

Information Sheet

Customers of Properties

Supplied with Water by Agreement

(Drinking & Non-Drinking)



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Purpose of this Information

Your property currently receives water from South Gippsland Water under a Water Supply Agreement. The purpose of this information is to outline what a Water Supply Agreement is, what that means to you as a property owner and what other information you may need to know. It is to be used as a guide in conjunction with the Water Supply Agreement.

• What is Potable (Drinking) Water?

Potable or drinking water is water that has been treated to meet the requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003*. It is intended primarily for human consumption and other domestic uses such as bathing and showering.

Potable water is delivered to the property 'Acceptance Point' identified in the Water Supply Agreement.

• What is Raw (Non-Drinking) Water?

Raw or non-drinking water is natural water found in the environment such as rainwater, rivers and ground water or water from lakes and reservoirs. This water source is considered raw and is not suitable for human consumption. This means it should not be used for drinking, food preparation, ice making, cleaning teeth or activities such as bathing and showering.

• What is a Water Supply Agreement (WSA)?

Water supplied through a Water Supply Agreement is not covered by the supply obligations within our Customer Charter. This may be due to a number of reasons including:

- the water supplied being non-potable water (not of drinking water quality), or
- a private pipeline is used to deliver the water to the property, or
- flow and pressure of the water supply cannot be guaranteed, or
- the property is outside a declared Water Supply District.

A Water Supply Agreement is needed to confirm that a property owner understands the water supplied does not meet the supply obligations within the Customer Charter and agrees to accept the supply under those conditions. It protects you as a customer and South Gippsland Water as a supplier.

• What is a water supply district?

A water supply district is an area that the Victorian Water Minister has approved for South Gippsland Water to supply water subject to the availability of suitable pipes, pumps and treatment facilities. South Gippsland Water must have a Water Supply Agreement in place to be able to provide services to properties outside our water supply district.

• What is a Customer Charter?

South Gippsland Water has a Customer Charter that sets out the service levels we need to meet in the supply of water to our customers in line with Essential Services Commission (ESC) guidelines. The ESC is the Victorian independent regulator for water and sewerage services.

• What is an acceptance point?

The Acceptance Point is the point where the water leaves South Gippsland Water's supply pipe and the responsibility for the water supply changes from South Gippsland Water to the property owner(s).

The Acceptance Point is usually the water meter adjacent to South Gippsland Water's water main and is identified in the Water Supply Agreement.

• Why should I sign the Agreement?

South Gippsland Water must have a Water Supply Agreement in place to be able to provide services to properties outside our water supply district or where our supply obligations within our Customer Charter are not met.

The Water Supply Agreement formalises that there is a supply arrangement between South Gippsland Water and the property owner and specifies any service constraints to the water supply.

- **Who can sign the Agreement?**

The property owner should sign the Agreement. If the property owner is a company or entity other than a natural person, the Agreement should be signed in accordance with the relevant legislation.

- **What happens to my water supply once a Water Supply Agreement is signed?**

Your water supply will not change.

- **If I refuse to sign the Agreement, what will happen?**

South Gippsland Water will continue to supply water. If you continue to pay your water bills, we will assume there is an implied agreement in place – it suggests an acceptance of the Agreement.

- **Will my water bill stay the same?**

The charges on your bill will stay the same but on the front page, you will see a red box titled 'Your Charges Explained'. Your water bill also highlights that your property is serviced by a Drinking (Potable) Water Supply Agreement.

- **What happens if I don't pay my water bill?**

Just like all our customers, we will respond to you by issuing a reminder notice and a final notice. If payment is not made, we will review the debt and implement our debt recovery process. Our Customer Services' Team can assist you if you are having difficulty paying your water bill.

- **The Agreement is different to the last Agreement that I was issued. What has changed?**

South Gippsland Water has updated and modified the Agreement to reflect current practices and provide more clarity around the supplied service. The intent of the Agreement remains the same.

- **Will my property always need to be supplied by an Agreement?**

As areas grow, and infrastructure is extended, there is the possibility that the water supply district may be extended and the water supply will meet South Gippsland Water's Customer Charter. Should this occur, you will be notified that the Agreement is no longer required.

- **Does anyone else receive water under a Water Supply Agreement?**

South Gippsland Water currently has approximately 500 customers who receive their water supply under a Water Supply Agreement for their property.

