



Our Voice Guide

January 2023



This Brand Voice and Language Guide is supported by the following documents:

- Brand Voice Guidelines
- Effective Language - 12 Quick Tips
- Our Brand Guide

For more information or clarification about any information in this guide, please contact Wannon Water's Communications Team

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Introduction

A voice that's always on your side

We play an essential role in the day-to-day lives of our customers, so it's important that they feel like we're always here to help.

Our brand voice is the tone, style and language we use to connect with our customers on a human level. It's about building trust with a voice that's supportive and genuine – and reminds them of our influential role in the region we all share.

Ready to learn more?

Note:

This Voice Guide is accompanied by a separate Brand Guide which covers the use of our visual elements. It outlines the design standards and specifications for the use of our logos, icons, fonts and colours.

The foundations of our brand voice - Our brand persona

We are the Local Leader

This is our brand persona and it describes who Wannon Water is as a person. It's the key element that drives our voice.

We belong to the communities we serve.

Being a Local Leader means going above and beyond for our people – protecting their health, our environment and our region as a whole.

We're an influential community partner leading the way with a voice that's engaging, informative and relatable. We write with a confident, consider-it-done energy that leaves our customers feeling like they're in safe (and familiar) hands.

Note:

The term 'Local Leader' helps to guide the tone of our writing and is for internal use only.

Every time you develop a communication, ask yourself:
'is this what a Local Leader would say?'

The foundations of our brand voice -

Our personality traits

These three traits are the practical tools that help us communicate as the Local Leader, bringing our voice to life.

Informative

We are clear and simple

As the experts in our corner, we're here to educate and inform with simple, straightforward writing.

We explain the reasons behind our actions and share important information in a clear and concise way so that everyone can understand and count on us to help.



Neighbourly

We are warm and inclusive

We embrace all of the characteristics of being a good neighbour – helpful, friendly and there when you need us.

We write with a genuine warmth and laid-back charm, using everyday language that's inclusive and relatable.

We're always respectful and honest with our community, avoiding overly-friendly or colloquial language.



Local Leader

We are dynamic and onto it

We genuinely care about the people of South West Victoria, protecting their health and our environment.

While we lead from authority, our friendly nature puts people at ease.

We write with an uplifting, dynamic energy that feels confident and reassuring.



How to be informative

Make it clear and simple

1. Get to the point quickly

Cut unnecessary words and repetition so that every sentence and paragraph has a clear purpose.

2. Break up your writing

Headings and sub-headings help guide the audience through your content.

3. Choose everyday words

Avoid jargon and technical language. Explain any terms our audience might be unfamiliar with.



Informative in action:

Go paperless to win \$100

Register for e-billing and you'll go into the draw to win a \$100 credit on your account.

With five chances to win each quarter, it's an easy way to save on your bill and help protect our environment.

Sign up at wannonwater.com.au/ebilling.

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How to be neighbourly

Make it warm and inclusive

1. Have a conversation

Write like you're speaking to your neighbour, but avoid overly friendly or colloquial language.

2. Put people in your sentences

Talk about 'us', 'our', 'you' and 'we' to bring us closer to our audience. Create a sense of community and remind them that we share a region.

3. Bring it back to our support

Reassure our audience that we're here to help in a way that feels genuine and real.



Neighbourly in action:

Putting people first comes naturally to us so we're here to help with more affordable, reliable and personalised service.

You'll see us around, in towns and on streets, maintaining and upgrading the pipes, pump stations and treatment plants we all need.

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How to be a Local Leader

Make it dynamic and onto it

1. Write in the active voice

It helps us sound more confident, in control and on top of things. For example:

Wannon Water supports the community.

Not

The community is supported by Wannon Water.

2. Lead with a gentle authority

Deliver our expertise with a quiet confidence. Make it clear that we're in charge and know what we're doing, but we're still approachable.

3. Bring the positive energy

Show that we're proactive with short, dynamic sentences and frame things in a positive light.



Local Leader in action:

Together, we can shape our region for the better.

