



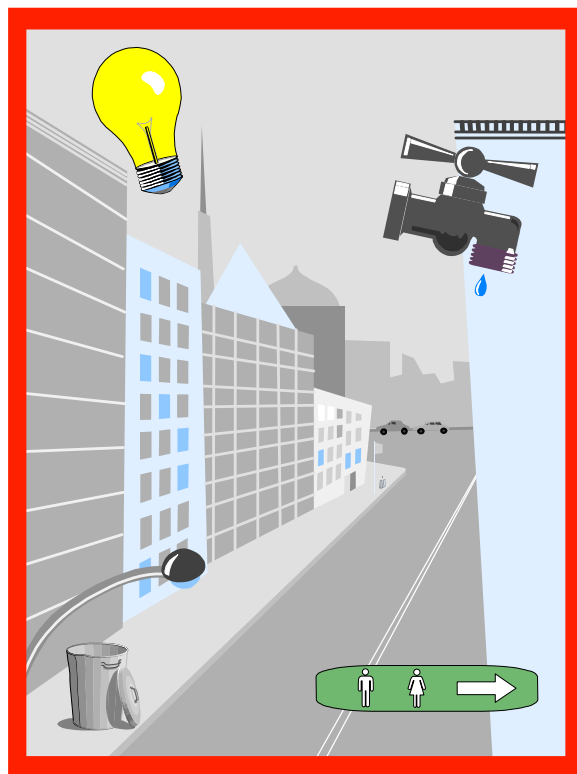
TWK INFO BROCHURE

Jewel of the Overberg

August 2008

THEEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY

(Issued by: Finance Directorate)



This brochure is issued to assist you, our valued clients with frequently asked questions relating to service deliver and to provide you with a ready reference of contact details.

MANAGEMENT:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Director / Deputy</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Fax</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Municipal Manager	HSD Wallace	028 – 214 3363	028 – 214 1289	annettesw@twk.org.za
Director: Financial Services	SN Jacobs / F van der Westhuizen	028 – 214 3361 028 – 214 3361	028 – 214 1289	stephenja@twk.org.za francoisva@twk.org.za
Director: Corporate services	J Isaacs / S Marthinus	028 – 214 3308 028 – 214 3308	028 – 214 1289	josephis@twk.org.za solliema@twk.org.za
Director: Development	H Gxoyiya / J Visagie	028 – 214 3336 028 – 214 3336	028 – 214 1289	honeygx@twk.org.za janvi@twk.org.za
Director: Operational Services	C van Heerden	028 – 212 1014	028 – 214 1289	conradvh@twk.org.za

TOWN MANAGERS:

<u>Town</u>	<u>Manager</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Fax</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Caledon-Botrivier- Tesselaarsdal-Myddleton	J Barnard	028 – 214 3365	028 -	janba@twk.org.za
Grabouw	A Liebenberg	021 – 859 2507	021 – 859 2930	antonli@twk.org.za
Greyton-Genadendal	D Damons	028 – 254 9620 028 – 251 8130	028 – 254 9965 028 – 251 8494	denverda@twk.org.za
Riviersonderend	V Pause	028 – 261 1360	028 – 261 1227	veronicapa@twk.org.za
Villiersdorp	E Marthinus	028 – 840 1130	028 – 840 2114	edwinma@twk.org.za

Town managers have full capacity to deal with all service delivery requests and queries. If they require help, they will contact the above corporate departments. Please note that the Town Management Model has been specifically introduced to bring service delivery closer to you and we urge you to contact them an work directly through them.

EMERGENCY AND OTHER TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Head office - Caledon	:	028 – 214 3300
Operational Services	:	028 – 212 1014
Traffic - Caledon	:	028 - 214 3300
Grabouw	:	021 - 859 4052
Villiersdorp	:	028 – 840 1130
Riviersonderend	:	028 – 261 1360

<u>Town</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Sewer</u>	<u>Refuse</u>	<u>Electricity</u>
Caledon / Myddleton	082 338 0963	082 338 0963	072 827 8625	083 3100 900 Eskom 086 003 7566
Botrivier	082 457 8779	082 457 8779	082 457 8779	Eskom 086 003 7566
Tesselaarsdal	082 457 8779	082 457 8779	082 457 8779	Eskom 086 003 7566
Grabouw	072 895 2266	072 895 2266	072 895 2266	Eskom 086 003 7566
Greyton	082 457 8761	082 457 8761	082 457 8761	071 387 2000 Eskom 086 003 7566
Genadendal	082 457 8761	082 457 8761	082 457 8761	Eskom 086 003 7566
Riviersonderend	082 457 8874	071 605 4719	082 457 8874	082 550 5781 Eskom 086 003 7566
Villiersdorp	082 499 5036	082 499 5027	082 493 5686	083 411 0471

INDIGENT SUBSIDY: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the basic municipal services subsidy policy?

