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**From:** Paul Byl  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 31 August 2004 3:02 PM  
**To:** Water Submissions  
**Subject:** Inquiry on Urban Water and Wastewater Pricing

31 August 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

We would like to make a submission to the inquiry on Urban Water and Wastewater Pricing. We have not read the complete Discussion Paper, but have read the Information Pamphlet and recently heard a radio interview in relation to this.

In 2002/2003 we built a new house. We thought we'd do the right thing and install a 30,000 gallon rainwater tank. When it was constructed, we were told it would be a good idea to fill it about 1/3 full with water, to protect the concrete until the gutters were connected and the rains came. We thought we'd have to get a water supplier in and obtained a few quotes, all in the vicinity of \$180 - \$200. Then we thought about connecting a number of hoses together and filling it with mains water. We checked previous water bills and then calculated that the cost this way would be about \$16! This hardly seemed true, so we then called the Water Corporation and double checked the rates with them. Yes, our calculations were correct. So that's how we filled it.

Although we wouldn't really want to pay more for the water used in our household, we do think the charges are very low. We don't believe that the current pricing structure sufficiently makes people reduce the amount of water they use on non-essential items such as swimming pools. So, in response to one of the questions the ERA is considering, we do not think current water prices adequately take into account the environmental impacts of water usage. Having said that, we would be hesitant for all households to have to pay more – that would hardly seem fair to those who are already struggling. Maybe the basic allowance per household should continue to be charged at very cheap (subsidised) rates, but then the next 'brackets' should be a lot higher than they are at present. Allowance should also be made for households where special circumstances exist, e.g. a disabled person that takes longer to shower, incontinence meaning more washing to be done etc.

We would not like to see water usage made cheaper in Winter and more expensive in Summer: we use our rainwater in winter, and use the mains water in Summer for the house and garden, when we've run out of rainwater. (We drilled 3 bores for garden use, but had no success in obtaining water.)

There should be much more pressure placed on households to recycle water, collect rainwater, have water efficient appliances, water efficient gardens etc. We support some measure of water restrictions, although we find watering only 2x/week over Summer a bit difficult. We definitely don't believe that people should be allowed to water every day, at whatever time and for whatever length of time.

Time prevents us from studying this issue further, but hope this submission may be of some use to you.

Yours truly,  
Paul & Lisa Byl