

## 1 Purpose

South Gippsland Water (SGW) complies with the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014). As part of this Act, the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) has provided a set of Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) to provide a guide to organisations that handle personal information.

We recognise the importance of privacy, and that all parties have a right to control how their personal information is collected and used. We are strongly committed to protecting your personal information at all times.

This Privacy Charter explains:

- What personal information South Gippsland Water will collect and why
- Who South Gippsland Water can disclose this information to
- How South Gippsland Water handle your personal information in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles
- Your rights to access and correct your information
- What South Gippsland Water will do in the event that your privacy is breached
- What to do if you think South Gippsland Water has mishandled your personal information.

## 2 Privacy Charter

The following items define South Gippsland Water's process for complying with each element of the Information Privacy Principles. For a full copy of the Information Privacy Principles, please refer to the [OVIC website](#).

This charter applies to the personal information of South Gippsland Water customers, staff, board members and contractors. It does not apply to the business information of contractors, except where that information includes personal information.

### 2.1 Collection

2.1.1 South Gippsland Water may collect personal information that we require for the purpose of our business activities, functions and as otherwise required or permitted by law. The types of personal information that may be collected by us for these purposes include:

- Your name
- Current and previous addresses
- Addresses at which our services are provided
- Email addresses, telephone and facsimile numbers
- Date of birth

- Driver licence details
- Pension card information
- Concession card information
- Bank account details
- Health information, for example vaccination status.

2.1.2 For operational reasons, South Gippsland Water may collect and retain additional information beyond those items listed above from staff, directors, service providers and contractors. This may include:

- The results of police record checks
- Records of declared pecuniary (or other) interests
- Registers of gifts, benefits and hospitality declarations
- Registers of Conflict of Interests declarations
- Records of internal disciplinary matters
- Records pertaining to health and safety incidents
- Records pertaining to family violence arrangements
- Other personal or sensitive information.

2.1.3 As per the requirements of the IPPs, this information will be collected only where necessary and disclosed only under circumstances where South Gippsland Water has a legal obligation to do so.

2.1.4 South Gippsland Water may collect personal information in several ways, including over the counter and using forms, the telephone and internet. The types of personal information South Gippsland Water will collect from you will depend on the circumstances in which that information is collected.

2.1.5 Personal Information is defined under the Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014) as information or an opinion (including as part of a database) that is recorded in any form and whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent or can be reasonably ascertained from that information. It specifically excludes any information of a kind that comprises Health Information, which is covered separately under the Health Records Act (2001).

## 2.2 Use and Disclosure

2.2.1 South Gippsland Water will store, use and disclose personal information to conduct our business activities and may provide the personal information to contractors or third parties (including account collection and credit reporting agencies) for the purposes of conducting our business activities.

2.2.2 South Gippsland Water uses and discloses personal information to facilitate our compliance with relevant statutory and other legal obligations and we may, on request by other statutory agencies, local government and the Victorian Government, disclose personal information to facilitate their compliance with their statutory and legal obligations and to facilitate their enforcement of applicable laws.

2.2.3 The personal information South Gippsland Water collects will not be used or disclosed for any other purpose without your consent, unless permitted under the Privacy Legislation.

2.2.4 South Gippsland Water does not sell, rent or trade or otherwise make your personal information available except for the purposes mentioned in this Privacy Charter.

## 2.3 Data Quality

2.3.1 South Gippsland Water will make every effort to ensure the personal information we collect, use and disclose, is complete, accurate and relevant for the purposes of our use or disclosure.

## 2.4 Data Security

2.4.1 South Gippsland Water will take all reasonable steps to securely store and protect the information we hold from interference, unauthorised use, disclosure, access, modification, loss or misuse. This includes confidentiality requirements for employees and contractors and having in place document storage security, policies, systems and site access restrictions.

2.4.2 South Gippsland Water will safeguard and help prevent unauthorised access to personal information, to maintain data security and ensure we use and disclose the information we collect appropriately.

2.4.3 Where South Gippsland Water holds personal information in conjunction with others, South Gippsland Water will allow each individual access to their own personal information and to the joint information, but not to the personal information of other individuals.

2.4.4 Other individuals will not be given account balances, transaction details or other personal information relating to someone else's account, unless the account holder gives South Gippsland Water express permission to disclose the information to individuals not listed on an account.

2.4.5 The applicability of the above section is limited by arrangements around confidentiality under family violence legislation. In situations where an account is held by an individual who is experiencing family violence, access to this information by other account holders may be restricted. With customer consent, this information may be used to refer family violence victims to the relevant support services.

2.4.6 We will take reasonable steps to destroy or permanently de-identify personal information if it is no longer needed for any purpose.

## 2.5 Openness

- 2.5.1 On request by an individual, South Gippsland Water will take reasonable steps to let the individual know what personal information is held about them.
- 2.5.2 Please be aware that this applies only to your own personal information. For inquiries about non-personal information, requests should be made under the Freedom of Information Act (1982). Please see the Freedom of Information section of SGW's website for details on how to make such an application.