It is a policy whereby the Theewaterskloof Municipality is obliged by the Constitution and Municipal Systems Act to provide basic municipal services to the poor. These services include water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal.

Why was the subsidy introduced?

The increased poverty, escalating unemployment and increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS coupled with the vision of offering better quality of life and higher standards of living form the roots of this policy.

How will the policy benefit Theewaterskloof residents?

- 6kl of water free to Indigents Households
- 50kw of electricity free to Indigent Households
- No Assessment Rates charged on properties valued less than R15,000
- R72.84 Subsidy on Sewerage and Refuse Removal

Is this a new welfare system?

No. The payment of municipal services remains the responsibility of the consumer / account holder.

Is my arrear debts written off when I qualify as a Indigent Household?

No. The settlement of the arrear debts remain your responsibility and must you contact the Debt Collection department to arrange the settlement of it.

Who can apply for this subsidy?

- Households with a joint/total income equal to twice the monthly pension grant (currently R940 x 2 = R1,880)
- Pensioners, unemployed, self-employed, or employed people with a total family income of less than R1,880 per month.
- Account holders receiving disability grants who have a total household income of less than R1,880 per month.
- An account holder whose partner also receives a government pension and has a total household income of less than R1,880 per month.
- HIV+/AIDS breadwinners and/or their orphans who have a total household income of less than R1,880 per month.

How to apply for a Subsidy?

Application forms are available from municipal offices in any of the towns in the Theewaterskloof municipal area.

Can I get assistance to complete the form?

Yes. An official at the office will assist applicants to complete the forms.

What documents must accompany the application form?

- A certified copy of your ID (Identity Document).
- Your latest municipal account.
- Your pay slip or receipt of government pension or a certified copy of your pension card or disability grant or an affidavit if you are unemployed and your total household income is less than R1,880 per month.
- Death certificate of the account holder if the applicant is not the account holder.

Where can I go to get copies certified?

Your local police station.

Where can I hand in the application?

Completed application forms can be handed in at your nearest Municipal Cashier / Debtors Clerk.

How will I know whether my application has been successful?

On your statement the description **Subsidy**.... and the amount with (-) will appear, which means your application was approved.

If my application is successful, how long will I be eligible for the free 6kl Water, 50kwh Electricity and Sewage and Refuse Charges Subsidy?

The subsidy period is effective from the date of approval. In towns where electricity is supplied by Eskom it can take up to 2 months for the free electricity units to be implemented depending on their work schedule

. The account holders must apply for the subsidy annually before the end of March. If there were no changes in your total household income / circumstances only the Indigent status declaration form need to be completed. If the Indigent status declaration form is not completed the subsidy will be terminated on 30 June.

Application forms must be completed accurately and truthfully as disclosure of false information will disqualify you and lead to criminal prosecution.

What happens if I provide false information on the application form?

This will lead to immediate disqualification and credit control action and you will not be allowed to apply for this municipal subsidy. You will be charged with the total amount of the subsidy plus interest. This may also lead to criminal prosecution.

ACCOUNTS AND SERVICES: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Every month, the Council sends out ± 18,000 accounts. Many consumers have difficulty understanding their accounts, which can lead to unnecessary disputes. Below is a guide to understand the accounts format used.

Valuation

Under the heading General Information, the right-hand box contains the council's valuation of your property. There is a land value and an improvements value; the latter refers to the built structure. Both the land and improvement value is used to calculate the rates reflected on your account, using a formula described in our Rates and Valuations section. The first R15 000 valuation of residential properties is exempt.

METER READINGS

Service

The first column on the far left lists codes such as E0703011 or W0703011.

- E0703011 is the code for a typical domestic electricity meter
- W0703011 is the code for a typical domestic water meter

In the case of large companies which use so much water that the meter dial turns over several times a month, a "factoring meter" is used. Which means that if the factor is 20, the meter reading must be multiplied by 20 to get the correct figure. Most domestic accounts list only one electricity meter, but businesses often use three-phase electricity and have three meters listed under Service.

