Customer Charter Summary

wannonWATER

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wannonwater.com.au

Customer Charter Summary

We're going beyond water for strong communities

Welcome to Wannon Water

Every day we supply South West Victoria with sustainable water services, while leading our communities towards a healthier, more prosperous future. It's a commitment that we're proud to make to the region we call home.

We're your local, dependable experts

From the South Australian border to the Otways. From the Grampians to the coast. Our services take care of more than 30 communities, including residents, farmers, businesses and industries. It's our responsibility to supply you with fresh water, from source to tap, and manage sewage to protect your health and wellbeing.

Putting people first comes naturally to us so we're here to help with a more affordable, reliable and personalised service.

You'll see us around, in towns and on streets, maintaining and upgrading the pipes, pump stations and treatment plants we all need.

We're making a real and positive difference

As locals, we're driven to shape our region for the better. We're committed to working with our communities and strategic partners to support the health and wellbeing of our people and protect our natural environment. We simply believe it's the right thing to do and it all comes back to our greater vision to go beyond water for stronger communities.

It's about delivering sustainable water services together with positive change for our region – and we're proud to be leading the way.

About this document

This Customer Charter Summary provides a summary of your rights as a customer and our obligations to you, as set out in our Customer Charter. Our Customer Charter is based on the Water Industry Standard issued by the Essential Services Commission (ESC). The ESC is an independent regulator of the Victorian water industry and is responsible for promoting the long-term interests of water and sewerage customers regarding price, quality and reliability of services.

More information

You can read the full version of our Customer Charter at wannonwater.com.au or give us a call to obtain a copy.

Our commitment to you

We want you to be satisfied with the services we provide, so we have a number of key service levels for typical customers that we aim to meet or exceed.

Service interruptions

Where available, we aim to supply our customers with reliable water and sewerage services each and every day, but interruptions do happen.

Sometimes we'll need to interrupt your water or sewerage services when we're undertaking work on our pipes or other assets and we'll let you know about this in advance. At other times, the interruption will be unplanned due to unforeseen incidents such as burst mains or damaged pipes.

We have guaranteed service levels that help us ensure you experience a specified level of service. If we don't meet those levels, we'll automatically apply a rebate to your bill.

For example, if you have more than two unplanned water supply interruptions in a 12-month period, and it's our fault, we'll apply an automatic rebate of $100 on your bill.

Water service standards

These standards cover minimum flow rates based on the size of your water meter. The flow is measured at your meter or at the tap closest to your meter because your private pipes and plumbing may be undersized or corroded which can impact the flow rate inside your property.

For example, properties with a standard 20-millimetre meter can expect a minimum flow rate of 20 litres a minute.

The minimum flow rates outlined do not apply in some circumstances such as during droughts, water shortages or emergencies.

The standards also outline the maximum number of unplanned water interruptions you should expect to experience in a 12-month period, the average duration of planned and unplanned water interruptions, and the average time we take to attend a water main burst or leak.

For example, on average, your water supply should be restored within 80 minutes of an unplanned interruption, or within 135 minutes of a planned interruption.

Sewerage service standards

These standards outline the maximum number of sewer blockages you should expect to receive in a 12-month period (nil) and the average and maximum time we take to attend, fix and contain sewer spills and blockages.

For example, we should take an average of 35 minutes to attend a sewer blockage or spill.

Access to your property

Wannon Water employees and people we authorise, such as meter readers, have a right to enter your land for things like reading your meter and carrying out works on our water and sewer assets. They're required to carry and display identification at all times.

If we need to enter your land, we'll cooperate as much as possible with you, cause as little harm and inconvenience as possible, leave your property as near as possible to the condition we found it, and not stay longer than is reasonable.

Under most circumstances, we're required to give you prior notice before we enter your property, such as to carry out any scheduled work. However, this doesn't apply if we enter to read your water meter or respond to an emergency.

Maintenance – who's responsible?