Every day, we support our communities with sustainable water services.

Looking ahead, we're driven to make a real difference beyond water to the region we call home.

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Our profile

Our profile explains who we are and what we do. It should be included on our website and in corporate documents. It can also be shared externally.

Every day, we supply South West Victoria with sustainable water services, while leading our communities towards a healthier, more prosperous future. It's a commitment that we're proud to make to the region we call home.

We're your local, dependable experts

From the South Australian border to the Otways. From the Grampians to the coast. Our services take care of more than 30 communities, including residents, farmers, businesses and industries. It's our responsibility to supply you with fresh water, from source to tap, and manage sewage to protect your health and wellbeing.

Putting people first comes naturally to us so we're here to help with more affordable, reliable and personalised service. You'll see us around, in towns and on streets, maintaining and upgrading the pipes, pump stations and treatment plants we all need.

We're making a real and positive difference

As locals, we're driven to shape our region for the better. We're committed to working with our communities and strategic partners to support the health and wellbeing of our people and protect our natural environment. We simply believe it's the right thing to do and it all comes back to our greater vision to go beyond water for stronger communities.

It's about delivering sustainable water services together with positive change for our region – and we're proud to be leading the way.

Our acknowledgment

This acknowledgement shows awareness of, and respect for, our region's Aboriginal and Traditional Owner heritage. This version is for use on our website and in corporate documents.

Wannon Water and the Victorian Government proudly acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country and acknowledge their contribution to the management of land, water and resources.

We acknowledge the Gunditjmara Peoples, the Eastern Maar Peoples, the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Nations, and the Wadawurrung Peoples.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

Getting the basics right - Formatting

Set up your document correctly from the start to ensure it is reader-friendly.

Templates

Use the official Wannon Water templates with the plain navy corporate logo.

NOTE: Any documents with the old navy, orange and green corporate logo must be updated.

Font

Align to the left (not justified) and set line spacing at 1.25.

Always use Arial in 11 point coloured black.

Arial Regular in 11 point
Arial Bold in 11 point

NOTE: Any documents with our old corporate font of Gill Sans must be updated.

Subject lines, headings and sub-headings

Use sentence case in Arial Bold (not capitals or every word capitalised).

Body

Only include a single space after a full stop.

Avoid full capitals (unless using an acronym) or underlining words or sentences.

Contact details

Include spaces in phone numbers e.g. 1300 926 666 or (03) 5565 6655. Ensure the entire number runs on the same line to make it easier to read.

Our website should be written as wannonwater.com.au (the www is not required). Ensure the web address runs on the same line.

Our email address should also run on a single line and not be separated e.g. info@wannonwater.com.au

Hyphens, slashes and brackets

Don't add extra spaces before or after a hyphen or forward slash.

Don't add extra space between brackets and the words contained within them.

Oxford commas

An Oxford comma is a final comma in a list of things. Generally, we avoid using them unless sentences are long and can't be broken up, or if they make reading easier when there are a number of 'ands' in a sentence.

For example, we wouldn't use an Oxford comma in the following sentence:

Our organisation has a number of branches including Asset Planning, Maintenance and Retail Services (no Oxford comma after the word 'Maintenance').

However, the use of an Oxford comma is appropriate in the following sentence:

Our organisation has a number of branches including People and Wellbeing, Finance and Regulation, and Retail Services (note the Oxford comma after the word 'Regulation').

Alternatively, consider using a bulleted list to break your sentence up.

Bulleted lists

- Start each bullet with a capital letter
- Do not use a semi-colon at the end of each bullet
- Do not add an 'and' at the end of the second last point
- The final bullet point is the only one that needs a full stop unless each bullet reads as a complete sentence when a full stop should be added to each one.

Getting the basics right - Greetings and sign-offs

Use the right greeting and sign-off. To keep things consistent, we use certain words depending on who we're talking to and the type of communication.

A formal letter to a specific person

Greeting

Dear <First Name>

NOTE: This is the default option. If you don't know their first name, or if it's a more formal letter, use their title and surname.

