

# Annual Freshwater Science Charges



## What are the annual freshwater science charges?

Section 36 of the Resource Management Act enables councils to recover costs incurred by monitoring the state of the environment.

The Regional Council recovers around 35% of the cost of freshwater monitoring and investigation directly from resource consent holders and the remaining 65% is funded by the general rate.

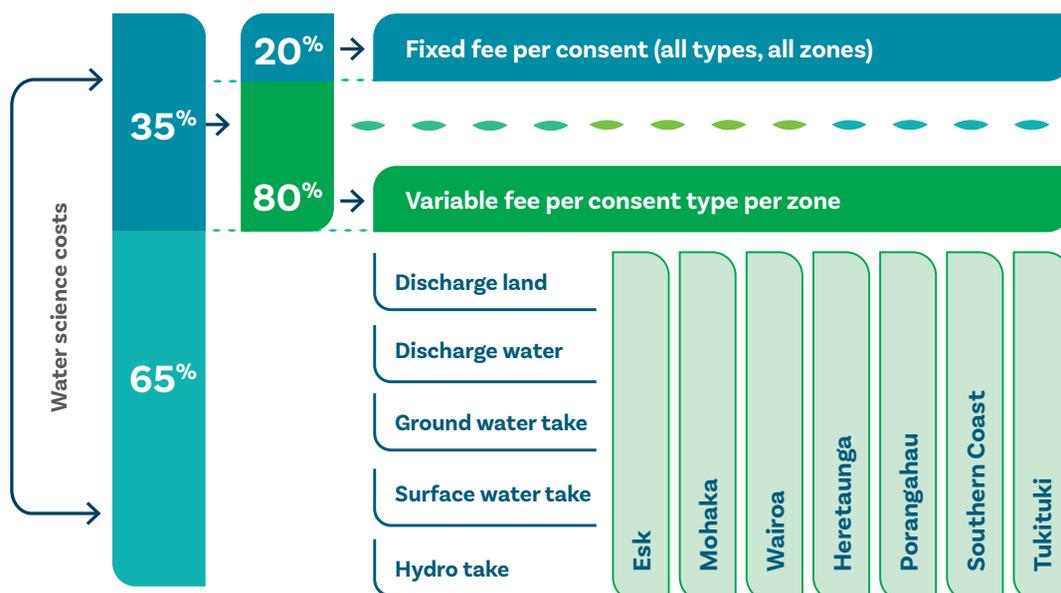
Freshwater science charges recovered from consent holders were \$2.0 million in 2019-20, and are estimated to be \$2.2m for the 2020-21 financial year, and \$2.4m for 2021-22.

### What is the current freshwater science charges regime?

The current charges for each consent depends on which of the seven zones the consent is in: Wairoa, Mohaka, Esk, Heretaunga, Tukituki, Pōrangahau or Southern Coast.

**The charge includes:**

- a **20% fixed charge** of the total recovered cost which is the same for all consents
- a **variable charge of 80%** which is split between zone based activity. This is calculated based on individual allocated volume (m<sup>3</sup>) for water takes, per litre/second for hydro water takes, a pollution index score for discharge consents, or the dairy herd size for dairy discharges to land in the Mohaka zone.



# Why do we want to change it?

## Proportionality

Consent holders have told us that the current charges for discharge consents do not recognise their activity in proportion to other consents. We agree that charges should reflect the scale of the consent holders discharge into the environment.

## Certainty

The current charges are based on actual consent numbers and costs as evaluated at the end of the financial year. Consent holders have told us they want to know what their charges will be in advance, so they can reasonably manage their finances.

## Consistency

Charges will be region wide to ensure consistency across the region for similar activities and from year to year. Changes in charges will be assessed as part of each Long Term Plan if there is a significant change to the water science programme costs.