Water supply

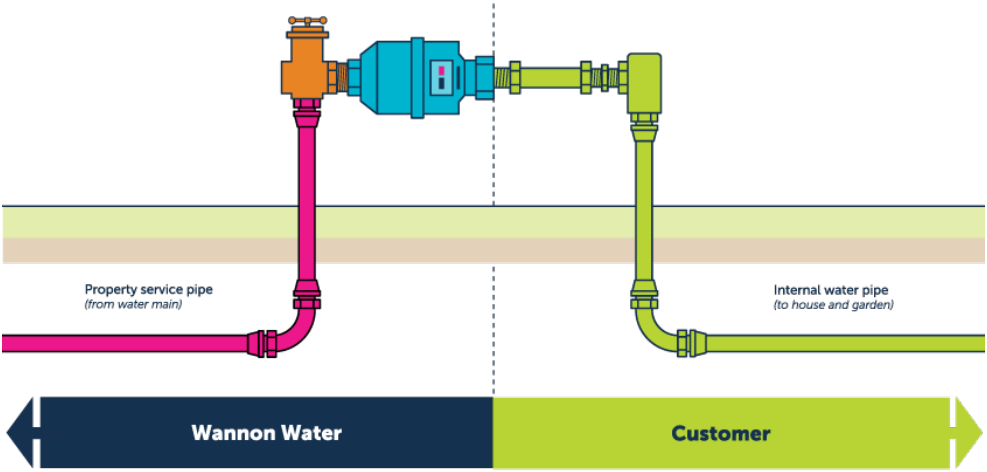
In general, we're responsible for maintaining the water service pipe that runs from our water main up to, and including, the first water meter on your property.

If the meter is more than two metres inside your boundary or if there is no accessible stop valve, we're only responsible for the water service pipe until it reaches your boundary.

If there is no meter or if the meter or part of the service pipe is located within or below a structure on your property, we're only responsible for the water service pipe up to the first accessible stop valve.

As a customer, you're responsible for all other parts of your property's water service pipe. You're also responsible for items such as meter pits and cages, backflow prevention devices, pressure valves, fire services and water service pipes from private extensions and agreements.

The diagram below explains it in detail.



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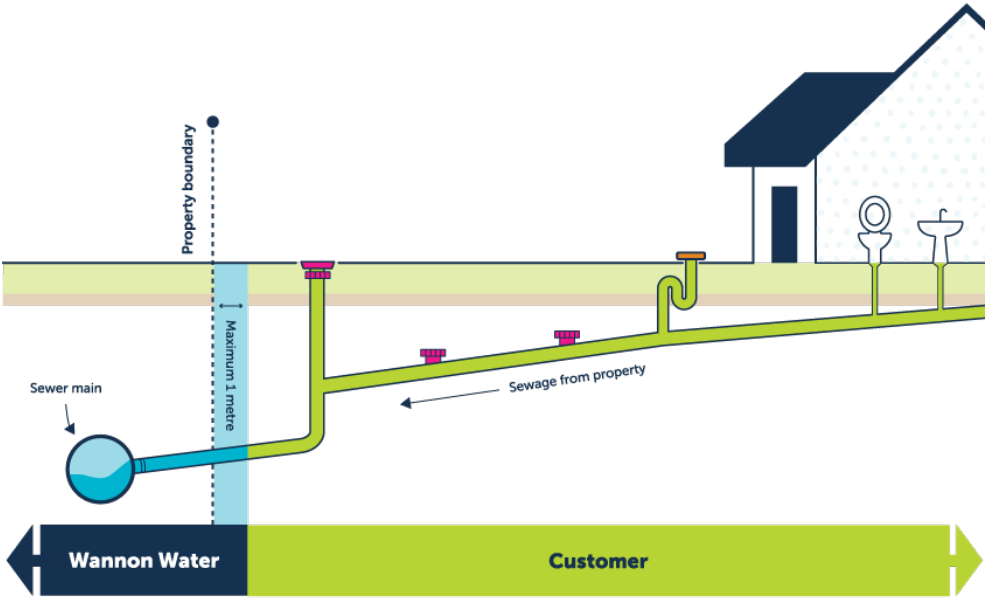
Sewerage services

If our sewer main is located **outside your property's boundary**, we'll maintain the sewer property drain from the main up to the first inspection point on the property.

However, if no inspection point exists we'll maintain the sewer property drain up to one metre from the main. If the building line is located on or close to your property's boundary, we'll maintain the sewer drain up to one metre outside the building line.

As a customer, you're responsible for all other parts of the sewer property drain, any combined sewer property drains located on another serviced property and sewer property drains from private extensions or private agreements.