Sign-off

Yours sincerely

<Name>

<Title>

Everyday letters to customers

Greeting

Hello <First Name>

NOTE: This is the default option. If you don't know their first name, simply use the word 'Hello'.

Sign-off

Thanks

The Wannon Water Team

A letterbox drop or bulk mail-out to customers

No greeting or sign-off is necessary.

This is an informative piece of communication that will feature a clear and simple subject line and a strong call to action at the end.

Getting the basics right - Write for your readers

Who is your audience and what do you need them to know?
Here's how to make your documents clear and easy to understand.

What's the purpose of your document?

Create a clear and simple heading that explains the purpose of your document. This will capture your reader's attention.

Add sub-headings

Sub-headings help guide your reader through your document. That way, if they only scan it quickly, they'll still get an idea of what you're communicating about.

Keep your paragraphs logical

Include the most important information at the top of your letter. Ensure your sentences and paragraphs flow in the correct order.

If you're writing a long report, include a summary of the main points at the start.

Keep sentences short

Keep your sentences to an average length of around 18 words. Write short, simple sentences in active voice.

Break up long sentences or explanations by using dot points.

Don't use complicated words that people will struggle to understand. Otherwise, explain what they mean.

Use active voice

An active voice is more conversational, making it easier for our readers to comprehend quickly and accurately. Active voice generally starts with 'who' rather than 'what' e.g:

Passive: *The water main is being repaired by our maintenance team.*

Active: *Our maintenance team is repairing the water main.*

Passive: *The Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant is being upgraded by our specialist contractors.*

Active: *Our specialist contractors are upgrading the Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant.*

Getting the basics right - Easy-to-understand words

Instead of.....	Say...	Instead of.....	Say...	Instead of.....	Say...
Address an issue	Handle, tackle, deal with	Future prospects	Prospects	One of the last remaining	One of the last
Adjacent to	Near, by	Give consideration to	Consider	One of the reasons	One reason
Ahead of	Before	Implement	Start	Optimise	Make the best use of, use effectively
Amongst	Among	In addition	Also	Peruse	Read
Approximately	About	Indicate	Show	Possessed	Had
Assistance	Help	Inform	Tell, advise	Presently	Soon
Attempted	Try	Initial	First	Rectify	Fix
At the present time	Now, today	In order to	To	Regarding	About
Behind schedule	Late	In spite of the fact that	Despite, although, however	Relocate	Move
Halt, cease	Stop	In the direction of	Towards	Render assistance to	Help
Close proximity	Close	In the lead-up/run-up to	Before	Request	Ask
Commence	Start, begin	In the near future	Soon	Shortly	Soon
Completely empty	Empty	In the process of	<i>Avoid - usually unnecessary</i>	Signage	Signs
Constructed	Built	In the wake of	After	Subsequent	Next
Currently	Now	In view of the fact that	Since	Sufficient	Enough
Dispatched	Sent	It appears	It seems	Take action on	Act on
During the course of	During	Less expensive	Cheaper	10 hectares of land	10 hectares
Early hours	Early	Make an approach to	Approach	Terminate	End
Enquire	Ask	Manufacture	Make	The majority of	Most
Eventuate	Happen, occur	Meet with	Meet	Therefore/thus	So
Filled to capacity	Full	Mutual cooperation	Cooperation	Until such time as	Until
Finalise	Finish, end, decide	Necessitate	Require	Usage/Utilise	Use
For a period of three weeks	For three weeks	Notify	Tell, advise	Whilst	While
For the purpose of	For	Numerous	Many		

Getting the basics right -

Capital letters

Our region

South West Victoria

Always in title case with no hyphen between 'south' and 'west'.

NOTE: We no longer use the term 'Great South Coast' or 'Western District'.

Organisations

Use title case when referring to an official or specific name in the first instance e.g. **Warrnambool City Council, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Department of Health.**

Afterwards, use lower case to refer to the organisation e.g. the **council**, the **authority**, the **department** (or, alternatively DoH).

