



MEDIA RELEASE

19 JUNE 2009

WATER AND SEWERAGE CHARGES TO GO FROM COUNCIL RATES

The Huon Valley Council has announced that charges for water and sewerage will no longer be included in rates notices from 1 July this year.

While the Council is committed to passing on 100% of the reduction to ratepayers, those ratepayers who do not currently receive water and sewerage services from the Council and who do not pay water and sewerage charges as part of their rates should be aware that they will not be affected by the new arrangements. From 1 July, water and sewerage charges will instead be issued by Southern Water, the new corporation responsible for the provision of water and sewerage services in the Huon Valley.

The announcement comes as the Council makes final preparations for its 2009-2010 budget. Aware of the impact the current economic uncertainty is having on household budgets, the Council assures ratepayers it is endeavouring to restrict any rates rise to acceptable levels while still maintaining appropriate levels of services to the community.

While the Council is mindful of the tough economic times and is working to keep costs to a minimum, it is still subject to outside pressures. These external pressures include the still unanswered question of who will pay for the water and sewerage rebates for pensioners; increased utility charges from Aurora; increased State Government land tax; and an increasing fire levy. While some of these increases will be absorbed by the Council, others will have to be passed on to ratepayers.

The recent revaluations of property in the Huon Valley will also have an effect on the rate levy the Council charges to property owners. Property owners who have seen a substantial increase in the Assessed Annual Value (AAV) of their property may see a rise in their rates relative to other property owners.

Minimising the impact these pressures have on Huon Valley ratepayers while continuing to deliver the level of services and facilities the community expects is the big challenge currently facing the Huon Valley Council. In its budget for the next financial year, the Council will endeavour to successfully meet this challenge.

ends

For additional comments, please contact:

Geoff Cockerill – General Manager, Huon Valley Council. Ph: 6264 0300

Glenn Doyle – Deputy General Manager, Huon Valley Council. Ph: 6264 0300

Contact: Jonathon Campbell, Huon Valley Council Community Relations Officer

Ph: 6264 0314

Mobile: 0428 318 868

Email: jcampbell@huonvalley.tas.gov.au