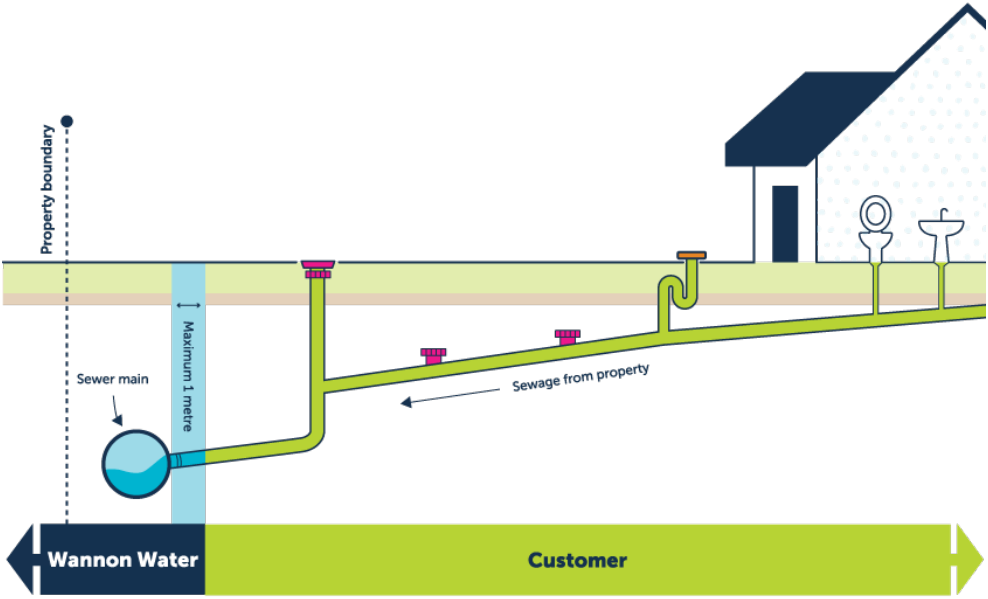
The diagram below explains it in detail.



If our sewer main is located **inside your property's boundary**, we'll maintain the sewer property drain from the main up to the first inspection point after the sewer main.

However, if the opening is more than one metre from the main or, if no inspection point exists, we'll maintain the sewer property drain up to one metre from the main.

The diagram below explains it in detail.



How you can help

Ensure your water meter is kept free of plants, weeds, excess soil and debris so we can access it at all times. This also applies to any sewer access points or inspection openings located on your property.

Make sure you seek approval from us before altering any water or sewerage pipes that are connected to our network.

If you're not sure who is responsible for maintaining the water and sewer assets on your property, give us a call.

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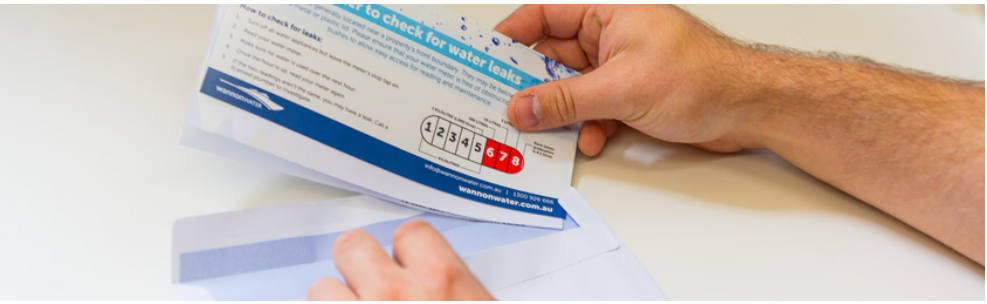

About your bill

Our charges

Our bills include fixed charges that help to cover the cost of the sewerage and water services provided to each property, plus a variable rate based on the amount of water that is used each day.

Owner-occupiers are responsible for all charges. If you rent your home, you will only be charged the variable rate for the water you've used.

Owners of properties where water and sewerage services are available, but not connected, will be billed a fixed charge, helping us to maintain our extensive networks.

A water surcharge applies where rural properties use more than their set maximum annual usage limit. This limit is detailed on the bills of our rural customers.

A fire service charge applies to owners of properties that have a private fire service connection.

A sewage volume charge applies to non-residential customers who dispose of sewage into our system.

How to pay

We'll generally send you a bill via mail or email every three months.

You can pay by:

- Credit card: pay online at wannonwater.com.au
- myWannonWater: use our customer portal at wannonwater.com.au
- Direct debit: enjoy the flexibility of choosing from regular payments or when your bill is due.
- Centrepay: if you receive any type of Centrelink payment, get an agreed instalment amount automatically deducted from your Cenrelink payment.
- Post Billpay: pay in person at any Australia Post office, online using Australia Post's website or by calling 13 18 16.
- BPay: enables you to make payments online through your financial institution.
- Mail: Send your cheque or money order to Wannon Water, PO Box 1158, Warrnambool 3280.
- In advance as agreed to by us.

Ways we can help

As needs change at different times throughout our lives, we recognise that some customer may, from time to time, need support to pay. That's why we've developed a number of programs to assist customers.

