



City West Water™



Customer Outcomes Performance Report 2019-20

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Summary

Every five years, we submit a Price Submission to the Essential Services Commission.

Our commitments in the current 5-year period relate to the following six Outcomes:

1. Services to my home and business are safe, reliable and efficiently managed.
2. Customer service is accessible and my enquiries are resolved promptly.
3. Billing and payment options are efficient and convenient.
4. Customers in hardship are supported.
5. The whole of the water cycle is managed in an environmentally sustainable way.
6. City West Water is a valued partner in servicing a growing Melbourne.

Overall, our performance against outcomes is 'on track'. We monitor 41 metrics to assess our performance and in 2019-20 we're pleased to report we met our target for 30 of these. We're meeting our targets against three outcomes and we're close on the remaining three.

Over the next year we will continue to improve our customer commitments by:

- introducing SMS notifications for interruptions to our service
- continuing to work towards carbon neutrality through installation of solar panels at our key sites
- consulting on the timing of developments for our network servicing plans to ensure infrastructure is delivered to support new developments.

1 Outcome 1:

Services to my home and business are safe, reliable and efficiently managed

We aim to give customers reliable services so that they feel assured that:

- when they turn on a tap in the kitchen or bathroom, their water is safe for drinking and will flow at a reasonable pressure
- when they flush a toilet, let the plug out of a sink or have a shower, their wastewater will disappear seamlessly into the sewer
- if something does go wrong with either their water supply or wastewater disposal, the problem is attended to and resolved in a timely and efficient manner.

Our sewer network performed well over the last year and we saw fewer sewer interruptions, blockages and spills across our network. We continue to invest in the sewer network and replaced over 16km of our older pipes. Continual investment ensures that we will to meet our sewer service and

reliability commitments every year.

Water supply interruptions were reduced from last year, but the number of customers experiencing more than three unplanned interruptions was still too high.

Whilst our water disruption notification process improved to include an interactive map, we did replace over 30km of water pipes across our network last year and continue to replace and renew pipes across our network to ensure continual supply to our customers.

During 2019-20, there were a couple of events resulting in several dirty water complaints. We continue to work closely with our bulk water supplier to ensure that water quality remains high next year.







Water services

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status	
Customers experiencing >3 (ie 4+) unplanned water supply interruptions in a year	222	126		<p>We fell short of our target in 2019-20. We are investing in additional renewals in our water network to reduce the number of water supply interruptions and manage our responsive maintenance costs.</p> <p>Over the last year we increased our renewals to over 30km of water mains and are planning to renew and replace approximately 30km of water mains in 2020-21.</p>
Number of low supply pressure events	0	0		
Customer satisfaction score on water quality via Customer Satisfaction Surveys	92.0%	91.0%		
Water quality complaints per 1000 customers	1.53	0.70		<p>Whilst we continue to provide safe drinking water, we do continue to receive higher than expected number of complaints about water quality. This was largely caused by residual effects of the Greenvale Reservoir where discoloured water and sediments were deposited in the CWW pipe network.</p> <p>This is contributing to the ongoing historically high numbers of complaints in CWW's area in recent months. We are working closely with our bulk supplier, Melbourne Water, to improve water quality.</p>
Compliance with drinking water quality standards	100%	100%		
Unplanned water supply interruptions restored within five hours (by affected customer)	97.3%	97.0%		
Average time taken (from notification) to restore unplanned water supply interruption, minutes (by affected customer)	117	120		
Planned water supply interruptions restored within five hours (by affected customer)	98.3%	99.0%		
Customers experiencing >5 (ie 6+) unplanned water supply interruptions in a year	0	0		

Sewerage services

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status
Customers experiencing >3 (ie 4+) sewer blockages in a year (no.)	0	6	
Sewer blockages restored within five hours (by affected customers)	99.5%	98.0%	
Average time (from notification) to rectify blockage/spill (main and HCB), minutes (events)	120	124	
Sewer spills contained within five hours of notification	100%	100%	
Sewer spills within a house, that are a result of a failure in our pipes	7	13	
Sewer spills within a house, that are a result of a failure in our pipes, not contained within one hour of notification	0	0	

Outcome 2:

Customer service is accessible and my enquiries are resolved promptly

We strive to provide exceptional customer service and are driven to be accessible and easy to deal with.

Our customer base is diverse and includes people of all ages, genders, cultural backgrounds, languages, socio-economic standings and technological abilities. We are committed to providing services that are accessible and timely, with the highest levels of customer service, while encompassing and catering for this diversity.

Over the last year, we implemented a range of improvements to our systems, including:

- completing a face-to-face customer service trial at Maribyrnong City Council to make our services more accessible to customers

- implementing a call back service
- developing and implementing a new framework to increase first contact resolution of customer queries which has seen over 95% of calls resolved on first contact (above target) and almost all emails responded to within one business day.

