

Barwon Water

About our Customer Charter

1 March 2023



The words **we** and **us** in this book mean Barwon Water.

Hard words

This book has some hard words.



hard words

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.



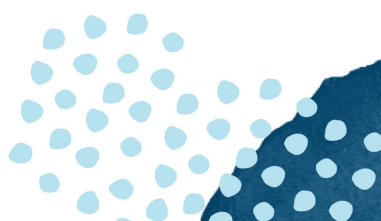


You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what the book is about
- find out more information.





About this book

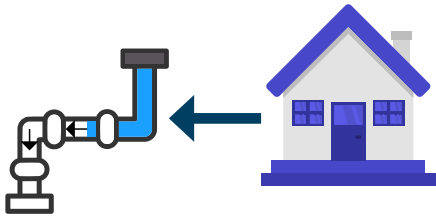
This book is written by Barwon Water.



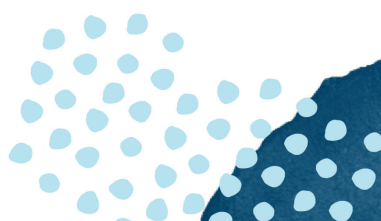
Barwon Water



- brings water to your house or business



- takes used water from your house or business.





This book has information about our **customer charter**.

Our customer charter says

- what we **must** do for you



- what you **must** do for us.

Our customer charter follows the rules of the water industry in Victoria.

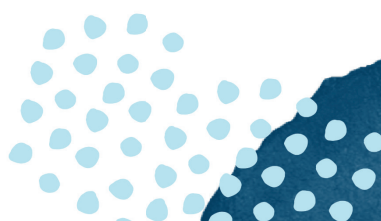
Our customer charter is for anyone who uses our water services.

This book has the main points of our customer charter.



You can read the full customer charter

- on our website
- by contacting us and asking for the full customer charter.





How to contact us



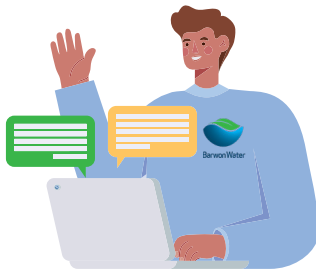
- Call us on 1300 656 007



- Email us at info@barwonwater.vic.gov.au



- Write us a letter to
Barwon Water
PO Box 659
Geelong VIC 3220



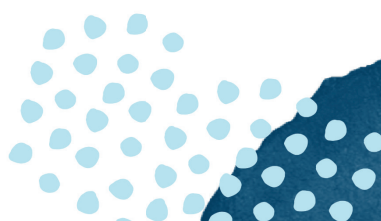
- Chat to us on our website by using web chat
www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au

You can use web chat between
8am and 6pm on Monday to Friday



- Look at our website

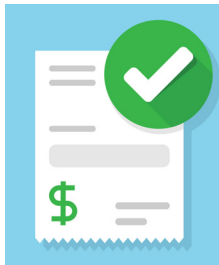
www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au



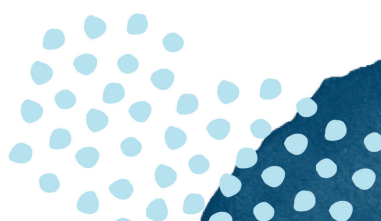


About connecting your water

We will connect your water within 10 working days, or at a date agreed with you, if

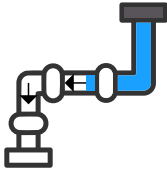


- you have paid to have your water connected
- you have agreed to pay to have your water connected
- you have followed the fair rules we asked you to follow for having your water connected.





About recycled water services



Customers who get both regular water and recycled water have two different pipes.



One pipe brings regular water for

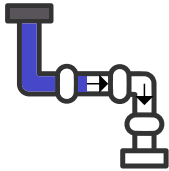
- drinking



- bathing



- washing.



Another pipe, which is purple, brings recycled water.

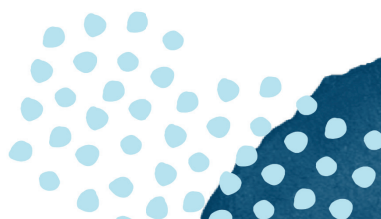
Recycled water should only be used for



- flushing toilets



- watering the garden.





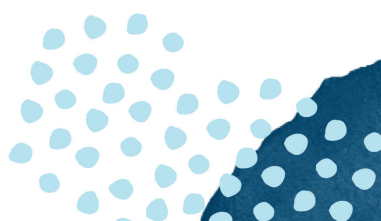
About your water bills

You **must** pay for your water services.

You can choose to get your water bill

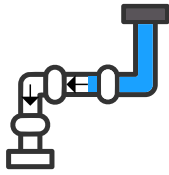


- sent in the mail
- sent in an email
- sent to someone who is allowed to pay your water bill.