## 2.6 Access and Correction

- 2.6.1 Customers may request access to their personal information held by South Gippsland Water. This information may not be provided where exemptions exist within the Privacy Legislation. Examples include, without limitation, where providing access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals or if the request for access is frivolous or vexatious.
- 2.6.2 South Gippsland Water will take reasonable steps to hold only accurate, complete and current personal information. Records will be updated and corrected when customers advise us that their personal information has changed.
- 2.6.3 Customers may request access to their personal information by contacting the South Gippsland Water Privacy Officer by post, or by sending an email containing their request to [sgwater@sgwater.com.au](mailto:sgwater@sgwater.com.au)
- 2.6.4 Customers are requested to provide as much detail as possible about the information sought in order to facilitate the request. Please note that in the case of complex or difficult inquiries we may charge for the reasonable cost of processing a request.

## 2.7 Unique Identifiers

- 2.7.1 A unique identifier is defined as an identifier (usually a number) assigned by an organisation to an individual uniquely to identify that individual for the purposes of the operations of that organisation, but does not include an identifier that consists only of the individual's name. It also excludes identifiers as defined under the Health Records Act 2001. These include identifiers such as tax file numbers and Centrelink Customer Reference Numbers.
- 2.7.2 South Gippsland Water will not assign unique identifiers to individuals unless the assignment of unique identifiers is necessary to enable us to carry out any business functions efficiently. Further, we will not require an individual to provide a unique identifier unless required or authorised by law.
- 2.7.3 South Gippsland Water will not adopt, make use of, or disclose unique identifiers assigned to an individual by another organisation except where a legal obligation exists to do so, or the individual grants consent.

## 2.8 Anonymity

Wherever it is lawful and practicable, we will provide individuals with the option of not identifying themselves when entering into transactions with us. However, if you do not provide South Gippsland Water with the personal information requested, then it may not be possible to supply you the services requested.

## 2.9 Information Disclosed Outside of Victoria

2.9.1 Some customer information including names, addresses and contact details collected by South Gippsland Water, may be maintained in applications which utilise cloud-based or other off-site storage. Where SGW discloses personal information to a third party which is located overseas or which will hold your personal information overseas, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that the overseas recipient of your personal information handles your personal information in accordance with the Victorian Privacy Laws.

2.9.2 We may transfer personal information about an individual to someone who is outside Victoria if we reasonably believe that the recipient of the information is subject to a law or laws which effectively uphold principles substantially similar to the Information Privacy Principles, the individual consents or as otherwise provided for in Privacy Legislation.

## 2.10 Sensitive Information

2.10.1 We will not collect sensitive information about an individual unless the individual has consented, the collection is required under law, the collection is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of an individual, or the collection is necessary for a legal or equitable claim.

2.10.2 Sensitive information is defined as personal information that touches on matters such as racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs, membership of professional associations and trade unions, political affiliations or criminal records.

## 2.11 Enquiries and Complaints

2.11.1 Customers can contact the South Gippsland Water Privacy Officer if they have questions about our Privacy Charter or wish to raise a complaint.

2.11.2 South Gippsland Water encourages customers that have a privacy complaint to tell us so that we can act quickly. The complaint will be investigated promptly, and SGW will attempt to answer any questions and do all we can to address the concerns of the complainant. This complaint will be addressed within 30 days.

2.11.3 In the event that you are not satisfied with South Gippsland Water's response to your complaint, you have the right to refer the matter to OVIC for mediation. For information on OVIC's dispute resolution process, please see the [OVIC website](https://www.ovic.vic.gov.au), email <mailto:enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au>, or phone 1300 006 842 within business hours.

### 3 Notification of Breaches

In the event that **South Gippsland Water** becomes aware of any breach of privacy requirements or unauthorised access to personal or sensitive information, we will take steps to notify all parties whose privacy may have been breached. This notification may be made by e-mail, letter or phone call. It will contain information detailing the information that may have been accessed, and any remedial steps **South Gippsland Water** is undertaking.

Additionally, all breaches of privacy requirements will be reported to OVIC, as per the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014).


### 4 Website collection

4.1.1 We provide notice to individuals that by using our websites, personal information may be collected by us, and in some instances our Internet Service Provider, and that this personal information may be used for monitoring use of our website and for the purpose of promoting water and sewerage related services and products and market research. Information collected may include the dates and times you access our website, the domains from which you visit, your activity in our website and your Internet Protocol address. This information is sometimes called “clickstream data”. We may use this data to analyse trends and statistics in order to improve the service we provide through our website.

4.1.2 We may use cookie technology on our websites to provide information and services to web site visitors. Cookies are pieces of information that a website transfers to your computer’s hard disk for record keeping purposes and are a necessary part of facilitating online transactions. Most web browsers are set to accept cookies. Cookies are useful to estimate our number of visitors and determine overall traffic patterns through our websites. If you do not wish to receive any cookies you may set your browser to refuse cookies. This may mean you will not be able to take full advantage of the services on our website.

This document is to be reviewed in **February 2027** or earlier as required.

This document must not be released to external parties without approval by the Managing Director.

DOCUMENT APPROVAL		
Approved:	Mgr Governance Risk & Performance	Date: 05/02/2024
Managing Director Signature:		

*Notify Community Relations Officer when revised for external publishing*