

Privacy Policy

Etowah Water & Sewer Authority - RESPECTS YOUR PRIVACY

Etowah Water & Sewer Authority (EWSA) is committed to maintaining the privacy of your nonpublic personal information. Technology has increased the amount of customer information collected and shared in today's environment. Customers are concerned about the impact this might have on their privacy. EWSA is sensitive to these concerns. We want to serve consumers as effectively and efficiently as possible. However, we also want our customers to be confident that their relationship with EWSA is treated with the appropriate confidentiality. We therefore commit to customers that we will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the information shared with us. Our customers are protected not only by state and federal laws but even more importantly by our commitment to them. This commitment is demonstrated by our core values.

COLLECTING INFORMATION

Your information is collected and stored by EWSA and is used only for applying your payments and displaying your statements and other account information in the EWSA's offices and online.

We collect your personal information, for example, when you

- Complete applications and other forms
- Open or modify an account
- Pay your bills online or by phone
- Use your credit or debit card
- Contact us for support

Nonpublic personal information is that information about the we collect from you in connection with providing the above services to you. Nonpublic personal information may include, for example, information about your account or accounting ?? history or credit worthiness. Nonpublic information does not include any information that is available from public sources, such as telephone directories.

We have established internal procedures and controls to ensure personal and account information is accurate, current and complete in accordance with customary and reasonable business standards. We also have established procedures to correct any inaccurate information in a timely manner. We train all of our employees about the importance of customer privacy and confidentiality. Our employee handbook requires employees to maintain the confidentiality of your nonpublic personal information. If you discover any information we have about you which is incorrect, please notify us immediately.

INFORMATION ACCESS

We restrict access to your nonpublic personal information to those employees who need to know that information to provide service or assistance to you. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that comply with federal standards to guard your personal information.

Your information will never be sold to a third party for any purposes.

As a general rule, we do not disclose personally identifiable information about our customers or former customers to anyone, except as outlined in this policy or as permitted or required by law.

At times, it is necessary for EWSA to enter into an arrangement with an outside company to provide support services essential for the delivery of our services to you (i.e. printing and mailing bill statements, on-line bill payment, etc.). These companies perform their services at our direction and, as permitted by law, we share customer nonpublic information with these companies as necessary to permit them to perform these required services. For example, we currently contract with a service provider who manages processing of credit card payments through our web site. We also contract with a company that provides for the reading of meters and processing of data from those meters to generate bills for water and sewer. We also contract with a third party provider for the maintenance and operation our billing software. EWSA may also exchange information with credit reporting agencies, other companies and organizations for fraud protection, credit risk reduction and collection activities. These companies and any other with whom we contract for services are contractually required to safeguard your nonpublic personal information and use it only for authorized purposes. They must adhere to the same standards of keeping your information confidential and secure as we do. They are not allowed to use your information for their own marketing purposes or for any other intended services not specifically contracted for.

Except as described above, we do not share customer information with anyone unless you expressly authorize or request it in writing. Our policy for protecting customer information applies to both former and current customers, and regardless of whether your account is active or inactive.

SECURITY NOTICE

Please take note of the following guidelines to protect you from Internet and e-mail fraud. The guidelines will assist you in detecting certain types of fraud (i.e. "phishing") that could potentially be designed to mimic the correspondence you receive from any company that you do business with over the internet, including Etowah Water & Sewer Authority.

- Our representatives will never send you an email requesting you to validate personal information. Please be advised that we will never ask for you to update your social

security number, date of birth, driver's license number, or other sensitive information via e-mail.

- While we are happy to receive e-mails from our customers in an effort to respond to service needs, e-mail is not a secure form of transmission. As such, EWSA does not recommend that you submit sensitive or personally identifiable information via e-mail.
- Once you have enrolled in the Authority's Online Bill Pay you can update your personal information by logging into your account at any time.

If you contact us for support, concerns or issues, we will keep an internal record of what assistance was given.

We use your customer information only when it will be important for us to contact you regarding your account, changes to our policies, our web site, and new services we think you'll find valuable.

ONLINE INFORMATION

When you sign up for Internet Bill Payment, we will request personal information about you and your accounts with us. This allows us to process your request accurately and ensure that an unauthorized individual does not access your accounts. We have safeguards in place to ensure that this information is protected and that our website is secure.

We use information gathered about you from our site statistics (for example your IP address) to help diagnose problems with our server, and to administer our Web site. We also gather broad demographic information from this data to help us improve our site and make your browsing experience more enjoyable. This is not linked to any personally identifiable information, except as necessary to prevent fraud or abuse on our system.

Because protection of credit card and debit card transactions is a high priority, EWSA has taken steps to ensure that your payment information is processed confidentially, securely and accurately. EWSA's on-line bill pay uses encrypted technology to protect your debit or credit card information during data transport by encrypting information such as your address, name, credit and/or debit card numbers. Our website operates over a private and secure network.

The documents posted on our web site may contain hypertext links or pointers to information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. These links and pointers are provided for visitors' convenience. EWSA does not control or guarantee the accuracy, timeliness, or completeness of any linked information from non-EWSA sites. Once you link to a web site not maintained by EWSA, you are subject to the terms and conditions of that web site, including its privacy policy.

ONLINE SECURITY

For security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, EWSA's web servers employ industry-standard methods to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage. Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on the Authority's servers are strictly prohibited and may be punishable by law.

To protect your personal information from unauthorized access and use, we use security measures that comply with federal law. These measures include computer safeguards and secured files and buildings.

In the specific context of this security monitoring, there is no expectation of privacy. However, only in the case of actual law enforcement investigations, will we attempt to identify individual users or their usage habits.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

As stated previously in this policy, we will not share your nonpublic personal information except when expressly authorized by you to do so or when required by federal and state laws, such as in response to a subpoena or court order.

Federal and state laws may require us to share your nonpublic information. For example, if you are involved in a legal matter with another party, we may be ordered to provide your nonpublic personal information to a court, attorney, or other party. In these circumstances, only that portion of your nonpublic personal information required by law, subpoena, or court order will be provided. Also, the Georgia Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. Section 50-18-70 et. seq. may require us to disclose information to third parties which is considered "public" information under that Act.

CHANGES IN OUR PRACTICES

If we make changes to our information handling practices or other privacy aspects, we will post those changes on this privacy statement. Changes will be immediately effective upon reposting to this privacy policy on the website.

If you have any questions about these policies, contact us.