- **Will my water service be affected in the future?**

While the majority of water supply agreements should continue uninterrupted, extreme conditions such as prolonged drought or failing infrastructure may result in South Gippsland Water temporarily or permanently ceasing the supply of water to properties supplied under a Water Supply Agreement. South Gippsland Water will provide advance notice where possible.

- **Can I terminate the Agreement?**

Yes. The Agreement allows both yourself, as the property owner, and South Gippsland Water to cease the supply of water with six months' notice, and contains termination clauses to protect both your rights and the rights of South Gippsland Water.

South Gippsland Water will make all reasonable efforts to maintain the supply to your property. If we consider terminating the Agreement, we will contact you.

If you wish to terminate the Agreement, our Plumbing team can arrange for the service disconnection. In some instances, the termination of the Agreement may mean that your property cannot be reconnected in the future.

Please note that you are not entitled to any compensation for the termination of the Agreement. Refer to general conditions on the agreement.

- **What will happen if I want to sell my property?**

The Property Information Statement provided to the purchaser's solicitor or conveyancer will note the property is serviced with a water supply by Agreement and a copy of the Water Supply Agreement will be provided.

- **The property is serviced by a private water supply works**

This occurs when the water main does not front the property boundary. The private water service pipe is usually located along the road reserve.

The property owner will be charged for all water usage beyond the Acceptance Point.

The Acceptance Point is usually located at the exit point of South Gippsland Water's water main.

The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and any costs associated with the upkeep of the private water service pipe.

It is recommended that the property owner regularly inspects the pipe route for leaks.

The property owner may consider installing appropriately located isolation valves which may assist when repair work needs to be undertaken.

Any low pressure supply issues experienced beyond the Acceptance Point may be reflective of the size of the private water service pipe.

- **The property is serviced by a private water supply network**

This occurs when a property is one of a group of properties which receive water from a private water supply network. The private water supply network supplies a number of properties through a common, privately owned pipe.

The Acceptance Point is the primary meter, which should be adjacent to South Gippsland Water's water main.

The property owners are jointly responsible for the maintenance and any costs associated with the upkeep of the water pipe from the Acceptance Point (primary meter) and solely responsible for the maintenance and any costs associated with the upkeep of the pipe from the secondary meter.

The property owners will be charged for all water usage recorded on their meter (secondary meter) and a share of the surplus water usage on the primary meter. The surplus water usage is the difference between the usage recorded on the primary meter less the usage of all the secondary meters.

It is recommended that the property owners regularly inspect the pipe route for leaks.

The property owner may consider installing appropriately located isolation valves which may assist when repair work needs to be undertaken.

Any low pressure supply issues experienced beyond the Acceptance Point may be reflective of the size of the private water service pipe.

- **The property is serviced by a privately owned water pipe that crosses neighbouring private land**

This usually occurs when the water main does not front the property's boundary.

The property owner will be charged for all water usage beyond the Acceptance Point (meter) which should be located at the exit point of South Gippsland Water's water main.

The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and any costs associated with the upkeep of the privately owned water pipe.

As there may be no easement over the privately owned pipe, it is the property owner's responsibility to arrange with the neighbour regarding access to the land where the pipe is located.

It is recommended that the property owner regularly inspects the pipe route for water leaks. Appropriately located isolation valves may assist when repair work needs to be undertaken.

- **I am on a private service, whose responsibility is it to make any repairs to it?**

It is the responsibility of the property owners connected to this private service to engage a licenced plumber to repair any leaks at the property owners cost.

- **I am on a private service do I get the same water as people connected to the reticulated water main?**

Yes, unless your supply is via a non-drinking (raw) water main.

- **I am connected by a private service, am I guaranteed the same quality and pressure as I would if I were connected to the reticulated water main?**

No, there is no guarantee that you will receive the same quality and pressure of your water.

- **My private service constantly leaks, what can I do?**

You can continue to repair or replace it or contact SGW advising you wish to terminate supply.

- **Why doesn't SGW extend the water main to service my property?**

Private services are not the responsibility of SGW and generally speaking water mains are extended by the developer when subdivision occurs.

- **Can my neighbour connect to my private service.**

No, SGW will not consent to new connections to private services.

More information

If you have any queries regarding your Water Supply Agreement contact South Gippsland Water's Customer Service team on 1300 851 636 or email sgwater@sgwater.com.au

Visit the South Gippsland Water website at www.sgwater.com.au