## Simplicity

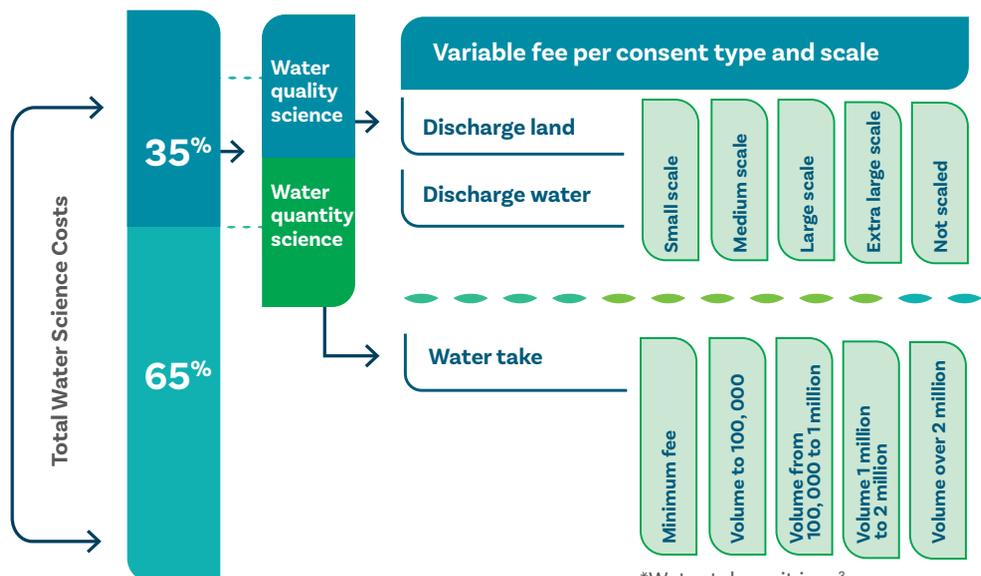
Consent holders have told us that the current charges are difficult to understand.

## What is the proposed freshwater science charges regime?

Our proposed fee structure will be a variable fee based on the consent type and scale.

Charges to consent holders to discharge to land and water will be based on the scale of the discharge activity, and charges for consent holders of water takes will be based on the deemed weekly volume of the consent.

Charges will be determined based on budgeted freshwater science costs and a set fee schedule in the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan each year in advance of the year the charges will be invoiced.



## Why do I have a decrease in my charges?

- Discharges to land consents have less costs allocated to them than discharges to water
- Small discharge consents have less of a charge than larger consents
- The charges are region wide, instead of being allocated to zones where some had a lower number of consent holders to share the costs
- There are some new exemptions (see back page).

## Why do I have an increase in my charges?

- Discharges direct to water are charged at a higher rate than discharges to land
- Charges will reflect the scale of the consent holder's discharge into the environment
- Some zones have had a lower allocation of costs or a larger number of consent holders to share those costs, and we are proposing to move to a region wide average.

## When would these proposed fees become effective?

These changes are subject to consultation and final confirmation by the Regional Council. If adopted, the proposed new charge regime would see invoices issued between February and March 2022 covering the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

The current financial year charges will still be generated in the old methodology, and invoices for these will be issued early July 2021 (covering the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021).

## Discharges to land/water:

The charges for discharge to land or water consents will be based on the scale of the consented discharge activity (as defined in table 2), and based on whether the receiving body of the discharge is land or water. The proposed fee schedule for 2021-22 is in table 1.

Table 1

Annual fixed charge to consent holders for Freshwater Management Research/Investigations & Monitoring: DISCHARGE CONSENTS (excl GST)					
Primary purpose of discharge	Small Scale	Medium Scale	Large Scale	Extra-Large Scale	Not Scaled
<b>Discharge to Water (per consent)</b>					
Drainage, Sewage, Stormwater & Wastewater	\$1,538	\$3,075	\$6,150	\$7,688	NA
Solid Waste	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$3,075
Other	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$1,538
<b>Discharge to Land (per consent)</b>					
Drainage, Sewage, Stormwater & Wastewater	\$769	\$1,538	\$3,075	\$3,844	NA
Solid Waste	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$1,538
Other	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$769

Table 2

Discharge consent category scale definitions				
Primary purpose of discharge	Small Scale	Medium Scale	Large Scale	Extra-Large Scale
Drainage	Max discharge rate: < 100 l/s	Max discharge rate: 100 to 1,000 l/s	Max discharge rate: 1,001 to 10,000 l/s	Max discharge rate: > 10,000 l/s
Sewage	Max discharge: < 50 m <sup>3</sup> /day	Max discharge: 50 to 200 m <sup>3</sup> /day	Max discharge: 201 to 1,000 m <sup>3</sup> /day	Max discharge: > 1,000 m <sup>3</sup> /day
Stormwater	Catchment area: < 5 Ha	Catchment area: 5 to 10 Ha	Catchment area: 11 to 50 Ha	Catchment area: > 50 Ha
Wastewater	<b>Dairy &amp; Piggery operations:</b> Herd size < 400 cow equiv* <b>All other operations:</b> Max discharge < 100 m <sup>3</sup> /day	<b>Dairy &amp; Piggery operations:</b> Herd size 400 to 1,000 cow equiv* <b>All other operations:</b> Max discharge 100 to 2,000 m <sup>3</sup> /day	<b>Dairy &amp; Piggery operations:</b> Herd size 1,001 to 3,000 cow equiv* <b>All other operations:</b> Max discharge 2,001 to 4,000 m <sup>3</sup> /day	<b>Dairy &amp; Piggery operations:</b> Herd size >3,000 cow equiv* <b>All other operations:</b> Max discharge > 4,000 m <sup>3</sup> /day
Solid waste and other	No scale applied. HBRC may apply scale factor to “non-scaled” discharge consents if outliers become apparent.			

\*Sheep, goats and pigs are converted to cow equivalents using the following conversions; 6.5 sheep = 1 cow equiv, 8.13 goats = 1 cow equiv, 3.75 pigs = 1 cow equiv.

**To find out more about discharging to air, land or water, go to [hbrc.govt.nz](https://hbrc.govt.nz) and search #airlandwater**

## Water takes:

The charges for water take consents will be based on the consented weekly volume of take (not actual use), at the proposed 2021-22 rates set out in table 3 below.

Table 3

Charges to consent holders for Freshwater Management Research/Investigations & Monitoring: WATER TAKES		
	Annual variable charge rate (excl GST)	
	\$	Units
Minimum charge	\$205	Per consent
Volume up to 100,000 m <sup>3</sup>	\$0.065	Per m <sup>3</sup> deemed weekly volume
Volume from 100,000 to 1,000,000 m <sup>3</sup>	\$0.045	Per m <sup>3</sup> deemed weekly volume
Volume from 1 million to 2 million m <sup>3</sup>	\$0.022	Per m <sup>3</sup> deemed weekly volume
Volume above 2 million m <sup>3</sup>	\$0.006	Per m <sup>3</sup> deemed weekly volume

For example, if your consented weekly take is 110,000 m<sup>3</sup>, then your charge will be based on the following:  
100,000m<sup>3</sup> @ \$0.065 per m<sup>3</sup> = \$6,500 plus 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> @\$0.045 = \$450 **Total charge (exc GST) = \$6,950**

## Exemptions

We are proposing to amend and/or introduce new exemptions for the freshwater science charges:

Current exemptions	Proposed exemptions
Discharges to improve the environment	<b>AMENDED</b> Discharges or water takes for activities with the primary objective of improving the environment
Discharges that are released once or for a very short period and which have no or negligible environmental impact	<b>AMENDED</b> Discharge to land or water, or water takes, released or taken once, or for a very short period, and which have no environmental impact
Discharge to land consents for domestic effluent from a single domestic dwelling	<b>AMENDED</b> Discharge to land consents for domestic effluent for single domestic dwellings, or where the maximum daily discharge is less than or equal to 2m <sup>3</sup>
	<b>NEW</b> Water take consents for the purpose of frost protection, based on the short period of use, and that typically the consent holder also has another water take consent at the same location for irrigation purposes
	<b>NEW</b> Discharges to water for the primary purpose of generating hydroelectricity
	<b>NEW</b> Where there are two or more discharge to land consents relating to the same activity at the same location, only the largest scaled discharge consent will attract the freshwater science charge
	<b>NEW</b> Where there are two or more discharge to water consents relating to the same activity at the same location, only the largest scaled discharge consent will attract the freshwater science

To find out more go to [hbrc.govt.nz](http://hbrc.govt.nz) and search #takingwater

## Our science work

The Annual Freshwater Science Charges help to fund vital environmental monitoring work to understand and sustainably manage the region's public resources. Our science work is for the public good and conducted on behalf of consent holders for the benefit of the region. The sustainable use of the region's resources promotes economic development and sustains our communities.

If you want to find out more about freshwater quality monitoring, go to [hbrc.govt.nz](http://hbrc.govt.nz) and search #freshwater  
For information about groundwater monitoring, go to [hbrc.govt.nz](http://hbrc.govt.nz) and search #groundwater