

Water bills to stay low for both town and country

Victorian's will continue to enjoy the lowest water prices in Australia after the state's water regulator completed its 2018 water price review, approving prices for 12 of the state's urban water businesses.

The latest decisions follow the Essential Services Commission approving prices for four water businesses last month including the two largest metropolitan businesses.

Commission chair Ron Ben-David says the pricing decisions will see most Victorian water customers – from the city to the country – benefit from flat or falling water prices.

“These price determinations are the successful outcome of our new pricing framework that has encouraged water businesses to work harder to deliver more for customers.

Water businesses have engaged with customers in meaningful ways to deliver real and tangible benefits including saving customers' money and improving service levels” he said.

The latest price decisions mean many regional customers will also enjoy lower bills for the next five years.

Customers of GWMWater (Horsham) will have the largest decrease in 2018–19 of around \$30 for a typical residential customer. Bills will also fall by more than \$25 in 2018–19 for customers of City West Water and Coliban water.

Customers of Goulburn Valley Water (Shepparton) will benefit from the largest reduction of around \$90 for a typical customer over five years.

Savings identified as a result of community feedback and discussion with the water businesses mean customers of Wannon Water and South Gippsland Water will also see lower prices than what was originally proposed. For these businesses, price changes will be limited to inflation.

Customers of North East Water will see small price increases, of \$4 per year for an average customer but will still have some of the lowest water bills in Australia.

Gippsland Water customers would see the biggest bill increase of \$20 during 2018–19, but bills will then flatten out, only rising with inflation.

The commission released final decisions for four urban water businesses in late May.

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Typical residential owner occupier water bills (adjusted for inflation)

	2017-18 (current)	2018-19 (from July 1 2018)	+ / - \$	+ / - %
Barwon Water	\$1,025	\$1,025	0	0.0%
Central Highlands Water	\$1,257	\$1,237	-\$20	-1.7
City West Water	\$981	\$955	-\$26	-2.7%
Coliban Water	\$1,365	\$1,339	-\$26	-1.9%
Gippsland Water	\$1,314	\$1,334	+\$20	+1.5%
Goulburn Valley Water	\$938	\$919	-\$19	-2.0%
GWMWater	\$1,417	\$1,387	-\$30	-2.1%
Lower Murray Water (urban)	\$976	\$972	-\$3	-0.4%
North East Water	\$871	\$875	+\$4	+0.5%
South Gippsland Water	\$996	\$996	0	0.0%
Wannon Water	\$1,121	\$1,121	0	0.0%
Western Water	\$1,019	\$1,019	0	0.0%

Typical residential owner occupier water bills are based on the average consumption for households in that region and are presented in \$2018 – 19 terms. Calculation includes a rebate paid to customers in 2017 – 18 from a government efficiency review.

First round final decisions May 2018

	2017-18 (current)	2018-19 (from July 1 2018)	+ / - \$	+ / - %
East Gippsland Water	\$1,189	\$1,184	-\$5	-0.4%
South East Water	\$1,036	\$963	-\$73	-7.1%
Westernport Water	\$1,139	\$1,152	+\$13	+1.1%
Yarra Valley Water	\$1,079	\$1,059	-\$20	-1.9%