An exception to this is when referring to the Wannon Water Board, you should use a capital letter for the word "Board" e.g. the role of the **Board** is to set the strategic direction.

Sites and facilities

Use capital letters when referring to a Wannon Water facility in the first instance e.g. the **Hamilton Water Treatment Plant**, the **Japan Street Sewer Pump Station**.

Use lower case if you are referring to a facility without its full name e.g. the **plant**, the **pump station**.

Corporate titles

Always use **Wannon Water** in full when writing - never shorten to 'WW'.

Departments, branches and team names should be in title case e.g. **Community and Corporate Services Department, Asset Systems Branch, People and Wellbeing Team.**

Job titles should be in title case as part of a formal title e.g. **Branch Manager Communications & Engagement Garrath Darkin.**

If you are referring to corporate titles in general, do not use capitals e.g. the **branch managers** will be available for further information, our **team** is in training

Governments

Use title case and the full name when referring to the **State Government** (or **Victorian Government**) and the **Federal Government** (or **Australian Government**) in the first instance.

Afterwards, use the lower case '**government**'.

The words '**local government**' do not refer to a specific organisation and should not be capitalised.

Documents and campaigns

Use title case and italics to spell out the full name of corporate documents in the first instance e.g. ***Wannon Water Urban Water Strategy 2022.***

Afterwards, use lower case e.g. the **strategy.**

Use title case to spell out the full name of plans, policies and procedures, but do not use italics e.g. **Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan, Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.**

Use title case and italics to spell out the name of campaigns e.g. ***Zero Harm, Ripple Effect, Water for Community.***

Abbreviations

Spell out an organisation's full title the first time you are using it, with the abbreviation following it in brackets e.g. the **Environment Protection Authority (EPA).**

Afterwards, the abbreviation can then be used on its own. Do not use full stops between each letter.

Getting the basics right - Numbers and figures

Note:

This section does not apply to tables, lists and charts in documents such as financial reports where numerals can be used

Numbers

Generally, the numbers **one to nine are spelt out**, and **10 and above are written as numerals** e.g. We have five projects planned that will benefit 11 towns.

Use commas for numbers with four digits and above e.g. 3,156.

Numbers should always be spelt out if they are used to start a sentence e.g. Twenty projects will begin.

Spell out first to ninth; use numerals for 10th and above e.g. second place, 10th anniversary.

Exceptions

Always use numerals for currency e.g. \$4 million project, \$5 entrance fee, 5 cent refund.

Always use numerals for percentages e.g. 3 per cent, 15 per cent. Always refer to per cent as two separate words, not as percent or %.

Temperatures

Always use numerals e.g. 5 degrees, 20 degrees, minus 2 degrees (not -2)

Measurements

In the first instance, the unit should be spelt out, before it is abbreviated. The following short forms are acceptable:

Fluid: megalitre - ML, kilolitre - kl, litre - lt (not l as it is too easily confused with the figure 1), millilitre (ml).

Length: kilometre - km, metre - m, centimetre - cm, millimetre - m.

Weight: tonne - t, kilogram - kg, gram - g, milligram - mg.

Area: square kilometre - sq km, hectare - h, square metre - sq m.

Volume: cubic metre - cu m, cubic centimetre - cc.

NOTE: Number refers to things we can count e.g. number of people. Amount refers to quantities we can measure e.g. amount of water.

Dates

Our format is **date, month, year** e.g. 5 February 2023.

Don't use 'th', 'st' etc at the end of the date.

If you are referring to a **financial year**, **the format is 2022/23** (not 2022-23, 2022/2023 or 2022-2023).

If you are referring to a **period representing a series of years**, **the format is 2023-28** (not 2023/28, 2023-2028 or 2023/28).

Times

Use the **12-hour clock** with a colon between the hours and minutes.

Don't use additional 00 for times on the hour e.g. our office hours are 8:15am to 5pm (not 5:00pm).

Don't add a space between the number and the 'am' or 'pm'.

Use 'noon' or 'midnight' instead of '12' or '12 noon' or '12 midnight'.

