

WATER SEWERAGE RETAIL SERVICES RIVERGLEN WOODLANE CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER



WATER SEWERAGE RETAIL SERVICES RIVERGLEN WOODLANE CUSTOMER CHARTER	
Reference Number	724335
Responsible Business Unit	Corporate Services
Responsible Officer	General Manager Corporate Services
Legislation	Water Industry Act 2012 Water Industry Guidelines No.2 (WG2/01) Water Industry Regulations 2012 Water Retail Code – minor and intermediate Retailers Australian Standards AS SIO 10002-2006
Relevant Delegations	Water Industry Act 2012 Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies Management Guidelines Frameworks	Customer Hardship Policy – Water and Sewerage Services Customer Enquiry, Complaints and Dispute Handling Management Guideline
Link to Strategic Plan	Objective 1.2 - Infrastructure Development
Council resolution	67.3
Date Adopted	8 April 2019
Review Date	2023
Previous Revisions	10 February 2015, 43.4

BACKGROUND

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is located 75km from Adelaide. The total population of the council area is estimated to be approximately 19,742 people.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is comprised of the major population centre Murray Bridge and a number of small rural towns. Two of these rely on a Council operated water and waste water scheme.

The aim of this Charter is to provide our customers with a clear understanding of the standards of service they can expect from us and to outline their rights and responsibilities.

The Water Retail Code – Minor & Intermediate Retailers, developed by The Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA), contains a detailed description of your rights and our responsibilities in providing you with water and/or sewerage retail services and can be found at www.escosa.sa.gov.au.

RETAIL SERVICES PROVIDED

Customers in the areas of Woodlane and Riverglen are provided with drinking water and sewerage and wastewater services. As provider of these services, we commit to certain standards of service and as a customer there are certain undertakings we expect of you to ensure the services can be provided.

DRINKING WATER QUALITY

We will:

- Provide you with drinking water that is safe for drinking and food preparation and in accordance with all relevant health and environmental regulatory requirements.
- Use our best endeavours to minimise the frequency and duration of interruptions or limitations to your water service.
- Provide you with information on any planned interruptions to your water service at least 4 business days prior to us undertaking any works or maintenance.
- Provide an emergency telephone number on our website for you to call in the event of an emergency or interruption to the supply of your water supply.
- In the case of an unplanned interruption or emergency, provide you with information about any impact to your water service as soon as possible.

You will:

- Report any leaks, bursts or quality issues to us as soon as possible by calling the emergency telephone number displayed on our website.
- Provide safe access to the water meter so that we can ascertain your water consumption for billing purposes

SEWERAGE REMOVAL – WOODLANE CUSTOMERS AND RIVERGLEN HOUSEBOAT CUSTOMERS ONLY

We will:

- Remove sewerage and waste water from your property in accordance with all relevant health and environmental regulatory requirements.
- Use our best endeavours to minimise the frequency and duration of interruptions or limitations to your sewerage service.
- Provide you with information on any planned interruptions to your sewerage service at least 4 business days prior to us undertaking any works or maintenance.
- Provide an emergency telephone number on our website for you to call in the event of an emergency or interruption to the supply of your sewerage service.

You will:

- Report any spills, leaks or incursions to us as soon as possible by calling the emergency number displayed on our website.
- Not discharge restricted wastewater into our sewerage infrastructure.

PRICES

We will:

- Publish our price list and Pricing Policy Statement*, which sets out all of the fees and charges associated with the sale and supply of our water & sewerage service, each year by 31 August on our website. We will also make this available at our office located at 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge.
- In the case that any fees and charges set out in the Price List change, publish these on our website two weeks before these fees and charges take effect, and make these available at our Offices.
- Calculate your bill on a pro-rata basis if a tariff rate or charge changes during a billing cycle so that the old tariff rate or charge applies up to and including the date of change and the new tariff rate or charge applies from the date of the change to the end of the billing cycle.

*Price list derived from our approved annual budget and rates declaration

WATER AND SEWERAGE CONCESSIONS

Water and sewerage concessions are administered by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. To check your eligibility for current water and sewerage concessions, assistance or advice visit www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/concessions, phone the Concessions hotline on 1800 307 758 or email concessions@dcsl.sa.gov.au.