The improvements we introduced to make our services more accessible and responsive are reflected in the residential customer satisfaction survey results where we have met or exceeded all of our targets.

We fell short on the business customers satisfaction survey results. Over the next year we will work on enhancing customer interface points to maintain our customer resolution indications and improve customer satisfaction.

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status
Calls resolved on first contact	96.9%	80.0%	Green
Customer correspondence (emails) responded to within 1 business day	99.6%	95.0%	Green
Customer correspondence responded to within ten business days	100%	100%	Green
Residential customer satisfaction with response to an enquiry	90.0%	85.0%	Green
Non-residential customer satisfaction with response to an enquiry	77.0%	85.0%	Red
Residential customer satisfaction with response to complaint	53.0%	50.0%	Green
Non-residential customer satisfaction with response to a complaint	33.0%	50.0%	Red
Complaints to the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria (excluding all referrals) per 1000 customers.	0.04	0.10	Green

The non-residential customers we surveyed were dissatisfied with how we resolved their enquiries and complaints, citing, time to resolve, lack of empathy and inadequacy of information provided. We saw a 12% and 24% decline in satisfaction with response to an enquiry or a complaint respectively. Customers who indicated they had made a complaint called about supply interruptions, metering problems, billing concerns and charges.

We are taking steps to ease these concerns, with live supply interruption maps and tailored hardship support for businesses during COVID-19. Over the next year we are developing specific business customer service offerings, including rolling out electronic contract management, expanding our Customer Experience Quality program for non-residential customers, and expanding e-Billing to all business customers.

Outcome 3:

Billing and payment options are efficient and convenient

We aim to provide billing options that meet our customers' needs. We commit to provide simple, accurate and timely billing, with convenient options for how customers receive and pay bills.

Over the last year, we have:

- worked to understand customer expectations around billing and payment options
- increased the number of customers using e-billing to over 30 per cent
- delivered our new online portal - MyAccount (in May 2020) where customers can easily access bills, set up payment plans
- initiated a proof of concept trial for digital water meters




We ended the year with fewer MyAccount customers registrations, however, as MyAccount promotion increases, we are confident more customers will register.

We are pleased to report that payment issue complaints were below target again. In 2020-21 we're taking further actions to better address customer payment issues, including:

- extending e-billing to non-residential customers
- investigating a new, more agile billings and collection system
- introducing 'rapid service response' using real time data on customer interactions to provide customers with the best information to help them control their bill through our customer portal and other channels.

We also reduced the share of bills reliant on estimated meter reads compared to last year and beat our target again.

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status
Payment issue complaints per 1000 customers	1.18	1.20	
Estimated meter reads used for billing (proportion of total reads)	1.85%	2.00%	
Customers with registered online accounts (proportion of all accounts)	3.6%	10.0%	

We set an ambitious target of 10% of customers registered with MyAccount in its first year of the release. MyAccount is our online customer self-service portal and is now available to all residential customers. We delayed the launch of the portal to May 2020 to allow for extensive testing and re-design.

As such, we had a smaller number of accounts registered by the end of the financial year. We have seen good uptake in registrations and are expecting this figure to increase in the next 12 months as we continue to promote MyAccount.



Outcome 4:

Customers in hardship are supported

We aim to support customers and employees experiencing hardship, vulnerability or the impacts of family violence.

Supporting customers in hardship has been a key focus of City West Water's response to the economic and social impacts of COVID-19. To help our customers to meet these challenging economic conditions, we launched a dedicated hardship and vulnerability team trained to manage complex customer situations and to provide discrete, confidential options in circumstances of hardship and family violence.

In addition to our usual support for customers, we have suspended all legal actions, debt collections and removed water restrictors. We're offering payment extensions of up to three months, providing case management for longer term debt

relief and providing referrals to financial counsellors.

This new hardship and vulnerability team and additional efforts are not fully captured in our performance indicators.

Many customers who may have otherwise pursued hardship grants or Water Assist applications have instead received other solutions that fit their needs, such as longer payment extensions, instalment plans, and grants. We have been working with customers to access the Utility Relief Grant (URGS) scheme through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

In recent months, social distancing requirements have also limited our ability to offer audits as part of Water Assist (a residential water efficiency audit, appliance retrofit and advice program).

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status
Customers on instalment plans (per 1000 customers)	50.9	40	Green circle
Residential customers receiving Hardship Grants (per 1000 customers)	0.48	1.2	Red circle
Number of customers taking up Water Assist (no.)	105	200	Red circle
Prior to restriction being applied, CWW has undertaken reasonable endeavours to ensure customer is not in hardship	100%	100%	Green circle



We recognise the essential nature of our services and the importance of providing options and assistance to support customers who are financially vulnerable or are in financial hardship. The pandemic has disrupted lives, causing financial hardship and negatively impacted people's wellbeing across our service area.

