wastewater collection, treatment, and reuse particularly in sensitive areas such as groundwater protection zones.
- Ensure equity and transparency by establishing a fair and clearly communicated augmentation charge for land developers, reflecting the principle that *growth pays for growth related infrastructure*.
- Protect the broader ratepayer base by implementing an equitable funding model that allocates costs to those who directly benefit from CWMS expansion.
- Promote responsible development by incentivising the creation of new allotments while maintaining environmental stewardship and long-term infrastructure sustainability.

Policy Statement

Infrastructure Fees

When a Developer proposes Development which requires a connection, or otherwise connects a Development to a CWMS, Council applies a developer contribution, called the CWMS Connection Fee. This fee is outlined in Council's Fees and Charges Register.

This charge is reviewed annually in alignment with the whole register.

Area-Specific CWMS Expansion Plans

Under this policy, Council may adopt implementation plans for specific areas requiring CWMS expansion. These plans will outline infrastructure requirements, cost apportionment and area specific applications of this policy.

Each plan will be appended to this policy and reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with Council's Growth Strategy, and environmental & financial sustainability objectives. These appendices will also include any transitional provisions for existing properties within the identified areas.

Augmentation Charge

Overview

Augmentation charges are imposed by Council to ensure that wastewater service provision can adequately accommodate increased demand arising from new development. Increased demand may necessitate system upgrades or expansion to maintain appropriate service levels for all users of the Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS). These charges enable Council to recover the costs associated with expanding wastewater service provision in accordance with recognised augmentation practices, and uphold the User Pays Principle

When demand for a Development cannot be met by current infrastructure, the responsible developer covers the full cost of the required augmentation.

Alternatively, developers may, subject to Council approval, design, fund, and construct the required CWMS augmentation infrastructure themselves. All works must comply with Council's wastewater asset standards, and ownership of the infrastructure must be transferred to Council upon completion.

Where the Charge Applies

The Augmentation Charge applies under the following circumstances:

- Development of existing allotments that are not currently connected to the CWMS.
- Subdivision of existing allotments resulting in additional CWMS-serviced lots.
- Any proposed development that exceeds the capacity of existing CWMS infrastructure.

Importantly, the Council identifies the beneficiaries of the augmentation and applies apportionment accordingly:

- If only one Development benefits, that developer bears the full cost.
- If the upgrade benefits the broader township (existing plus future growth), Council can choose to fund it, via the wastewater business model, and then recover costs through infrastructure fees as outlined within this document.

When the Charge is Applied

Council assesses the necessary works and communicates the Augmentation Charge details to the developer when connection to CWMS is required.

It is always in addition to the standard CWMS connection fee as listed within Council's Fees and Charges Register.

Calculation & Apportionment

The Augmentation Charge on a user pays basis and is calculated based on:

- The estimated number of Connection Units within the serviced area.
- Projected development timelines.
- Total cost of infrastructure delivery, , overheads, and impacts on existing customers
- The capacity of existing infrastructure and the impacts that the development will have on the CWMS network

Where multiple developments benefit, Council will apportion costs among all beneficiaries.

Use of Funds

Funds collected through Augmentation Charges are strictly allocated to the specific augmentation works for which they were levied. They are not used for unrelated network expansions or general wastewater operations.

Council-Initiated Upgrades

If Council initiates an upgrade that exceeds the immediate needs of a Development, for example, to accommodate future growth, it will fund the additional capacity. These costs may later be recovered through Augmentation Charges applied to future developments, consistent with the User Pays Principle.

Review of Augmentation Charge

Given that development timelines may span several years, Augmentation Charges are subject to periodic review. Adjustments may be made based on updated assessments of:

- Growth density
- Development timing
- Infrastructure requirements

This ensures charges remain cost-reflective and consistent with National Water Initiative (NWI) Pricing Principle 9 (which addresses cost-reflective pricing over time)

Operation & Maintenance

Augmentation Charges do not cover ongoing operation, maintenance, or renewal of CWMS, unless the renewal includes a capacity upgrade in which the augmentation charge will fund the capacity increase.

These costs are funded separately through Annual Service Charges, in accordance with NWI Pricing Principles.

Review

Upon adoption of this policy, the first review will be conducted within a two year period. Following reviews will be conducted every four years.

The Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services will report to Council via the Audit and Risk Committee on the outcome of the review and make recommendations for amendment, alteration or a substitution if considered necessary.

References/Related Documents

This policy will be available for inspection at the Renmark Paringa offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from the council's website at:
https://www.renmarkparinga.sa.gov.au/council/council-documents/policiesandbylaws

Document Control

Version #	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1.0	February 2026	Council	New Policy

Appendices

Appendix A: Area-Specific CWMS Expansion Plan – Renmark West (Rural Neighbourhood Zone)

Purpose

This section outlines the area specific plan for CWMS expansion in Renmark West, consistent with the overarching CWMS Policy and Council's strategic growth objectives.

Area Description

This policy applies to the Renmark West Rural Neighbourhood Zone, specifically the area bounded by Arumpo street to the west, Ral Ral Avenue to the east, Bookmark Avenue to the north, and Etiwanda Street to the south.

Infrastructure Status

Due to the current CWMS Capacity being limited to the township, no existing CWMS infrastructure has been constructed within the Renmark West area.

Infrastructure Upgrades (Council)

The proposed CWMS arrangement comprises of a rising main that will extend from a main pump station that will be located on Tapalin Street. This rising main will convey all wastewater from upstream to the existing wastewater treatment plant on Paringa Street, Renmark.

Development Drivers

- Projected Growth Renmark West Rural Neighbourhood Zone:
    - Anticipated subdivision of numerous existing allotments
    - Estimated 534 new allotments over 10 years

Funding & Cost Recovery

The CWMS Connection Fee will apply as outlined in Council's Fees and Charges Register. In addition, the Augmentation Charge will be calculated based on the total capital cost (including finance costs) of the required infrastructure divided by the forecasted total lot yield within the serviced area. This ensures that costs are apportioned fairly among all benefiting developments.

The Augmentation Charge will be reviewed annually in accordance with the 'Review of Augmentation Charge' provisions within the Community Wastewater Management System

(CWMS) Expansion Policy to ensure charges remain cost-reflective and consistent with National Water Initiative (NWI) Pricing Principle 9

Existing Onsite Systems

Properties within the affected Renmark West area that currently operate compliant onsite wastewater systems will be grandfathered, meaning they will not be required to connect to Council's CWMS until their existing onsite system reaches the end of its serviceable life or requires replacement due to changes in on site conditions, e.g. renovations and extensions.

At the point that connection becomes necessary, the property owner will be required to:

- pay the applicable CWMS connection fee; and
- commence payment of the annual CWMS service charge.

Until such time, grandfathered properties will not be subject to CWMS service charges. Council retains all rights to adjust this policy in the future in accordance with the provisions of the Water Industry Act 2012.