Meter number

Each council meter has its own individual number.

Previous and Current

These columns show the meter reading figures for the previous and current months. Where a council official has been unable to read the meter, these will be estimates, based on the consumption of the previous three (3) months.

Consumption

Consumption. This column translates the meter reading figures in the previous column into actual consumption units, either kilowatt hours (electricity) or kilolitres (water). To give examples of what these figures mean:

- A typical domestic geyser will use around 400 kilowatts a month
- A single kilolitre of water is about five bathtubs, each filled to the brim

To encourage conservation of water, a sliding scale of tariffs is used, in which the more water you use, the more expensive it becomes.

Electricity

This combines all figures from the Consumption column to give the total number of kilowatt hour units. The figure in the right-hand column, under "Amount", is the cost of the electricity used.

Water Services

This combines all figures from the water section of the Consumption column to give the total number of kilolitre units. The figure in the right-hand column, under "Amount", is the cost of the water used.

Assessment Rate

This is a figure based on your land and improvement value, to which a formula has been applied based on such factors as the area you live in, the type of dwelling and market prices in that area for the last twelve (12) months .

Rebates

In certain cases, such as pensioners, special discounts apply. These will be listed under the Details column.

ASSESSMENT RATE AND VALUATIONS

Why should I pay rates?

Municipalities are expected to be self-funding, raising much of their revenue from three key sources: Electricity, Water supplies, and the Property Taxes (known as Rates). The money raised by the council pay for basic services such as Roads, Traffic Services, Water, Sewer, Street Lights, Refuse Removal and Waste Management.

Don't my income taxes already pay for much of that?

No, your income taxes go to Central Government.

How does the system work?

Each municipality determines its rates in a different way. Our Rates are expected to bring in R34,562,392.00 over the 2007/2008 year.

Since rates are taxes on properties, the municipality must first set a value for those properties. Theewaterskloof sets a value on every property in its towns once every four years. There are two separate values for each property: the value of the land, and the value of the improvements, meaning the buildings. Rates are based on land and improvement values.

How are the land values calculated?

The value is based on:

Location by suburb: Some suburbs are more desirable locations than others, and various properties in an area may have a similar location value. An individual valuation does not take into account whether your property has a desirable view, or is located on a noisy road. Valuers survey typical market rates in each area to determine market-related values.

Area of the land: Generally the larger the property, the greater its value.

Rights of the property: Each property is granted certain building rights by council's planning department, and these are key to the property's value.

- A property with commercial or industrial rights is more valuable than one with only residential rights - even if there is only a private residence on the property.
- The more floors a building on the property is permitted to have, the more valuable the rights - even if the existing dwelling is only single-storied.
- The greater the building coverage allowed, the more valuable the property.

How do the valuations match up against market rates?

Generally the council's land values are similar to market rates in the particular neighbourhood. The improvement values, however, are often substantially lower than market rates. These are based on the broad general features of the buildings, and may not take account of whether there's a new swimming pool, an electronic surveillance system, or any other added feature that would influence an estate agent's price for the property.

Will Council not gain from setting values as high as possible?

Municipal authorities are sensitive to this problem, and the council doesn't actually do the valuations. A panel of independent evaluators with professional qualifications is contracted to council to supply this service. Evaluations are made continuously, whenever new properties are built or new townships developed.

When are valuations done?

Valuations were published in June 2004. The next valuations for the entire municipal area will be conducted in 2007/2008 for implementation on 01 July 2009 (2009/2010 financial year)

NEW CONNECTIONS

How do I get a new electricity, water or sewer connection?

There are two different kinds of new connections:

- If you have bought or moved into an existing property, the account must be transferred to your name.
- If you have bought land and erect a new building, the physical cables or pipes must be connected to the municipal grid.

Opening a New Account

Come to the Enquiries Offices in any of our towns, to pay a deposit and sign a Consumers Agreement on services with the Council. Bring along your identity document and a letter from your estate agent, landlord or conveyance, confirming that you are the legal owner or tenant of the property. Payment can be made in cash or by cheque.

Installing a new physical connection

Water and electricity connections are each handled by different sections.

Electricity

To install electrical cables and new meter boxes, contact any of our offices. An official will need to visit the property before giving you a quote on a connection fee. Generally, 14 days from date of payment should be allowed for installation work to be completed.

Water

To install new water or sewer connections, contact any of our offices. Once again, an official will need to visit the property before giving a quote on a connection fee.

ACCOUNTS PROBLEMS

Some people find the municipal accounts difficult to understand.

My electricity bill was the same for months, then suddenly it went up

Each month, an official will visit your house/property to read the meter. The meter should be positioned in a place easily accessible to the council official. But if no one is at home and the official cannot gain access, the billing system will generate an average based on previous consumption. When eventually the council does get to read your meter, one of two things will happen:

- You will have used more electricity than estimated, and you will receive a higher bill than before, covering what was owed in the previous months;
- You will have used less electricity than estimated, and the council will "credit" you in your next account.

I work all day and keep my property locked. Officials can't gain access.

Many working people have this problem. The council's solution is to allow you to read your own meter and phone the readings through to our offices. Write down the numbers on the dial of your water and electricity meters, and phone 028 – 214 3317 or 028 – 214 3300. About once a year the council will insist you on making an arrangement for a meter reader to inspect the dials to confirm that you've been phoning through the correct readings. This must be done before 30th June because of the tariff increase on 1 July.

What happens if I fail to pay?

The Council is taking a tough line on non-payment of accounts, because it is owed a lot of money in unpaid bills. But services are only cut off after several months of non-payment. The process is:

- If you have failed to pay for over 60 days, you will receive a friendly phone call from a council's Debt Collection Unit reminding you to pay.
- If you continue to fail to pay, you will receive a written warning that you have 14 days in which to pay, failing which services will be cut off.
- If you still do not pay, the council will cut off electricity to your property. Water is generally not cut off, except in the case of non-residential properties. In the case of households, water will be restricted to 6kl per month or the installation of a pre-paid meter. If you are having problems with payment, it may be better to visit the Council offices and make an arrangement for credit, which will be reflected on future invoices.

How do I settle an overdue account after the service has been cut off?

You will need to go in person to the Debt Collection Unit at Caledon or any of the other offices where you will need to pay both the overdue accounts and a reconnection fee. You may also be asked to apply in writing for an arrangement with the council's Debt Collection Unit. Reconnection fees differ according to the nature of the disconnection.

The average fee, if the property has simply been "switched" off, are Water R170.00, Electricity R149.80 and Businesses 2 x monthly account. If there are signs that the meter has been tampered with, or that illegal cables/pipes have been installed to bypass the meter, the council will remove cables/pipes, or even the entire meter. The reconnection fee will depend on how many components need to be reconnected. You may also be criminally prosecuted.

I have just bought a property. The previous occupant accumulated water and electricity bills. The Municipality refuses to reconnect me until the bills are paid.

In this instance the law, unfortunately, is not on your side. The owner of a property is responsible for all municipal bills - even those inherited from a previous occupant who defaulted on payments. It's up to you to settle your dispute with the previous occupant privately. Meanwhile, the Council will not reconnect the property until accounts are up to date. It's worth bearing in mind next time you buy or rent a property: ensure that all Council bills have been paid, lest you inherit someone else's troubles.

How do I reclaim a deposit after selling a property?

A service disconnection form must be completed stating the date when services must be disconnected. Deposits are refunded at the Expenditure Section at the Caledon Head Office. In most cases, refunds take the form of a credit on outstanding accounts rather than cash payments. Interest is not paid on deposits. Deposits are refunded within 7 days of the following month. To reclaim your deposit, call (028) 214 3317. Request that the account be finalised before you go to the Caledon Office to fetch the cheque. If you would prefer, you can request the cheque to be mailed to you or deposited directly into your account.

THEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY

(DIRECTORATE: FINANCIAL SERVICES)

NOTICE 1

Please note the following important facts:

- As a public institution we are subjected and committed to the **Batho Pele (People First) Principles** and we encourage you to report any incident of poor service and / or undignified treatment by officials.
- If an **Account has not been received by the 15th of the Month**, please call our offices for a copy of the account or the balance payable.
- Accounts are **Payable monthly on/before the 25th**.
- **Accounts must be paid every month**, without fail in order for us to provide you, the customer with sustainable service delivery. We cannot do so, if you do not pay. Responsible citizens pay their municipal accounts and encourage neighbours, family and friends also to pay.
- **Legal Action** will be instituted against debtors who do not pay their amounts or make appropriate arrangements. Remember that legal costs are expensive and we therefore prefer that you settle or arrange settlement (repayment of arrears) while current accounts are paid in full, before such action is taken. Non payment of accounts may lead to black-listing.
- To reduce the Financial burden of a high once off Assessment Rates Payment, you are encouraged to arrange for **Assessment Rates to be charged Monthly** (due date is before the end on May).
- A **Query Register** is available at all our offices for you to officially report any amount query (the amount queried will be kept in abeyance until the query is solved :

If you were incorrectly charged or overcharged, we will credit the amount overcharged. The amount not disputed must be paid.

THEEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY

(DIRECTORATE: FINANCIAL SERVICES)

NOTICE 2

- Consumers must ensure that our **Meter Readers are enabled to Read Meters**. If you have dogs or if you gates are locked, you may phone councils' offices (Tel: 028 – 214 3300) to supply your readings monthly. Please do not reduce the actual readings as this practice will lead to high charges when we choose to request permission for an independent reading.

Rubble or sand must be removed from meters because if not, such meters cannot be read. This will lead to high future charges.

- If your **Meter Leaks** between the meter and the house/building, it means that water is registering through the meter as consumption and you are liable for the water consumed (even for such leakage)

It is in your own interest that you acquire the services of a private plumber to fix the leak urgently (the cost of fixing the leak is cheaper than water wastage for which you have to pay).

If the **Leak is Before the Meter** (i.e. towards the road), it does not register as consumption and you are therefore not charged for it. You should however still report any leaks, including leaks in public areas.

- **Water is Life!** It is a valuable commodity and supply is limited. Use it sparingly (imagine what you would do without water).
- The **Price of Water** remains a bargain. 1 Litre cold drink costs you approximately R 8.40. We sell water @ R 8.33/1000 litres.

THEEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY

(DIRECTORATE: FINANCIAL SERVICES)

NOTICE 3

- Please report **Vandalism** of municipal property because it is your property which is vandalized.
- Please note that **Littering** is not only a Health Hazard but is also a Crime, punishable by law.
- **Don't burn refuse.**
- **Don't start a refuse heap** in your environment. It attracts others to dump there as well and it creates a breeding ground for germs and pests like flies, cockroaches, mosquitoes and rats which spread diseases.
- Don't throw **garden, domestic or any other refuse** on the pavements or in the streets or storm water inlets because it spoils the environment and pollutes our water resources.
- Report people to the municipality who dump illegal refuse.
- **You do not create jobs by littering. It is actually a major financial burden which hampers service delivery and infrastructure provision and maintenance!**

WE VALUE YOU AS OUR CUSTOMERS !

THEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY

NOTICE 4

INTEREST WRITE-OFF INCENTIVE ON SETTLEMENT OF DEBTS

Council has resolved (Resolution C37/2006 dated 27 July 2006), as a gesture of goodwill, to write-off interest on Arrear Debts, subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS:

- Debtors should sign an Acknowledgement of Debt in order to qualify for such Incentive.
- Government, Councillors and Officials should not be allowed to participate in the Incentive Scheme.
- Debtors must pay their current account plus Arrears monthly.
- Immediate settlement is the due date determined in the letters of demand (usually seven days from date of letter).
- The Incentive Policy is applicable up to 30 June 2010, subject to extension.

The Interest shall be written-off as follows:

	<u>RESIDENTS</u>	<u>BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL/ AGRICULTURAL/ COMMERCIAL</u>	<u>CLEARANCES BY ATTORNEYS</u>
1 Immediate Settlement	100%	75%	#50%
2 Settlement within 1 month	75%	50%	*35%
3 Settlement within 2 month	50%	40%	*20%
4 Settlement within 3 month	25%	20%	*15%

If paid before Clearance certificate is issued

** Calculated from date of Clearance Certificate*

We trust that this will assist you to settle your debts in order for us to provide Sustainable Services to you, our valued clients.

Kindly contact our Debt Collection Section Offices at Caledon. Telephonic enquiries could be directed to 028- 214 3366 / 028 – 214 3408 / 028 – 214 3309 or 028 – 214 3300.



SMS & E-MAIL FACILITIES

Please be informed that the Municipality has the facility to send your monthly account balance, notices and reminders by SMS or E-mail. We hereby kindly request you to furnish us with your cellphone number or e-mail address to update our database.

Send my monthly account balance via sms	Yes	No
Send my monthly account balance via e-mail	Yes	No

Account number	
Account number	
Account number	
Account number	
Account number	
Cellphone Number	
E-maill address	

Signature

Date.....



FOR OFFICIAL USE

Completed by:

Date :

Please complete and return to the nearest office.