To help our customers to meet these challenging economic conditions, we launched a new hardship and vulnerability program in April 2020. This new program includes a dedicated team and hotline providing tailored options to customers experiencing genuine hardship and an additional range of support for customers who may be finding themselves in financial hardship for the first time.

During 2019-20, we had 50.9 customers for every 1000 customers seek an instalment plan which is below our target of 40, and is much improved on previous years.

With the high number of customers seeking instalment plans, an increase in payment extensions from 4 weeks to 12 weeks, and a increase in successful government grant applications, we saw a decrease in hardship grants and water assist.

We will continue to work with customers to provide fit for purpose solutions.

Outcome 5:

The whole of the water cycle is managed in an environmentally sustainable way

We aim to responsibly manage our valuable water resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

We continue to diversify our supplies to ensure water supplies are available now and into the future, for a range of uses, from drinking water to irrigation for recreational open spaces. We manage the water cycle with liveability and wellbeing in mind by providing water for irrigation of green spaces and incorporating Traditional Owners and Aboriginal values in our water cycle planning processes.

Over the last year we:







- worked collaboratively with Melbourne Water, South East Water, Yarra Valley Water and Western Water on the Sewerage Strategy Implementation Plan
- collaborated with key stakeholders in integrated water management forums to create

more liveable communities in the west

- funded stormwater harvesting projects through the Stormwater Harvesting Partnering Fund and collaborated with partners to develop the Greening the West Strategy 2020 2025
- launched a digital metering trial to investigate the benefits of digital meters to help customers manage their water consumption.

We weren't able to reduce net carbon emissions by 5% this year, but are working towards progressively reducing our greenhouse gas emissions with a cost-effective plan developed and implemented so we can be carbon neutral by 2030. This will include investing in a long-term sustainable carbon reduction strategy including undertaking a solar energy program to install solar panels at key City West Water sites commencing next year.

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status
Water lost from the network (% of total water supplied)	6.7 %	9.3 %	
Water storage levels remain at or above 40% (in November) as per the water outlook zones in our Urban Water Strategy (CP)	63.8%	40.0%	
Emergency relief structures compliant with requirement to not spill in dry weather (CP)	100 %	100 %	
Compliance with the Environmental Protection Authority's discharge licence requirements - Number of licence non-compliances	0	0	
Progress towards our goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2030 (climate change)	0 %	5 %	
Stormwater partnerships in place	13	7	

In line with customer preferences, we are investing in long-term and permanent solutions to become carbon neutral.

Unfortunately we did not make as much progress as planned during 2019-20, where our target was 5% reduction in emissions. This was largely because of a delay in the commissioning of our large-scale solar partnership due to grid connectivity constraints.

Over the next 12 months, we are installing solar panels on our own sites and the large-scale solar partnership will start producing renewable energy in October 2020. These projects will decrease our annual emissions by 35% and contribute to meeting our targets.



Outcome 6:

City West Water is a valued partner in servicing a growing Melbourne

As Melbourne rapidly grows, we aim to work collaboratively with stakeholders in the development community to ensure waste and sewerage services are delivered in a timely and efficient manner.

As a service provider for some of Melbourne's fastest growing areas, we have a responsibility to support Greater Melbourne's growth and future liveability. We do this by rolling out new water and sewerage services in growth areas and existing residential areas and delivering new and amended water and sewerage services to an ever-changing commercial and industrial customer base.

In 2019-20, stronger than expected development growth in Melbourne's west continued to present challenges for us in processing applications. During the year, City West Water introduced simplified internal processes, addressed technology

constraints and trained additional staff to provide 'surge capacity' during peak periods.


These efforts have already resulted in improvements in processing times for customer contribution applications and we expect these endeavours to allow us to improve our performance on other indicators in 2020-21.

2019-20

	Result	Target	Status	
95% of standard* plumbing applications completed within 10 business days	50.2%	95.0%	●	<p>Similar to our performance in 2018-19, we continued to see unprecedented rates of urban development and construction activity across our service area, specifically across the west of Melbourne.</p> <p>We connected over 15,000 new customers in the last year – 1,000 more than the previous year. This presented challenges for us in processing applications with the volume tending to be lumpy across the year, with significant peaks around Christmas and at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>We are working with the industry to smooth out the applications and are seeking to simplify internal processes, addressed technology constraints and utilise additional trained staff to provide 'surge capacity' during peak periods.</p>
95% of pressure and flow information applications processed within 10 business days	99.3%	95.0%	●	
95% of asset information applications processed within 10 business days	74.5%	95.0%	●	
95% of new customer contribution applications processed within 45 business days	98.5%	95.0%	●	
95% of standard* 20mm new meter supply and assembly installed within 10 business days of application	95.9%	95.0%	●	

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