About water charges



We will charge you for water based on

- how you are connected to our water services
- how much water you use.



Your water charges may include

- A **fixed** water charge



A fixed charge is the amount a house or business owner pays for the water service.

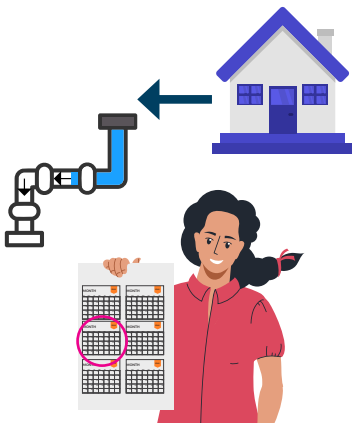
The fixed charge **must** be paid every 3 months.



- A charge for the amount of regular water you use.

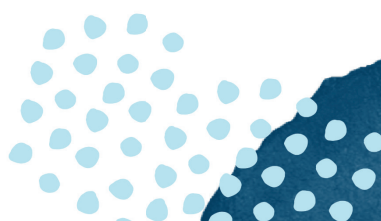


- A charge for the amount of recycled water you use.



- A charge for taking away used water from your house or business.

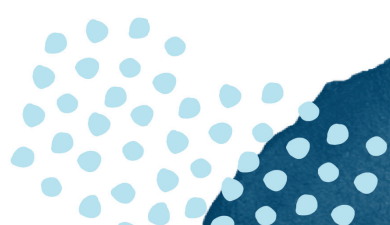
This charge **must** be paid every 3 months.





Some of our customers have a different written agreement about how they will be charged for water.

If you are one of these customers, you can find out more information about how you will be charged for water in our full customer charter.





How to pay

You **must** pay your water bill within 28 days from the date the bill is made.

You can pay your bill in 10 different ways.

1. Direct debit

Direct debit means we take money from your bank account when your water bill is due.



If you want to pay by direct debit you **must** set it up before your water bill is due.

You can set up direct debit



- on our website

<https://www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/billing-and-accounts/payment-options>



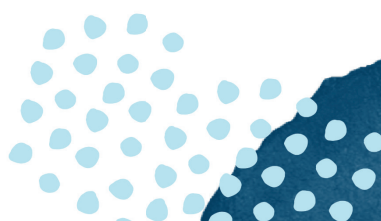
- by calling us.

2. BPay

BPay means you pay online from your bank account.



You will need to use a code on your water bill.





3. Credit Card

You can pay by using your credit card on our website.



4. Centrepay

You can pay your water bill from your Centrelink payments.

You can call us on 1300 656 007 for more information.



5. Post Billpay

You can pay your water bill using Post Billpay on the Australia Post website

<https://www.postbillpay.com.au/>



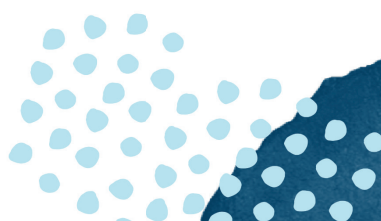
6. Australia Post office

You can take your bill into the post office and pay.



7. Phone

You can call us on 13 18 16 to pay your bill by credit card.





8. Mail

You can send us a cheque in the mail to

Barwon Water
PO Box 659
Geelong VIC 3220



9. In advance

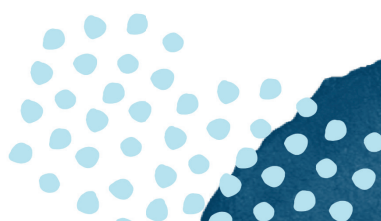
You can pay us before your water bill is given to you.



10. Other options

You can pay in the other ways that are shown on your water bill or [reminder notice](#).

A reminder notice is a letter to remind you to pay your water bill.





About payment reminders



If you **do not** pay your bill on time, we will send you a reminder notice.

If you do not pay your bill within 15 days after the date on the reminder notice, we will send you a **final notice**.

A final notice is the last chance to pay your bill before something serious happens.

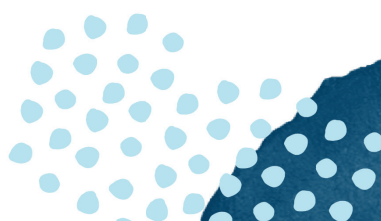
This could include



- stopping your water service
- a lawyer contacting you to ask you to pay your bill.

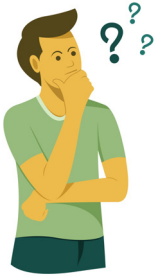
We will try to contact you before something serious happens.

Taking serious steps is the last thing we will do.





Help to pay



You can tell us if it is hard for you to pay your water bill.

You can ask for a **flexible payment plan**.



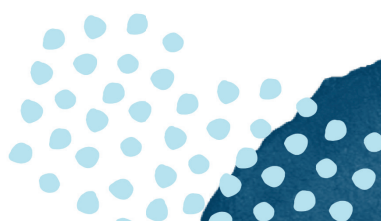
A flexible payment plan means you pay small amounts over a set amount of time.

This means you **do not** have to pay a big bill at the one time.



This plan **must** be agreed to by us and you.

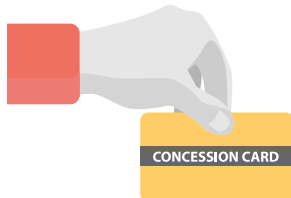
If you have not paid 2 flexible payment plans in the past 12 months, we might not be able to offer you another flexible payment plan.





How we can help our customers with concessions

You can ask if you are allowed to get a **concession**.



Concession means you have a card from the government.

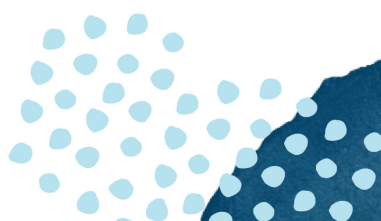
You might get a concession if you



- are older



- have a disability.





How we can help our customers with rebates



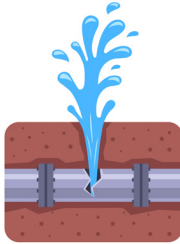
You can ask us if you are allowed to get a **rebate**.

Rebate means getting some of your money back as a discount or refund.



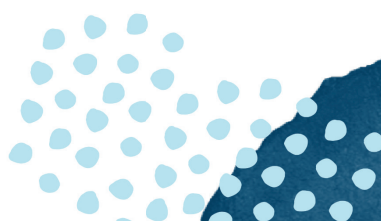
You might get a rebate if

- you need more water for medical reasons
- you can show that there was a hidden leak that caused a very high water bill.



This is usually from pipes underground or under a building.

You can only ask for this once every 5 years.





How we can help our customers with payment assistance

You can ask if you are allowed to get **payment assistance**.

Payment assistance means help to pay your bill.

For example



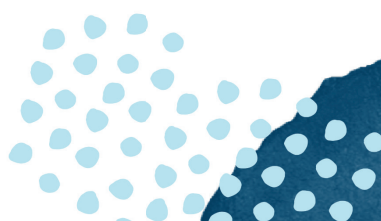
- setting up a payment plan



- sending the bill to someone else to pay, but only if they agree in writing



- getting help with government funding.





Why we might contact you

We might call you to let you know about help available, like

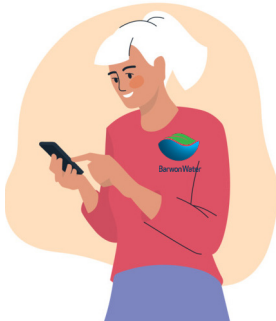


- if you are having trouble paying your bill
- if you are facing family violence
- programs to support you, like grants and saving programs

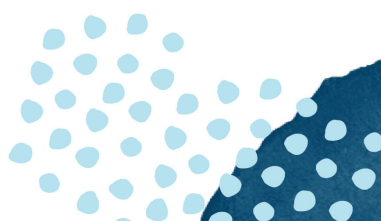


- information in other languages

- updating your contact information and how we talk to you



- your billing history.





How we help with communication

We offer a free **interpreter service** for customers who do not speak English.



Interpreter service means getting someone to help you talk if you do not speak the same language.

To use the interpreter service call 131 450.

We offer a **TTY service** for customers with speech and hearing challenges.



TTY service is like a special phone that helps people with speech and hearing challenges talk on the phone by typing messages instead of speaking.

To use the TTY service call 133 677.

You can choose someone to talk with us for you.

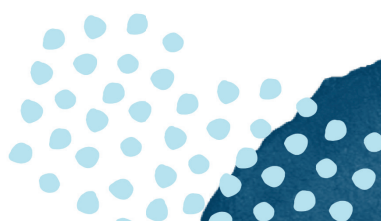


To do this fill out the form on our website

<https://www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/billing-and-accounts/update-details/privacy-registration>



If you need help with the form call us on 1300 656 007.





Our service standards

We **must** give you good service.

For example, we must



- reduce the problems caused by sudden **water outages** and give you emergency drinking water

A water outage is when the water stops running.



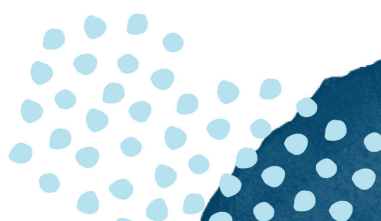
- Tell you at least 2 days ahead if we plan to shut off the water and give you emergency drinking water



- Quickly fix and clean up any breaks, leaks or blockages in our water systems



- pay you if we do not give you these services.





We have a list of our **service standards and targets**.



The list of service standards and targets shows how well we will provide our services and what we aim to achieve.

You can ask us to see our service standards and targets.

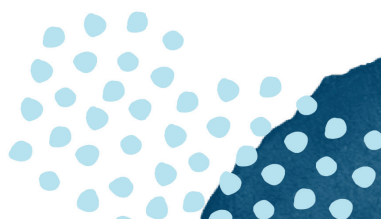
We have a list of our **guaranteed service levels**.



The list of guaranteed service levels shows how we promise to give you services.

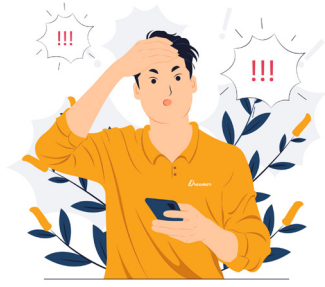
It also shows how much we will pay you if we **do not** give you these services.

You can ask us to see our guaranteed service levels.





Complaints



You can contact us to make a **complaint**.

A complaint means you tell someone you **are not** happy about something.



If you ask for a written response to your complaint, we will give you an answer within 10 working days.

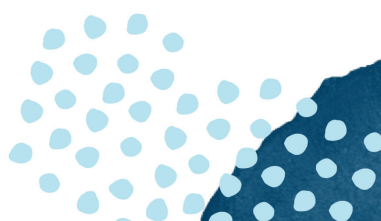
We will explain the reasons for our answer.



If you are not happy with our answer you can ask to have your complaint looked at again by our **Customer Resolutions Coordinator**.

A Customer Resolutions Coordinator is a worker whose job it is to look after complaints.

If you are not happy with how your complaint was handled you can also tell our Customer Resolutions Coordinator.





You can contact our Customer Resolutions Coordinator by



- writing to us



- calling us



- emailing us.



If you are not happy with the answer by our Customer Resolutions Coordinator you can contact the **Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria**.

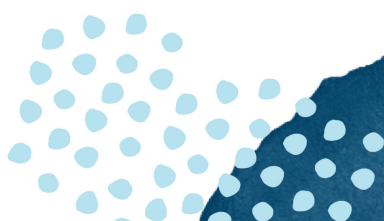
The Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria is a place in Victoria where you can get help to fix problems about your water services.



- call 1800 500 509



- email ewovinfo@ewov.com.au.





Your privacy

We follow **privacy** laws.

Privacy means we do not share your personal information with other people or groups.



You can read our privacy policy on our website.



What our customers must do



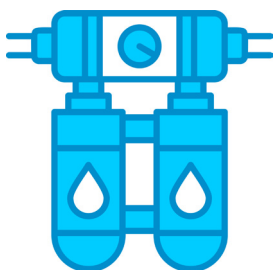
As a customer, **you must**



- pay for charges that happened after leaving your house or business, unless you told us at least 2 days before you planned to leave



- make sure your water meter is easy to reach



- take care of your **infrastructure** when we ask

Infrastructure can include things like pipes, buildings and equipment.



- remove trees when we ask



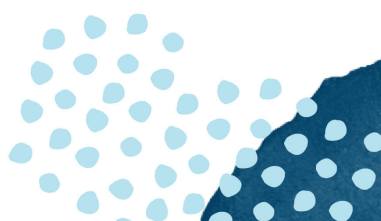
- get our permission for any building work that might get in the way of our services



TARGET YOUR
WATER USE 



- not make changes to our works without our permission
- follow any water restrictions in place
- follow Victoria's Permanent Water Saving Rules
- take care of combined drains or any agreements with other landowners.

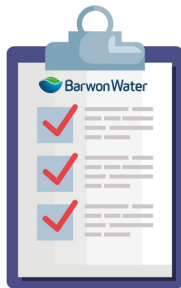




There are some parts of the water pipes and sewerage systems that **we must** take care of.



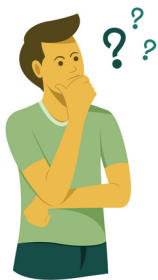
There are some parts of the water pipes and sewerage systems that **you must** take care of.



We have a list of **maintenance obligations**.

The maintenance obligations show

- what **we must** take care of
- what **you must** take care of.



You can ask us for the maintenance obligations.

You can ask us to explain the maintenance obligations to you.





More information

If you want more information about our customer charter you can contact us.



About this book

This book helps you understand our customer charter.

Easy English Australia wrote this book in September 2023.

We use pictures from

- Veceezy
- Adobe