Getting the basics right - Apostrophes

Contractions

Contractions are used when two words are combined to sound more casual or informal. The apostrophe is always placed where the letter/s have been removed.

Some common examples are:

- **couldn't** - could not
- **doesn't** - does not
- **don't** - do not
- **he'll** - he will
- **I'd** - I would
- **I'll** - I will
- **I'm** - I am
- **isn't** - is not
- **it's** - it is OR it has
- **she'd** - she would
- **we're** - we are
- **who's** - who is
- **you'll** - you will
- **you're** - you are.

Possession

Possessive apostrophes show that a thing (a noun) belongs to or is related to someone or something else.

Singular nouns and names

When the noun is singular, add an apostrophe plus 's' e.g: *Wannon Water's pipeline, one week's notice.*

When a singular noun already ends in 's', add an apostrophe plus another 's' (the general rule is you should write it as you say it) e.g: *James's pen.*

Plural nouns

For plural nouns that end with an 's', add an apostrophe AFTER the 's'. For example if there is more than one water authority or week e.g: *The water authorities' pipelines, two weeks' notice.*

For plural nouns that don't end with an 's' (e.g. children, men and women), add an apostrophe BEFORE the 's' e.g: *The children's poster competition, International Women's Day.*

It's vs its

One of the most common apostrophe mistakes is placing an apostrophe in the word ITS to show something belongs to IT. But this rule doesn't apply to pronouns – its, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs. As outlined, it's is always a contraction of 'it is' or 'it has'.

Its describes something that belongs to it e.g: *The committee elected its president, the vehicle had its service.*

The easiest way to remember this rule is to read it back to yourself. The committee elected it's president effectively reads the committee elected it is president, which doesn't make sense.

When NOT to use an apostrophe

Don't use an apostrophe just because a word is plural e.g. *reports* (not report's), *USBs* (not USB's), *1990s* (not 1990's).

However, if you are referring to something that belongs to a decade, add an apostrophe e.g. *the 1990s' pipeline.*

Inclusive language

At Wannon Water, we use inclusive language because it's effective language – it is respectful, accurate and relevant to all.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,

Use culturally appropriate and respectful language when writing with, for, or about First Nations Australians. 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' is most often considered best practice. Using 'First Peoples' and 'First Nations' is also generally acceptable.

Age diversity

Avoid referring to a person's age or an age group if it's not relevant. Standalone words in everyday use, like 'old' and 'young', can carry bias or unintended subtext. Words that carry stereotypes, for example 'elderly', are not acceptable.

When an age or age range is relevant to a fact, you can use the term 'people' with the age reference e.g. *Survey data showed people aged 15 to 17 years were the highest proportion of internet users.*

Gender and sexual diversity

Inclusive language conveys gender equality and is gender neutral. Respect peoples' preferences around gender and sexual identity with pronoun choice, job titles and personal titles.

Do not default to a generic gendered pronoun like 'he' or 'she' to talk about a generic person. Instead, use 'they', 'their' and 'them' to refer to singular subjects as this allows you to speak to a broader audience of men, women, and other identifying genders.

Unless gender is relevant, always use gender-neutral words rather than gender-specific ones. For example, use 'workforce' instead of 'manpower', 'artificial' instead of 'man made', and 'access point' rather than 'manhole'.

Don't ask for a preferred title (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Ms) or gender identity in a form or survey unless you specifically need to collect this information.

On a side note, when giving addressing a group, avoid the term "ladies and gentlemen". Instead, simply use 'good morning', 'good afternoon' or 'welcome everyone' which are all inclusive.

People with a disability

Disability does not define people. Use inclusive language that respects diversity e.g: *person with disability* (NOT disabled person), *person who is deaf or hard of hearing* (NOT deaf person), *person who is blind or has low vision* (NOT blind person).

Cultural and linguistic diversity

Australians have different cultural backgrounds and speak many languages. Use inclusive language that respects this diversity. You can use the general term 'multicultural communities' to write about people from different cultural backgrounds.

