

ATTENTION: Dr Ursula Kretzer
Economic Regulation Authority
PO Box 8469
Perth Business Centre
PERTH WA 6849

07 January 2008

Dear Sir

WATER CONNECTION TO LOT 431 WAGIN

I am writing regarding our recent phone conversation, about the outrageous costs for water connections in the country. These high costs are seriously affecting all land developments in all country areas, there doesn't seem to be any set charges, or set rules for working costs out, also you cannot get any quotes or approx costs up front.

Firstly you have to contact the Water Corporation, they then tell you, you must engage a consultant (they are all in the metro area or south coastal cities) involving long distance phone calls and travelling costs.

The consultant said we had to pay Water Corp head works charges up front – they can range we were told from \$3,000 to \$13,500, whatever they decide.

We had 75 metres to get the water just to our property, it cost \$3,060 charged by the consultant to investigate and design, which they did on the first day. Then it cost \$1,000 for a start up meeting on sight. This they told us would be less if we worked in with their visits to other jobs in neighbouring towns (which we did) but we were still charged the full amount by the consultants and I guess everyone else would have been charged \$1,000 as well.

They had also got us to call tenders for a plumber, we were only able to get three quotes from plumbers in the country, they ranged from \$9,583 to \$25,000. We obviously took the lowest quote.

The plumber does all the actual work, supplies all the materials, engages the surveyor, the Shire clears the road verge and everything connected with the job, which turned out to be very straight forward, with no problems.

We then had to pay the consultants a further \$1,000 to come back, just to tell the Water Corp the work was ready to hand over to them to pressure test the pipe line.

We cannot see the need at all for consultants, it seems to be a real rort on the consumers and by the Water Corporation, the country people have to pay the same costs for connection as city people, they can at least recoup a lot of their costs back by the very high prices they can get for their property on the coast or city. After all this we found that, still after two months we had not been given a water meter, to be able to use water. After many more phone calls to Water Corp we were then told we would have to make another application to the Water Corp for a meter or we would be fined if we used any water without a meter.

I have enclosed photo copies of all our costs for our 75 metre connection.

Yours faithfully

C.J. Ball

enc.

PS. Just one other reason for our concern, we have had three other blocks of land in the Wagin town area, high lots with good views, one 10 acre and two 15 acres, they have been on the market for just over 12 months.

The real estate agents said they have lots of keen interested buyers, but as soon as they look into costs of water connections, they walk away. There are also other people who can't sell land for this reason.

N.B Letter transcribed from a hand written Submission.