

City of Bunbury
2018/19 Rates Billing and Charges
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. Why do I pay rates?

Your rates help pay for the upkeep and maintenance of the City's infrastructure, such as roads, footpaths, parks. The rates you pay also help fund the many community services provided by your City, such as libraries, arts and entertainment, sporting grounds and recreation facilities. In each year's Budget, the City also looks at improving infrastructure and services to ratepayers.

A copy of the 2018/19 Budget is available on the City's website - www.bunbury.wa.gov.au.

2. How are my rates calculated?

Rates are calculated by multiplying a property's Gross Rental Value (GRV) by the rate in the dollar set by Council. The Gross Rental Value (GRV) is the fair rental value of your property as determined by Landgate – Valuation Services and is an estimate of how much you could expect to receive if you were to rent your property – for example: GRV \$16,300 / 52 = \$313 per week.

3. How much have my rates gone up?

For the 2018/19 financial year, the City has decided on a rate increase of 2.9%. 1% of this increase will be used for the upgrade and renewal of the City's aging infrastructure assets. The minimum rate for 2018/19 is \$1,164 and the rate in the dollar is 9.351c.

Your rate notice also includes refuse removal charges and the Emergency Services Levy (ESL). Refuse collection charges have increased modestly and the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) has increased by 10.9% (refer point 10 below).

4. I want to object to the Gross Rental Value of my property

If you feel that the valuation of your property is not correct, you may lodge an objection to the Gross Rental Valuation applied to your property. An objection to the GRV must be lodged with Landgate – Valuation Services within 60 days of receiving your rates notice. The back of your rates notice will provide further information. The contact number for Landgate is (08) 9273 9273 (preferred number). The date of valuation for the current GRV is 1 August 2016.

Landgate determine the GRV from the analysis and investigation of market rents, as gathered from owners, property managers and other sources. The GRV represents the annual equivalent of a fair weekly rental, assuming the landlord pays all rates, taxes, insurance and associated outgoings.

Commercial and Industrial rentals are assessed both manually and with computer assistance based on the analysis of comparable leased premises.

The GRV for non-residential vacant land is valued on the basis of 5% of their capital value. For vacant residential land, this is valued at 3% of its capital value.

5. Do I pay GST on my Rates?

No. GST is not payable on your general rates, Emergency Services Levy (ESL), swimming pool inspection fee or your waste service charges.

6. I have a Pensioner/Seniors card

If you are the holder of a current Pension card or Senior's card you may be eligible for a rebate on your rates. To be eligible for a rebate, you:

- a) Must be the owner AND occupier of a property as at 1st July and
- b) Must have a current Pensioner Concession card or Senior's card.

You can register your pensioner concession card details with the Water Corporation online via their website - <https://www.watercorporation.com.au/my-account/i-want-to/concessions/apply-for-a-concession> or over the phone on 1300 659 951. If you have any doubts about your eligibility for a rebate, please contact our Rates Department. Alternatively, you can complete an application in person at the City of Bunbury Administration Office or at Aqwest.

A capping applies for both WA Seniors Card holders and Pensioner Concession Card holders as determined by the WA State Government:

Seniors Card	\$100.00
Pensioner Concession	\$750.00

7. What do I get for my residential refuse and recycling charge?

Your standard waste bin (red/green top) and recycling bin (yellow top) is collected fortnightly and your organic bin (lime green) is collected weekly. In addition you will receive 2 hard waste and 2 green waste kerb side pickups during the year. These dates are advertised on the City of Bunbury website and on your Waste Calendar.

Waste Services have a range of bin sizes to suit individual requirements – for further information, please contact Waste Operations on 9792 7333 or visit the City of Bunbury website.

Residents also have free access to the Electronic and Hazardous waste drop off facility at 21 McCombe Road, Davenport during the following times:

- Tuesday 10.30am to 2.30pm
- Thursday 10.30am to 2.30pm
- Saturday 10.30am to 2.30pm

Proof of residency will need to be provided.

8. Where can I get more compostable bags for my Organic Bin?

Compostable bags are available for collection from the following locations:

- Customer Service (4 Stephen Street, Bunbury);
- South West Sports Centre;
- Bunbury Public Library;
- Withers Community Library; and
- Bunbury Visitors Centre

Residents are able to collect up to 2 packets of bags at any time (stock permitting) on proof of Bunbury residency. Bags are available for purchase by non-residents for \$5.00 per packet.

Delivery of bags is available for aged and disability pensioners. Please phone Waste Operations on 9792 7333 to organise.

9. What is the Swimming Pool Inspection Fee?

State Government legislation requires all private swimming pool enclosures to be inspected at least every four years. The fee for this service is charged per annum for each registered pool enclosure. All pool owners are encouraged to properly maintain their pool enclosures in the interest of safety.

10. What is the Emergency Services Levy (ESL)?

The Emergency Services Levy (ESL) is a State Government charge applicable to all properties in WA, which is invoiced and collected by local governments on behalf of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES). The ESL provides the majority of funding required for career and volunteer Fire and Emergency Brigades, DFES multi-function brigades/units, Bush Fire brigades and State Emergency Service units.

The amount of the ESL to be collected, and the applicable rates and charging parameters, are declared annually by the Minister for Emergency Services.

For the 2018/19 financial year, the State Government has increased the ESL by 10.9%. This increase is to fund the Rural Fire Division which will be established within the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

For more information please refer to the ESL section of the DFES website (www.dfes.wa.gov.au), the brochure enclosed with your annual notice, or enquire on free-call 1300 136 099.

11. What do I get for paying my rates early?

If your rates are paid in full by the due date you will be entered into the draw to win \$2,000 courtesy of the Commonwealth Bank.

The following terms and conditions apply to the 2018/19 early payment of rates incentive prizes:

1. The competition is open to ratepayers of the City of Bunbury, who pay the full amount due as listed in their 2018/19 rates notice before 4:00pm, 7 September 2018. No responsibility is accepted for late, lost or misdirected payments.
2. Councillors and Employees of the City of Bunbury, state government properties and properties that receive a rates exemption are not eligible to be included in the prize draw.

12. Where can I pay my rates?

- a) In Person – City of Bunbury Customer Service Centre, 4 Stephen St Bunbury or at any Australia Post.
- b) Via Internet through B-Pay or BPOINT.
- c) Telephone payments by Credit Card by calling 1300 276 468.
- d) By Mail – Cheques and Money Orders can be posted to City of Bunbury, PO Box 21, Bunbury WA 6231

See the back of your Rate Notice for further details.

13. Alternative Payment Options

Options offered include:

- Direct Debit - weekly, fortnightly and monthly direct debits from your savings or cheque account.
- Centrepay – eligible ratepayers may elect to have regular deductions taken from their Centrelink payments.

If you are encountering financial hardship and are unable to pay your rates by one of the options offered on your rate notice, a direct debit or Centrepay payment arrangement may be entered into. Please contact our Rates Department as soon as possible to discuss a suitable arrangement.

14. What happens if I don't pay my rates?

The City of Bunbury will follow its Corporate Policy and Guideline to recover money due. Legal action will be progressed through a debt recovery agency and all fees associated with this are recoverable and will be added to the rates account.

Contact Details

Phone: (08) 9792 7243

Email: rates@bunbury.wa.gov.au

Please visit our website at www.bunbury.wa.gov.au for further rates and payment information.