


	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Water Industry Act 2012</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Customer Charter – Sewerage Services</h3>	<b>Version No:</b>	1.3
		<b>Issued:</b>	June 2015
		<b>Last Review:</b>	September 2021
		<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2024

Name of Council	Wudinna District Council
File reference	9.63
Responsibility:	Governance
Policy Level	Mandatory S 3.1 Water Retail Code
Minutes reference:	21 September 2021 10.5.3 b)
Next review date:	Council will endeavour to review this policy every 3 years or upon change in legislation
Applicable Legislation:	Water Industry Act 2012 Local Government Act 1999 South Australian Public Health Act 2011 South Australian Public Health (Wastewater) Regulations 2013
Related Policies & Procedures:	Complaints Policy and Procedure Debt Recovery Policy Planning, Building and Wastewater Management Policy Request for Service Policy and Procedure Water Industry Act 2012 Customer Hardship Policy
Related Documents	Water Retail Code – Minor and Intermediate Retailers 2015 Water Industry Retail Licence – 2 February 2013

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**Wudinna District Council is the holder of a water retailer’s license under the Water Industry Act 2012 covering the provision of sewerage services through its Community Wastewater Management Scheme (CWMS).**

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## 1. AIM

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

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

## 2. SEWERAGE SERVICES PROVIDED

We provide residents in the majority of the Wudinna Township with access to a Community Wastewater Management Scheme.

## 3. SEWERAGE REMOVAL (QUALITY)

We will:

- 3.1 Remove sewage/wastewater/effluent having been passed through an approved wastewater management system from your property in accordance with all relevant health and environmental regulatory requirements;
- 3.2 Use our best endeavours to minimise the frequency and duration of interruptions or limitations to your sewerage service;
- 3.3 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;
- 3.4 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:

- 3.5 Will report any spills, leaks or incursions to us as soon as possible by calling the emergency telephone number displayed on our website;
- 3.6 Will not discharge restricted or prohibited wastewater into our sewerage infrastructure;
- 3.7 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 contract with us;


## 4. SERVICE CHARGE

We will:

- 4.1 Publish our annual service charge, which sets out all of the charges associated with the supply of your sewerage service, each year in your rates notice and by 30 September on our website [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au). We will also make this available at our office at 11 Burton Terrace Wudinna 5652.
- 4.2 Publish our Fees and Charges Register on our website [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au). Fees and charges will be set in line with ESCOSA's pricing principals, set out in its Price Determination each year by 30 September. We will also make the Fees and Charges Register available at our office at 11 Burton Terrace Wudinna 5652.
- 4.3 In the case that any charges change, publish these on our website [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au) 14 days prior to these fees and charges taking effect and make these available at our office.
- 4.4 Publish a price list and pricing policy statement on Council website.

## 5. 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).

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## 6. CONNECTIONS

### 6.1 Existing Connections – Where Your Property is Currently Connected to Our Infrastructure

We will:

6.1.1 Continue with and manage all current connections to the Community Wastewater Management Scheme unless a request is made in writing by a customer wishing to disconnect to operate another approved and compliant waste water management system, and approval is given for that. Only systems formally approved within Council policy will be considered.

You will:

6.1.2 Provide us with the following information about your supply address, if requested

- a) Any damage or disrepair of the septic tank, piping or associated infrastructure
- b) any discharge or change in wastewater quality that may affect the operation of the Community Wastewater Management Scheme
- c) any changes to the sewerage or wastewater infrastructure

### 6.2 New Connections – Where Your Property is Not Currently Connected to Our Infrastructure

We will:

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

6.2.2 Allow/require connection to the sewerage service following approval of an application for the installation of a waste control system at your property in accordance with the requirements of the South Australian Public Health (Wastewater) Regulations 2013.

6.2.3 Advise owners of non-residential premises of the annual charge to be made for the service, calculated in accordance with the Local Government Association of South Australia's *Code for Establishing and Applying Property Units as a Factor for the Imposition of Annual Service Charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems*.

