



## Customer Charter– sewerage/CWMS services

The District Council of Grant is a regional local government body located on the Limestone Coast, South Australia.

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

The *Water Retail Code-Minor & Intermediate Retailers*, developed by Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA), contains a detailed description of your rights and our responsibilities in providing you with CWMS services and can be found at ([www.escosa.sa.gov.au](http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au)).

### CWMS services provided

We provide customers in Allendale East, Donovans, Port MacDonnell, Cape Douglas, Pelican Point and Tarpeena with Community Wastewater management Schemes (CWMS).

#### EFFLUENT REMOVAL (QUALITY)

We will:

- remove effluent and wastewater 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 CWMS service,
- provide you with information on any planned interruptions to your CWMS 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 CWMS service and
- provide de-sludging of septic tanks connected into the CWMS once every four years.

You:

- will report any spills, leaks or incursions to us as soon as possible by calling the emergency telephone number displayed on our website,
- will not discharge restricted wastewater into our CWMS infrastructure,
- may be liable to pay us for a proportion of the costs reasonably attributable to you for a blockage, burst

or leak. We will advise you of the reasons for cost recovery in these circumstances and any amounts payable will be subject to the payment assistance and financial hardship provisions of your agreement with us,

- contact us to discuss our requirements for disposal of industrial or non-domestic waste into our CWMS infrastructure and
- allow access to Councils contractor to de-sludge your septic tank when notified.

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### Our prices

#### PRICE LIST

We will:

- publish our Price List (Rates & Charges), which sets out all of the fees and charges associated with the sale and supply of your CWMS service, each year by 31<sup>st</sup> July on our website at [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au). We will also make this available at our office at 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier,
- publish our Pricing Policy Statement, which outlines how our fees and charges are compliant with ESCOSA's pricing principles set out in its Price Determination, each year by **31<sup>st</sup> August** on our website at [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au). We will also make this available at our office at 324 Commercial Street West Mount Gambier and
- in the case that any fees and charges set out in the Price List change, publish these on our website 30days days prior to these fees and charges taking effect, and make these available at our office.

#### SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGE

The Local Government Act 1999/Roxby Downs Indenture Ratification Act 1982 allows us to recover a “service availability charge” from you where our CWMS infrastructure runs adjacent to your property. We will require you to pay our “CWMS Vacant service charge” where a property is vacant but has a CWMS connection point supplied to the property.

#### SEWERAGE CONCESSIONS

Sewerage concessions are administered by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. To check your eligibility for current sewerage concessions, assistance or advice visit

[www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/concessions](http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/concessions), phone the Concessions Hotline on 1800 307 758 or email [concessions@dcsl.sa.gov.au](mailto:concessions@dcsl.sa.gov.au).

## Connections

### EXISTING CONNECTIONS - WHERE YOUR PROPERTY IS CURRENTLY CONNECTED TO OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

We will:

- maintain property connections to CWMS even with change of property ownership and
- all service charges remain on the property and appear on the property rates.

You will:

- provide us with ownership contact details on purchasing a property.

### CONNECTIONS – WHERE YOUR PROPERTY IS NOT CURRENTLY CONNECTED TO OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

We will:

- allow connection of new properties to our infrastructure or create new connections for newly created allotments in accordance with our CWMS Policy which is available on our web-site at [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier. We will provide you with a copy of our CWMS Policy upon request.

You will:

- Lodge an On-site Wastewater Works application for approval prior to connecting into the CWMS and
- pay the relevant connection and application fees as set out in our Price List.

## Billing and payments

We will:

- include your CWMS service charges on your rates notice, (separately identified), issued quarterly, unless otherwise agreed with you and
- offer you the ability to pay your bills in person, by mail, by direct debit.

You will:

- pay our bill by the payment due date unless we have agreed on a flexible payment arrangement and
- 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) and

- inform you about, and assess your eligibility for, our Hardship Program if requested.

You will:

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

Further details on our Hardship Policy are available on our website at [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier. 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 and
- inform you about our independent external dispute resolution body 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 and
- pay the overcharged amount directly to you within 10 business days if you have ceased to purchase a CWMS service from us.

## Undercharging

We will:

- 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 and
- not charge you interest on the undercharged amount.
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## 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 for our Hardship Program).

You will:

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

## Entry to your 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 septic tanks or CWMS service and
- notify you in writing when de-sludging of septic tanks will be carried out and who the contractor is.

You will:

- ensure safe access to our infrastructure located at your supply address and
- provide safe and clear access to your septic tank for Council contractors on when notified.

## Disconnections

Subject to any applicable regulatory requirements that prohibit disconnection, we will only disconnect your CWMS service if:

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

Where you request a disconnection (and it is not prohibited), 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.

## Termination of contract for CMWS services

We will:

- confer on you the right to terminate your contract with us for the supply of CWMS services and
- inform you of any relevant fees or charges payable as a result of your termination.

You will:

- pay any relevant fees or charges.

## Complaints and dispute resolution

We will:

- respond or acknowledge your complaint or enquiry within 5 business days,
- refer you to the relevant manager if you are not satisfied with our initial response or resolution or, if required, escalate you to the CEO and
- advise you of your option to escalate your complaint to our nominated independent dispute resolution body and provide you with the details of that organisation.

Further details on our Enquiry, Complaint & Dispute Resolution Procedures are available on our website at [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier. We will provide you with a copy of our policy and procedures upon request.

## Contacting 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 8721 0444

Faults & Emergencies 08 8721 0444

Website [www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au](http://www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au)

Email [info@dcgrant.sa.gov.au](mailto:info@dcgrant.sa.gov.au)

Office 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier

Business hours 8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri