



**RWS**

# **CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER**

**Updated June 2020**



## Rural Water Services Pty Ltd

"For all your Stock and Garden needs"

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**RURAL WATER SERVICES PTY LTD (RWS) SUPPLIES NON-POTABLE WATER WHICH MUST NOT BE USED FOR DRINKING, COOKING, CLEANING, BATHING, LAUNDRY OR ANY OTHER HOUSEHOLD PURPOSE AND MAY CAUSE SERIOUS ILLNESS INJURY OR DEATH IF CONSUMED OR USED IN SUCH A MANNER.**

# Table of Contents

**WHAT IS A RURAL WATER SERVICE ..... 4**

**THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE TO YOU ..... 4**

- 1. WHO CAN HAVE A RURAL WATER SERVICE ..... 4
- 2. CONDITIONS OF HAVING A RURAL WATER SERVICE ..... 4
- 3. SERVICE DELIVERY ..... 4
- 4. ASSET MANAGEMENT ..... 4
- 5. CUSTOMER BILLING ..... 5
- 6. CUSTOMER CONTACT ..... 6

**WHAT WE ASK IN RETURN ..... 7**

- 1. SERVICE DELIVERY ..... 7
- 2. ASSET MANAGEMENT ..... 7
- 3. CUSTOMER BILLING ..... 7

**CONTACT INFORMATION ..... 8**



## LICENSE AND WATER SERVICES

South West Irrigation Management Co-operative Limited (trading as Rural Water Services) (RWS) provides water services under the provisions of a Water Services License (WL) issued by the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA).

The ERA granted HW WL31 which commenced on 9 October 1996. WL31 authorises RWS to provide non-potable water supply services and irrigation services.

The legislation that governs the licensing of water services for RWS is the Water Services Act 2012 (Act).

## WHAT IS A RURAL WATER SERVICE

The RWS' aim is to provide a non-potable water service for people living in rural areas who require a small amount of water for stock and garden needs.

Rural Water Services Pty Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Harvey Water, formed in 2004 and initially intended to supply non potable water to non shareholders of Harvey Water, typically on lots of less than 5ha.

A Rural Water Service (RWS) replaces what was previously known as a By-Law 11. With the introduction of the piped irrigation water system in Harvey and Waroona, new non-shareholders of Harvey Water and existing By-Law customers wanting a stock and garden supply may have the option to become a RWS customer. In 2013, a change in policy was adopted that allows Harvey Water shareholders to also have a Rural Water Service supply.

## THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE TO YOU

### 1. WHO CAN HAVE A RURAL WATER SERVICE

Anyone who is close enough to Harvey Water's pipeline, in the Harvey and Waroona Districts, may apply to connect to the service. A fixed cost applies to a direct connection to an existing pipeline but full cost recovery will be required where additional works are needed. Information about connection is available on our website, [www.harveywater.com.au/RWS](http://www.harveywater.com.au/RWS) or you can contact the Harvey Water office to ask for the Connection Information Pack, which includes an Application for a Supply Point.

### 2. CONDITIONS OF HAVING A RURAL WATER SERVICE

A Rural Water Service is only for a stock and garden supply and is intended for customers using up to 1 Megalitre (1,000 kilolitres) per year, although this is only an amount estimated for management of water supply purposes, it is not a limit.

Water supplied under a Rural Water Service is untreated water from the dams and must not be used for potable purposes including drinking, cooking, cleaning, bathing, laundry or any other household purpose and may result in serious illness, injury or death if used for any of these purposes.

### 3. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 3.1. The water will be unfiltered, untreated and non-potable under gravity static head pressure from a 50mm Supply Point.

- 3.2. We will supply fit for purpose water for stock and garden use. Due to the nature of the Harvey Water open dam and piped distribution system, we cannot guarantee that actions beyond our control will not compromise the quality of the water delivered. The water quality in the Waroona and Harvey Irrigation Districts will usually be less than 500 mg/l TDS.
- 3.3. We cannot guarantee any level of water pressure or water supply.

#### **4. ASSET MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1. It is our obligation as per Water Services Act (2012), section 129(5) to provide written notice for proposed entry at least 48 hours in advance when it is necessary to enter onto private land for routine inspection or maintenance excluding meter reading.
- 4.2. We will ensure cost effective supply system maintenance is carried out to enable efficient and effective distribution of water to customers' supply points.
- 4.3. If in the course of carrying out maintenance and operations Harvey Water needs to remove or erect a fence or gate we will give you 48 hours notice and discuss this with you. This complies with the Water Services Act (2012), section 139(2)(f).
- 4.4. It is our obligation as per Water Services Act (2012), section 173(4) & section 174(1) to provide written notice of entry at least 48 hours in advance when it is necessary to enter onto private land for planned major construction works which is likely to cause disruption. However, because of the nature of irrigation operations, and the frequent need to enter onto our customers' properties, we are not always able to advise of entry onto your land for routine operations and maintenance. We will endeavour to contact you in person prior to entry. Should you not be present we will leave a calling card or send an SMS message to advise of our visit.
- 4.5. We will endeavour to prevent disruptions to supply; however, where they are unavoidable we will limit them to a maximum of five days.
- 4.6. In the event that we need to shutdown the system we will advise as per the Water Services Act (2012) section 173(4) & section 174(1) to all customers affected in writing or by SMS at least 48 hours before the disruption occurs outlining the reason for the disruption and the expected duration.
- 4.7. In the event of an emergency shutdown of supply we will contact affected customers within six hours and advise them of the reason for the shut down and its expected duration.
- 4.8. We will endeavour to repair or replace any measuring device found to be faulty as soon as possible, minimising disruption to the customer.
- 4.9. Where a measuring device is found to be recording incorrectly we will estimate water consumption based on previous history for the period the device is considered to be faulty.
- 4.10. To request testing of the measuring device on your supply point please contact the Contracts and Compliance Coordinator at the Harvey Water office. A fee will be payable on each request and prior to your request being processed. If the Meter is found to be with in normal operating standards then all associated costs will be invoiced to the customer account. If the Meter is found to be faulty then the customer will be reimbursed. Refer to our Review Your Invoice Policy, available on the website, for further information on Water Meter Testing.

- 4.11. As per the Water Services Regulations (2013), section 26(5) if on testing the meter, it is not found to be within the prescribed tolerance for that type of meter Harvey Water will adjust the reading and charges with which the owner or occupier is dissatisfied. Harvey Water will also in this circumstance bear the costs of the testing, which includes refunding or crediting the charge (if any) paid under subregulation (3).
- 4.12. We will thoroughly investigate all instances where supply points or measuring devices (meters) appear to have been tampered with, including the redirection of water to a neighbouring property. We may limit access to water supply while the cause is investigated. Where, in our opinion, water theft has occurred we will estimate the quantity not properly measured and charge the customer estimated usage and a tampering fee. We may also suspend supply and charge a disconnection fee or remove the supply point. Refer to our Meter Tampering Policy, available on the website, for further information. This complies with the Water Services Act (2012), section 89(1)(a) and penalties following which may apply.
- 4.13. RWS only takes responsibility to deliver water to a supply point and measuring device. Beyond that point is the customer's responsibility. If a problem occurs beyond the measuring device then the full cost of the consumption and the repairs will be borne by the Customer. Refer to our Leaks Policy, available on the website, for further information.
- 4.14. To arrange for a meter reading outside of the normal invoicing cycle please contact the Contracts and Compliance Coordinator at the Harvey Water office. A fee will apply.
- 4.15. We will continue a program of investment in new technology to ensure the water distribution system is capable of meeting customer needs at lower real costs while reducing water losses.

## **5. CUSTOMER BILLING**

- 5.1. We will raise an invoice of equal value for the annual Fixed Charges within five working days of the end of the month of July, September and December each year. Invoices issued will contain all the necessary information to enable our customers to identify the property and service being charged, as well as will contain all the necessary information to enable our customers to identify the property and service being charged, as well as the different payment methods available to enable payment.
- 5.2. We will issue Water Delivery invoices on a monthly basis within five working days of the end of the month. Delivery invoices will enable our customers to identify the consumption during the billing period and the year to date total.
- 5.3. We will issue reminder notices for payment of accounts, after a period of 14 days over the due date, by SMS and/or written notice. Further notices will be issued according to the Debtor Policy.
- 5.4. We will charge interest at 4% above the prevailing bank rate on overdue invoices and limit or refuse supply to any customer where fixed charges and/or delivery charges remain unpaid more than 30 days over the due date. If after a period of 60 days beyond the due date the invoice still remains unpaid RWS will commence legal action which may result in disconnection and removal of the supply point.
- 5.5. You are entitled to request a review of your invoice if you think it is incorrect. Further information about reviewing your invoice can be found on the Harvey Water website

## 6. CUSTOMER CONTACT

- 6.1. We will keep our customers fully informed of all matters which may affect them through direct mail, newsletters, notices in newspapers circulating in the district and SMS. In particular, we will publish details of rates and charges applicable for the next financial year within five working days of the beginning of July of each year on the Harvey Water website.
- 6.2. We will respond to reports of faults within the water supply system within two working days unless the fault is deemed urgent by the Harvey Water General Manager or Operations Manager. Urgent faults will be responded to within two hours. Initial responses may be by telephone or personal visit by a RWS representative.
- 6.3. We will respond to your complaints courteously and efficiently. We will reply to all written correspondence, received either by post or email, within five working days. If the matter requires investigation we will advise in writing and will nominate a date for further contact
- 6.4. To assist you and to help us identify your complaint more easily you will find a Complaints Form for you to print and complete along with our Customer Complaint Handling Process on the Harvey Water website [www.harveywater.com.au/RWS/CustomerComplaint](http://www.harveywater.com.au/RWS/CustomerComplaint)
- 6.5. If your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction within 15 business days, you may refer the matter to the Energy and Water Ombudsman for resolution:

**Energy and Water Ombudsman Western Australia** Level 2, Albert Facey House,  
469 Wellington Street  
Perth Western Australia 6000  
Freephone: 1800 754 004 (free from landlines)  
Telephone: (08) 9220 7588  
Facsimile: (08) 9220 7599  
Email: [energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au](mailto:energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy](http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy)

## WHAT WE ASK IN RETURN

To help RWS provide the level of service which we have outlined above, we ask that you help us in the following ways:

### 1. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 1.1. Advise us at our Harvey office on (08) 9729 0100 of any service difficulties or faults.
- 1.2. The Water must only be used for the permitted purposes of stock and garden use and for closed irrigation systems. Use of the water for prohibited purposes such as drinking, cooking, cleaning, bathing, laundry or other household potable purpose may result in serious illness, injury or death. The water must not be used for surface (flood) irrigation.
- 1.3. Ensure safe access to supply points and waterways by our staff for operations and maintenance purposes especially if you have or are installing electric fences

## 2. ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 2.1. Seek to use water as efficiently as possible so as to keep waste flows to a minimum. This will help reduce groundwater levels, reduce salinity in the drains and save you money.
- 2.2. Do not discharge polluting or hazardous wastes into the water supply or drainage system.
- 2.3. Do not interfere with any assets or metering devices. Any signs of interference with water flow or tampering of metering devices may result in disconnection while investigations are completed and any remedial works carried out. If tampering or other interference is confirmed, the estimate of consumption will be calculated and a tampering fee will be charged to the offending customers account Repeat offences may result in permanent or temporary disconnection action being taken, a fee will be charged for this action.
- 2.4. Please contact Harvey Water before carrying out works in the near vicinity of any Harvey Water infrastructure. RWS is part of a free service, "Dial Before You Dig", to obtain a map of any assets that may be affected and contact us for on-site location. Customers will be liable for any damage which occurs to assets during works. Contact [www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au). This complies with the Water Services Act (2012), section 85 (4)(5).
- 2.5. You must take steps to ensure that livestock do not damage the Supply Point on your property.
- 2.6. To report damage to infrastructure or assets (pipeline or supply points) call our Works Supervisor (24/7) on 0429 048 500

## 3. CUSTOMER BILLING

- 3.1. Pay, by the due date, invoices for Fixed Charges and Delivery Charges raised for the services provided.
- 3.2. Let us know before the due date if you are having any difficulty in paying any amounts charged so that we may work with you to set up an agreed payment plan and to avoid refusal of supply.
- 3.3. Notify us as soon as possible of any changes in contact information, i.e. mobile, email, postal address and/or ownership of property so that we may provide a service and send bills to the correct customer.



**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS**

**DURING OFFICE HOURS**

Harvey Water Office on (08) 9729 0100

or

**AFTER HOURS**

Works Supervisor on 0429 048 500

**Dial Before You Dig (DBYD):**

**[www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au)**



**RWS**

**Rural Water Services Pty Ltd**

A wholly owned company of South West Irrigation Management Cooperative Limited (t/as Harvey Water)  
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