

# **Sandown Crescent**

## **Water meters installation – Questions and Answers**

### **Why is it beneficial to install water meters?**

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- Help protect the environment by conserving water; you will become more aware of your water use when you become metered as the more you use, the more you pay.

#### ***Financial Benefits***

- You control how much water you use and therefore control the cost of your own water bill
- Save money; you become more conscious of the water you use. Most people use at least 10% less water once they have a meter installed
- You only pay for the water you use hence it is one of the fairest methods to charge for water
- You no longer subsidise the cost for those who are less careful with water
- You help to prevent wastage; with more water saved less sewerage is produced

### **Questions raised by residents**

#### ***Regulations***

Further investigation has been done on whether an individual water meter is required per unit. A site visit was held with a representative of the City of Cape Town on **7 May 2019** at Sandown Crescent.

The City official confirmed in writing that in challenging cases of complexes such as Sandown Crescent, an alternative solution can be found, including the metering of units by calculation. This was the method proposed in SGM on 26 March 2019.

To ensure there is no confusion, a letter will be sent to each owner affected as to the detailed water usage calculation relevant to their unit.

## ***Installation***

### **1. How will the meters be installed?**

The meters will be installed in line with the existing plumbing.

### **2. Where will my water meter be installed?**

With the exception of the two inner loft apartments, all meters will be installed externally to the apartment.

- Ground & middle floor apartments will each have individual meters installed in the exterior brick work, below each kitchen window (both racecourse & stairwell facing).
- The side loft apartments (eg. A301 & 304) will have their water meters installed in the basement, on each main supply.
- The inner two apartments of each block (eg. A302 & A303, EXCLUDING B Block) will have two meters installed per apartment. One meter will be installed externally in the brickwork below each kitchen window, and the second meter in close proximity to the mains tap upstairs (inside the apartment) in each bathroom. The two meters are required as the loft's bathroom and kitchen are supplied separately via different pipes coming up through the basement. The consumption of the kitchen and the bathroom will be added in the software to show one total water consumption for the apartment.
- All external water meters will be covered with Nutec boards, painted to match the exterior of the building.

### **3. Will they be installed before the stop cock to each unit or after? Do they fall under "Common areas Body Corporate responsibility" or "Owners areas responsibility"?**

Before the stop cock for all units except for the loft apartments where the meters will be installed after the mains tap. The meters can be isolated by the stop cocks which are installed on the supply pipe work in the basements. This is Body Corporate property / responsibility.

### **4. Will the installation result in damage to walls, floors and kitchen units etc.**

No as the bulk of the meters will be installed externally (in the outer wall). Where meters will be installed inside the loft apartment bathrooms, a tile will need to be removed to gather access to the existing piping.

**5. What happened if anything gets damaged in my flat, e.g. water spills/damage, tiles, etc. and who will be liable for the repair?**

The installer. Only internal access into certain loft apartments is required.

**6. Will a suitable qualified person be provided by Trafalgar to approve the installation and quality of workmanship?**

A qualified plumber will complete all the installations. Trafalgar has not appointed the contractor; the plumber will be appointed by NUSCO, the appointed installer.

**7. Will each unit have its own meter?**

This is not required as per the meeting with the City of Cape Town referred to previously in this document.

***Maintenance of water meters***

**8. How easy is it to remove in order to clean or maintain?**

Typically, no maintenance is required. In the unlikely event that a meter does need to be replaced, the Tail ends can easily be unscrewed in position.

**9. Will the meters require regular maintenance? How often will the sites be visited to check or maintained?**

N/A - other than battery replacements every 8 to 10 years, no foreseen maintenance is required.

**10. Who is accountable for the cost when maintenance is required?**

The appointed contractor will cover any unforeseen maintenance costs for the first 2 years

**11. Is it part of the SLA?**

Yes

**12. Is the meter built for reliability in harsh conditions for example wind, rain and dust?**

Yes, these are similar/same type of meter that is installed in the ground for individual homes.

**13. Does the water meter come with a warranty?**

Yes. Replaced at contractors cost for first 2 years. If the meter is faulty after 2 years, the Body Corporate will pay for a replacement meter and the installation. If the meter's electronic module fails, that is for the Metering company (Nusco) to replace as they can't invoice / track usage without it.

**14. How often must it be replaced?**

Never

**15. How easy is it to upgrade or replace the meters when technology changes?**

A new electronic module can be installed on existing meter's pickup.

**16. If there is a fault with a meter will the software pick it up?**

Yes, weekly / monthly reports will highlight water meters with zero consumption. Investigation can take place to confirm if an apartment is occupied or empty (Same as electricity readings)

**17. How often must batteries be replaced and how difficult is it to replace the batteries?**

8 to 10 years – Easy, four screws to open outer casing. New battery slots inside.

**18. Will the casing withstand harsh conditions?**

Yes

***Installation procedure and insurance matters:***

An SA licensed plumber will be installing all sub-meters. Sub-meters are the types of meter that service the individual units within multi-unit residential or commercial premises such as townhouses, apartment buildings or shopping centres.

**19. Can owners request a compliance certificate when required, for example when selling?**

No compliance certificate is required. Compliance certificates must cover entire apartment, not only meter.

**20. What type of water meter will be installed?**

Mechanical Rotary Style Meter

**21. Has it been SABS approved?**

Yes

**22. If there were no problems with leakage before the installation, who takes responsibility for costs arising during or after installation in the event of leakage?**

The plumber installing the meters will take responsibility. If you do become aware of a leak, please notify Trafalgar immediately and we will notify the installation company.

**23. If any tiles are damaged or any other costs arise as a result of the installation, is there an agreement regarding liability of costs?**

The appointed contractor carry liability insurance / if any additional work is required that was unforeseen, this will be treated as variation order and would require sign off from SOMO (Sandown Crescent's appointed Maintenance company) and the Sandown Crescent body corporate prior to the work commencing.

**24. If the owner has to arrange to take off work, how long will the installations take and will the owner be able to choose a time slot that will suit him / her?**

Only applicable to loft apartments – 3 to 4 hours per apartment. A schedule will be made available for loft owners/tenants to select a convenient time.

***Software & Contract: Reading cost per month***

**25. Estimated annual increase in cost?**

6%

**26. Can an app be downloaded by the owner to monitor water usage?**

Yes – there is an Android App available. Details on how to download this will be communicated post installation. Apple iPhone users will need to use the web interface. The address will be communicated once installation has taken place.

**27. Is there a contract in place?**

Yes, a 3 year service contract

**28. Can the reading's software be transferred to another company in the future?**

Yes, the software and licenses used on the communication equipment is open source software and can be transferred to another contractor/provider

**29. Is there an exit clause in the contract?**

Yes, we are able to terminate the contract at any point with 90 days notice. This is written into the SLA with the service provider.

**30. Who is the provider and what is their credibility?**

NUSCO is the preferred provider and was one of the suppliers presented at the SGM. NUSCO is a well-established utility company having been in the industry since 1999.

**31. How will I be billed for water usage?**

The billing will be included on your statement from Trafalgar, as per the process currently followed for electricity readings. Trafalgar will receive the batch of monthly invoices and add to our statements.

**32. If I have a query regarding my water usage, who do I escalate this to?**

This will follow the same process as other billing queries. They must be directed to Trafalgar and will be taken forward with the correct channel.