CONNECTIONS

Existing Connections – Where your property is currently connected to our infrastructure

We will:

- Maintain your water/sewerage service to the meter or to the connection point on your property.

You will:

- Provide us with the following information about your supply address:
 - Owners name
 - Street number
 - Street Name
 - Suburb
- Pay the relevant connection and account establishment fees as set out in our Price List.

Connections – Where your property is not currently connected to our infrastructure

We will:

Inform you within 14 days whether or not you can be connected to our infrastructure

Connect you to our water/sewerage service within 14 days of you providing us with information required by us and paying the relevant connection and account establishment fees as set out in our Price List.

You will:

- Provide us with the following information about your supply address:
 - Owners name
 - Street number
 - Street Name
 - Suburb
- Pay the relevant connection and account establishment fees as set out in our Price List.

Further details on connecting new properties to our infrastructure is available on our website at www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au or by visiting our office at 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge. We will provide you with a copy of our Connection Policy upon request.

BILLING AND PAYMENTS

We will:

- Issue you with a bill at least quarterly, unless otherwise agreed with you Or
- Include your water and/or sewerage charges on your rates notice, (separately identified), issued quarterly, unless otherwise agreed with you
- Ensure your bill is based on actual meter reading at least once within a 12 month period
- Provide you with a detailed invoice and give you at least 14 business days to pay your bill.

You will:

- Pay our bill by the payment date unless we have agreed on a flexible payment arrangement
- Pay any fee we incur if any of your payment methods are dishonoured.

PAYMENT ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

We will:

- Provide you with the ability to pay your bills by instalments or enter into a flexible payment arrangement
- Offer you the ability to make payments towards future bills, grant payment extensions and agree to have your bill redirected to another person (where that person agrees)
- Inform you about, and assess your eligibility under our Hardship Policy if requested.

You will:

- Inform us if you are having difficulties paying your bills prior to the due date.

Further details on our Hardship Policy are available on our website at www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au or by visiting our office at 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge. We will provide you with a copy of our Hardship Policy upon request.

REVIEWING YOUR BILL / BILLING DISPUTES

We will:

- Not commence our debt collection processes where a bill (or part of a bill) is in dispute
- Review your bill and inform you of the outcome of our review within 30 business days of your request
- Inform you about our independent external dispute resolution process where you remain dissatisfied following our review.

You will:

- Pay any portion of your bill that is not in dispute while your bill is being reviewed or any future bills that become due.

OVERCHARGING

We will:

- Inform you within 10 business days of becoming aware of you being overcharged as a result of an act or omission by us and credit the overcharged amount to your next bill.
- Pay the overcharged amount directly to you within 10 business days if you have ceased to purchase a retail service from us.

UNDERCHARGING

We will:

- In relation to a retail service which is metered, limit the amount we recover from you to the amount undercharged in the 12 months prior to the meter reading date on the last bill sent to you
- In relation to unmetered services, limit the amount we recover from you to the amount undercharged in the 12 months prior to the error being advised to you in writing
- List the undercharged amount as a separate item in a special bill or in your next bill with an explanation of that amount and, if requested, offer you an extended time to pay the amount
- Not charge you interest on the undercharged amount.

DEBT RECOVERY

We will:

- Only commence debt collection/recovery action where you have failed to pay your bill(s) by the due date and you have not contacted us to discuss a payment extension or other flexible payment arrangements (including eligibility under our Hardship Policy).
- Not undertake debt collection activity where we have installed a flow restriction device.

You will:

- Contact us if you are having difficulty paying your bills prior to the due date.