With an individual case management approach, our specially trained Customer Relations Team ensures that each customer's needs are addressed sensitively, respectfully and confidentially.

Payment arrangements

We understand that customers can't always afford the minimum payments needed to manage their account. When a customer needing support to pay contacts us, we'll explain the support available in their situation.

Some of these options include payment extensions and negotiating arrangements based on what a customer can reasonably afford to pay. Once support and arrangements are in place, these customers are shielded from having their water supply restricted and further recovery action.

Concessions

If you hold a pension, eligible veterans' card or a health care card, you may be entitled to a concession on your bill. This is often overlooked and contributes to a larger bill than necessary. We'll grant a rebate as soon as we're aware and help you to claim previous rebates which will reduce the outstanding amount on your bill.

Government assistance schemes

The government has assistance schemes available for customers unable to pay their account due to a temporary financial crisis.

We can refer you to relevant government assistance schemes such as the Utility Relief Grant Scheme.

Financial counselling

We can quickly refer customers to a free and independent financial counsellor who will explain their rights and outline options that are available in their particular situation.

Family violence

Family violence impacts all areas of our community. We recognise the role we can play in providing payment solutions and support services for customers so their access to an essential service isn't limited. Confidentiality and safety are our utmost priorities, and we treat every customer who is experiencing or suffering the effects of family violence with respect.

Water usage

Our high water use allowance provides assistance to eligible customers who experience a high water bill.

Customers can also request information on how to reduce their water usage, improve their water efficiency and seek details about relevant government water efficiency programs.

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Enquiries and complaints

We're committed to delivering excellent customer service and handling complaints successfully. We use complaints constructively to improve our services.

Customers can contact us to enquire about their account, options for paying bills, entitlements to a concession, customer support programs and our complaint handling procedures.

Our aim is to resolve complaints at the first point of contact. If a written reply is required, we'll take no longer than 10 working days to respond. Our reply will deal with the substance of the enquiry or complaint and provide reasons for our decision. If you are not satisfied with the reply, you may have the complaint re-assessed at a higher level.

If you are still not satisfied, you also have the right to complain to Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria (EWOV), a not-for-profit, independent and impartial dispute resolution service.

You can contact EWOV on:

Freecall: 1800 500 509 (rates apply to calls made from mobile phones)

Email: ewovinfo@ewov.com.au

Web: ewov.com.au

Mail: Reply Paid 469, Melbourne VIC 8060

Your privacy is important to us

We comply with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and understand the responsibilities that come with being custodians of your personal information, including ensuring it is stored securely and is not disclosed or used for unauthorised purposes.

You can read our Privacy Charter at wannonwater.com.au

Contact us

Please contact us with any enquiries, feedback or to obtain information including a copy of our full Customer Charter

Phone: 1300 926 666 Monday to Friday (8.15am to 5pm) excluding public holidays.

Faults and emergencies: 1300 926 666 (24 hours day, 7 days a week)

Email: info@wannonwater.com.au

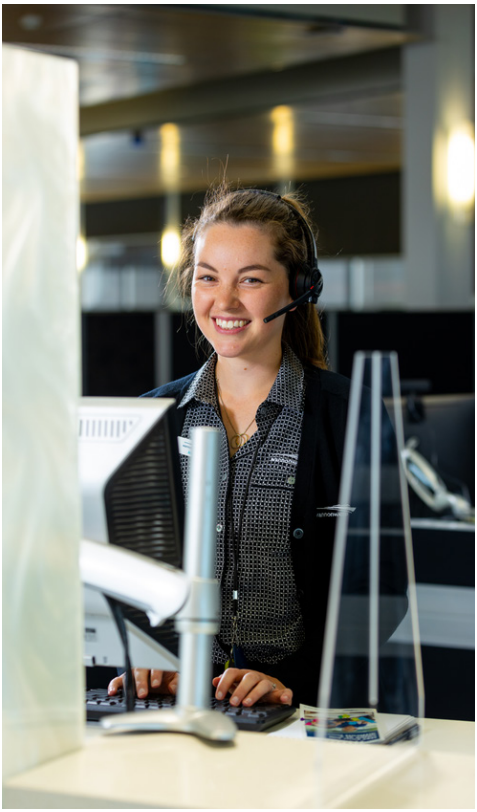
Mail: PO Box 1158, Warrnambool VIC 3280

Customer service centres:

- 25 Gateway Road, Warrnambool
- 66 Gray Street, Hamilton
- 15 Townsend Street, Portland

Website: wannonwater.com.au

Social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.



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