

Fact Sheet: Utilities

In Common Ground Queensland's 2022 Tenant Survey, 47% of tenants who took part said they did not understand the process of paying electricity and water bills.

In this factsheet we will explain the process for tenants paying utilities at Brisbane Common Ground.

Think back to your Tenancy Sign-up

You may recall that your lease agreement states an amount to pay for utilities (under Item 12 and 14). Currently it stipulates \$22.50 per week towards electricity and \$2.50 per week towards water. This amount is an estimate of how much we expect you might need to pay for your utilities based on average electricity and water usage.

Is that how much it costs?

No, each unit is individually metred for electricity and water. These bills arrive quarterly, and the charges are taken from the money paid by you on an individual basis. Every six months, we refund the amount of money that you have left over once the bills have been paid.

Why didn't I get a refund last time?

If your electricity and water usage is more than the amount you have paid towards utilities, you won't receive a refund, you will receive a bill.

Sounds pretty straightforward, doesn't it?

Well, not really. Some tenants with healthcare cards are entitled to rebates or credits from the state government, which means we have to manually work out each tenant's bill individually.

If you moved in or out of your unit recently a pro-rata charge may need to be applied and Common Ground Queensland must manually work this out.

Where do the bills come from?

We have a contract with Origin to supply bulk electricity until mid-2024. There is a bulk discount applied to this deal. Water bills arrive from the owner of the building, the Queensland State Department of Housing.

Why don't tenants just look after their own electricity?

Common Ground Queensland offers this utilities billing service to all tenants to assist in managing your bills. If you receive a Centrelink payment, you can arrange a Centrepay Deduction to cover your future bills, and we can arrange support for you if you would like to set this up.

There is nothing to stop you doing your own research about deals and sourcing your own electricity supplier. After all, each unit is individually metred.