CUSTOMERS WITH SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS

You will:

- Inform us and provide evidence from a registered medical practitioner or a hospital that someone residing at your supply address require the ongoing use of a dialysis machine
- Inform us when the dialysis machine is no longer required at your supply address

We will:

- Register your supply address as an address with special medical needs
- Provide you with a least 4 business days' notice of any planned outages that will affect the supply of water to your property
- Provide you with an emergency telephone contact number in the event of an interruption

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Registration as a customer with special medical needs does not ensure you will be provided with drinking water at all times, for example, in the circumstances of an unplanned interruption outside of our control. Accordingly, you must ensure that you have a contingency plan in place to protect yourself in the event of an unplanned interruption to your supply.

ENTRY TO OUR PROPERTY

We will:

- Provide you with at least 24 hours notice if we need to enter your supply address for the purposes of connecting, disconnecting, restricting, inspecting, repairing or testing your retail service

You will:

- Ensure safe access to our infrastructure (including but not limited to the meter) located at your supply address

WATER FLOW RESTRICTIONS FOR NON - PAYMENT

We will only restrict the flow of water to your property if:

- You have not paid your bill or bills by the due date and you have not contacted us to arrange an alternative payment arrangement
- You do not adhere to our previously agreed payment arrangement and you have not contacted us to discuss any further payment options
- You do not adhere to the terms of our agreement under our Hardship Policy
- You refuse our employees or contractors entry to your property, including but not limited to, where you deny our meter readers access to your property for three consecutive billing cycles and you do not contact us to arrange reasonable alternative access arrangements.
- You are using water services illegally.

Before restricting your water supply, **we will:**

- Use our best endeavours to contact you in person, by telephone, by mail and/or email.
- Provide you with information about our flexible payment arrangements, Government funded concessions and assess your eligibility for participation under our Hardship Policy.
- Issue you with a reminder notice
- Issue you a restriction notice informing you that we intend to restrict your supply in 10 business days if you do not contact us.

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You will:

Contact us as soon as possible to discuss the reasons for your possible restriction and how the issue can be resolved.

DISCONNECTIONS

We will only disconnect your retail service if:

- You request the disconnection
- There is a public health, environment or safety risk to our services from your connection point (e.g. backflow risk or unauthorised industrial waste)
- You are found to be using the services illegally or have refused entry to person(s) authorised to read your meter or undertake maintenance or repairs in accordance with relevant regulatory instruments.

Where you request a disconnection, we will use our best endeavours to issue you with a final account in accordance with your request. We will inform you if you are still required to pay our "Service availability charge" when you request the disconnection.

REINSTATEMENT OF WATER SUPPLY

We will:

- Use our best endeavours to reinstate your supply within a time agreed with you subject to the reasons for disconnection or restriction being rectified and you paying our reinstatement fee.
- Waive the reinstatement fee if you are eligible for payment by instruments under our Hardship Policy.

You will:

- Contact us to discuss how the issue that led to the flow restriction or disconnection can be rectified.
- Pay our reinstatement fee unless it is waived.

TERMINATION OF CONTRACT FOR RETAIL SERVICES

We will:

- Confer on you the right to terminate your contract with us for the supply of a retail service.
- Inform you of any relevant fees or charges payable as a result of your termination

The electronic version accessible on Council's website and Council's electronic record system is the controlled version. Printed copies are considered uncontrolled – before using a printed copy verify that is the current version.

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You will:

- Provide a least 3 business days' notice of your intention to terminate your contract with us for the supply of a retail service
- Pay any relevant fees or charges.

COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

We will:

- Respond or acknowledge your complaint or enquiry within 7 business days
- Refer you to management if you are not satisfied with our initial response or resolution or, if required, escalate you to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Advise you of your option to escalate your complaint to our nominated independent dispute resolution process and provide you with the details of that process.

Further details on our Enquiry, Complaint & dispute resolution procedure are available on our website at www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au or by visiting our office at 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge. We will provide you with a copy of our procedures upon request.

CONTACT US

If you need to know more about us or the content of this Charter, please contact us on the details below

General Enquiries:

08) 8539 1100

Faults & Emergencies:

08) 8539 1100 (24 hrs)

Website:

www.murraybridge.sagov.au

Office:

Local Government Centre, 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge

Business Hours:

8.30 am – 4.45 pm

Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holidays)

Interpreter Services:

131 450 (24hrs, within Australia)

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