You will:

6.2.4 Submit an application for the installation of a waste control system at your property in accordance with the requirements of the South Australian Public Health (Wastewater) Regulations 2013 and pay the required fees;

6.2.5 Provide any ancillary information that may be required to properly assess your wastewater systems suitability to be connected to a Community Wastewater Management Scheme.

Further details on connecting new properties to our infrastructure is available on our website [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 11 Burton Tce Wudinna 5652.

## 7. BILLING AND PAYMENTS

We will:

7.1 Include your annual service charges on your rates notice (separately identified) which sets out all of the charges associated with the supply of your sewerage service, in the first rates notices issued after the declaration of rates

7.2 Include your sewerage levy on your rates notice, (separately identified), issued quarterly unless paid in full.


7.3 As with your rates provide you with the option of payment in full by the due date or payment in quarterly instalments.

7.4 As with your rates, offer you a range of options for payment of your service charge.

You will:

7.5 Pay our bills by the payment due date we have agreed on a flexible payment arrangement;

7.6 Pay any fee we incur if any of your payment methods are dishonoured

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## 8. PAYMENT ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

We will:

- 8.1 Provide you with the ability to pay your bills by instalments or enter into a flexible payment arrangement;
- 8.2 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);
- 8.3 Inform you about, and assess your eligibility for, our Hardship Program if requested.

You will:

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

Further details on our Water Industry Act 2012 Customer Hardship Policy are available on our website at [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 11 Burton Terrace Wudinna 5652. We will provide a copy of our Water Industry Act 2012 Customer Hardship Policy upon request.

## 9. REVIEWING YOUR BILL/BILLING DISPUTES

We will:

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

You will:

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

## 10. OVERCHARGING

We will:

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 Pay the overcharged amount directly to you within 10 business days if you have ceased to purchase a sewerage service from us.

## 11. UNDERCHARGING

We will:

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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.
- 11.3 Not charge you interest on the undercharge amount.


## 12. DEBT RECOVERY

We will:

- 12.1 Only commence debt collection/necessary 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 assessment under our Water Industry Act 2012 Customer Hardship Policy).
- 12.2 Not undertake debt collection activity where we have installed a flow restriction device.

You will:

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

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### 13. ENTRY TO YOUR PROPERTY

We will:

13.1 Unless in an emergency or where a public health risk may exist, provide you with at least 24 hours' notice if we need to enter your supply address for the purpose of inspecting or testing your sewerage service or accessing Council's CWMS easement for the purposes of inspection, maintenance or repair.

You will:

13.2 Ensure safe access to your supply address.

### 14. DISCONNECTIONS

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

14.1 You request the disconnection and it has been approved by Council;

14.2 There is a public health, environment or safety risk to our services from your connection point;

Where you request a disconnection (and it is approved), we will use our best endeavours to refund any portion of a service charge paid to which you may be entitled.

### 15. COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

We will:

15.1 Respond or acknowledge your complaint or enquiry within seven business days.

15.2 Refer you to our Chief Executive Officer if you are not satisfied with our initial response or resolution.

15.3 Advise you of your option to escalate your complaint to the State Ombudsman, South Australia, and provide you with the details of that organisation.

Further details on our Council Complaint Handling Procedure are available on our website at [www.wudinna.sa.gov.au](http://www.wudinna.sa.gov.au) or by visiting our office at 11 Burton Terrace Wudinna 5652. We will provide you with a copy of our procedures upon request.

### 16. CONTACTING US

If you need to know more about the content of this Charter or need assistance, please contact us as detailed below:

General Enquiries:	Business Hours	08 8680 2002
Faults and Emergencies:	Business Hours	08 8680 2002
	After Hours	0427 802 358

Email:	<a href="mailto:admin@wudinna.sa.gov.au">admin@wudinna.sa.gov.au</a>
Office:	11 Burton Terrace Wudinna SA 5652
Business Hours:	8.30am to 5.00pm