

WATER PRICES

**228. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Water:**

I have a supplementary question. What drives the minister's hostility to families with two or more children that he would punish them financially just because they happen to need more water than smaller families?

**Mr D.J. KELLY replied:**

The member for Cottesloe obviously did not listen to the answer to the question. I reminded you that when you were in government and the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Water, the water supply of 2 500 families was reduced to a trickle every year because they were struggling to pay their water bills. That is how you dealt with families.

Prior to COVID, we reduced that number by 60 or 70 per cent. During COVID, we actually stopped that practice altogether. I am not going to be lectured by you about what we can do to assist families. Through the processes we have put in place, we discovered that over 100 households had significantly high water bills because a member of the household was doing home dialysis. That is something that saves taxpayers' money because they are not having dialysis in hospitals. What did we do? We started the Medical Assist program whereby we gave families who have a family member on home dialysis 30 000 litres of free water every two months so that they could do dialysis at home and not end up with a huge water bill. We actually care about workers and we care about their families, and through the structures that we have put in place through the Water Corporation, we are helping those families who, for whatever reason, may be struggling to pay their water bills.