



ACT
Government

Individual water metering for new unit developments

Advisory Note 15

Territory Planning Authority
July 2026

Introduction to advisory notes

Advisory notes provide guidance on how particular processes in the ACT planning system will typically occur, how elements of the system work and how considerations will typically be made. These will typically be technical in nature and may cover anything from steps in an assessment and decision-making process to interpreting elements of the statutory planning documents.

Advisory notes in combination with process maps, guides and factsheets, seek to support all stakeholders to better understand and interact with the planning system.

Advisory notes are for the use of all stakeholders, including the development industry when preparing a development proposal or progressing a proposal through the assessment and approvals process, or the general community when commenting on applications and interacting with the planning system.

Advisory notes are prepared by the Territory Planning Authority to cover elements of the *Planning Act 2023* only. These are not intended to cover other processes, such as Building Approvals under the *Building Act 2004*. Advisory note 15 relates to a policy change under the *Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014*, with development applications required to reflect this change after the relevant implementation date.

Advisory notes may be updated or added to from time to time.

Version history

Version number	Approved by	Date
1.0	Executive Branch Manager, Building, Design and Projects, Planning and Urban Policy	28/06/2024
2.0	Executive Group Manager, Statutory Planning Division, CED	06/07/2026

Advisory Note 15: Individual water metering for new unit developments

This advisory note provides guidance on the requirement for unit titled developments to include a cold water meter for each unit, instead of one meter for the entire development. Icon Water will also be updating its metering guidelines and technical specifications to implement this policy change.

Background

The Unit Titles Reform Project is improving the management of apartments, townhouses, mixed-use developments, and commercial units. One of the policy proposals as part of this project is to investigate the introduction of separate metering for cold-water supply to new unit developments.

Currently, there are no requirements for cold-water consumption in unit titled buildings to be separately metered. Where buildings are not separately metered, unit owners contribute to the usage costs for the entire building, which is typically calculated based on unit entitlement.

This can lead to inequitable financial outcomes for unit occupants. Unit occupants with lower water consumption relative to others in the same development effectively subsidise the water use of others, and vice versa. This can be especially pronounced in mixed-use developments with commercial tenants that use a higher volume of water in their operations.

Requiring individual water metering of the cold-water supply for new unit developments will align the ACT with other jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, who have already enacted policy and regulations to require separate water meters for cold water supply in new unit developments.

To support policy alignment and equitable outcomes, it is important that both units and standalone houses have equal access to water billing. This will enable all households to monitor their water usage, pay only for the water they are using and encourage water conservation.

Introduction of individual water metering

In December 2023, the government agreed to introduce individual water metering for new unit developments, via amendments to the technical code under the *Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014*. The [Utilities \(Technical Regulation\) \(Water and Sewerage Code\) Approval 2024](#) commenced on 1 July 2024, and sets out the individual water metering requirement, amongst other updates and changes to the code.

Icon Water, as the sole water utility service provider, will be required to update its water and sewerage network design and construction standards, which include requirements for property service connections, sewage and water supply, and requirements for water meters. The relevant guidelines and technical specifications will also be updated.

Timeline

The transition period set out in the Water and Sewerage Code for the introduction of individual water meters for units is as follows:

- (a) Class B units (generally townhouses or stand-alone dwellings in a unit complex) – customers or developers can opt-in to unit metering from 1 January 2025; mandatory unit metering is to commence for all new multi-unit developments where the Development Application is lodged on or after 1 July 2025; and,
- (b) Class A units (generally flats or apartments in multi-storey developments) – customers or developers can opt-in to unit metering from 1 July 2027; mandatory unit metering is to commence for all new multi-unit developments where the Development Application is lodged on or after 1 July 2028.

The requirement for mandatory individual water meters for the cold-water supply will apply if a new Development Application is lodged for a multi-unit development on or after the above dates.

Further information

[Utilities \(Technical Regulation\) Act 2014](#)

[Utilities \(Technical Regulation\) \(Water and Sewerage Code\) Approval 2024](#)

[Icon Water](#)

Got questions?

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