

Fees and charge schedule

Background

Environment Southland's Fees and Charges Schedule describes the fees and charges we have set under legislation such as the Resource Management Act 1991, Local Government Act 2002 and Building Act 2004. These Acts allow us to recover all reasonable costs incurred in respect of the activity to which the charge relates.

The fees and charges covered in the schedule include:

- changes to policy statements and regional plans
- resource consent applications (including transfers of resource consents and reviews of resource consents)
- annual consent holder charges and compliance charges
- incident cost recovery
- charges under the Biosecurity Act 1993
- charges under the Maritime Transport Act 1994
- spatial information data
- river and catchment services
- Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
- charges under the Building Act 2004.

Predominantly fees and charges are set on a cost recovery basis so that individuals pay for the services they use. An element of most of our activities is also paid from rates or other external sources.

Why are there changes?

In line with our Long-term Plan 2021-2031 and following consultation during May/June, we have made changes to our Fees and Charges Schedule for the 2021-2022 financial year. Previous increases in costs and deposits have not kept up with increasing costs and equity for users, so this year's changes are more significant and should provide more clarity for our customers. These changes will take effect from 1 August 2021. The full schedule will be available online from this date.

The changes in the Fees and Charges Schedule have been made for three reasons.

1. Consolidating some of the fees and charges so administration is more efficient
2. Charges reflect the actual cost of the activity
3. Simpler structure and greater up-front transparency around costs.

What are the key changes?

There are four main changes to the Fees and Charges Schedule

1. Increased amount for consent application deposit, and different categories for consent applications.
2. One deposit per activity or consent application – this has changed from a single deposit for multiple consent applications.
3. Hourly charge-out rates have tiered to reflect the level of the person doing the work.
4. Reduced the number of one-off, small charges.

It's important to note that although the amount required as a deposit for consent applications has increased (particularly in the case of multiple applications), the Council only charges actual costs as required by the Resource Management Act 1991.

Where the actual cost of the application(s) processing is different to the initial deposit(s) charged, the difference will be refunded to the applicant if the costs are lower, or further costs invoiced later in the process if the costs are higher. It is simply that more of the costs are required to be paid up front, reducing the need for further significant costs to be invoiced later in the process. This is more consistent with how charges are applied at other councils across the country.

We've also amended the format of the Fees and Charges Schedule, in order to provide a clearer picture of the full annual cost of consents.

GST exclusive costs

Another change we have made to our Fees and Charges Schedule is that all costs shown are GST exclusive, in line with standard business practice.

Questions

If you have questions about any of the changes to our Fees and Charges Schedule, please give us a call on 0800 76 88 45.