When you ask people their name, don't ask for 'Christian name', 'first name', 'forename' or 'surname'. These terms all take for granted the European conventions and order of names. Instead, ask for their given name and family name.

Further help

- Australian Government Style Manual stylemanual.gov.au
- Diversity Council of Australia dca.org.au/inclusive-language

Glossary

The glossary on the following pages serves as a resource for employees and aims to ensure our communications are clear, simple and consistent.

If you need help or would like clarification about the use of other words, please contact the Communications Team.

Glossary

A

about Preferred over the word *approximately*.

Acts of Parliament Capitalise and italics e.g. *Water Act 1989*.

address As in addressing an issue or problem. This is a buzzword and doesn't actually say anything. Instead, use *handle an issue/problem, discuss an issue, tackle an issue, deal with an issue, look at the issue, talk about an issue*.

adjacent to Prefer *next to, beside, alongside, near*.

advisor Not *adviser*.

ageing Not *aging*.

algae The plural of *alga* e.g. *blue-green algae are (not is) spreading*. Note the words blue-green algae are not capitalised because this is not the official title, but they can then be shorted to BGA.

a lot Two words.

am/pm No full stops, no space: 2pm, 8.30am.

amid/among Not *amidst/amongst*.

and Do not use the ampersand & unless it is part of a formal title, when using it as part of common shorthand expressions e.g. *R&D*, or when identifying more than one addressee e.g. *Mr & Ms Wilson*.

anticipate Prefer the word *expect* instead e.g. *we expect the work to be completed by 4pm*.

aquifer Use capital letters only when referring to a particular aquifer e.g. *Dilwyn Aquifer, Newer Volcanic Aquifer*.

B

backflow One word.

backflow prevention devices No capitals.

barbecue Not *bbq, BBQ or barbeque*.

basis This is often a wasteful word e.g. *on a part-time basis* means *part time*. *On a regular basis* means *regularly*. The result is simpler and more direct.

beaches Use a capital for the title only if it is an official name e.g. *Shelly Beach, East Beach*.

begin/start/commence Prefer *begin* and *start* over *commence*. Also avoid the *commencement* of something.

beyond water for strong communities Wannon Water's strategic direction. Italics and not *beyond water for strong(er) communities*.

biannual/biennial *Biannual* means something happens twice each year. *Biennial* means lasting for, or happening every two years. To avoid confusion, use *twice-yearly* and *every two years* instead.

biosolids The nutrient-rich organic matter produced after *sludge* created from the sewage treatment process is dried and composted for at least three years. *Biosolids* can be used for soil conditioning agricultural land.

Glossary

Board Capitalise when referring to the Wannon Water Board.

borefield One word.

build-over Hyphen.

bulk water entitlement No capitals. If referring to the full name, use capitals e.g. *Wannon Water's Bulk Entitlements*.

bushfire One word.

C

cannot One word.

carbon emissions No capitals.

car park Two words.

catchments Use capital letters only when referring to a particular area e.g. *Otway Catchment, Grampians Catchment*.

central business district Lower case central business district is spelt out the first time, but can then be shortened to *CBD*.

centre *Centre on*, not *centre around*.

CEO Chief Executive Officer. Spell out at first mention.

changeover No hyphen. Usually *change* will do.

childcare One word.

Choose Tap Italics.

Christmas Never use *Xmas*.

city/shire Capitalise *City of Warrnambool, Southern Grampians Shire* etc. as it refers to the municipal title, but just Hamilton city, Camperdown town centre, Warrnambool central business district.

community engagement Not *community consultation*.

consultant No capital letter.

continual/continuous *Continual* means regularly or frequently recurring. *Continuous* means going on without a break, uninterrupted.

cooperate One word.

coordinate/coordinator One word.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Use in full in the first reference, then 'COVID-19'

Corporation Use a capital C only if specifically referring to Wannon Water.

could have Not *could of*.

Country Capitalise when referring to an area of land, sea and sky that is associated with a distinct group of Aboriginal people. Also use capitals for *Acknowledgement of Country* and *Welcome to Country*.

create We don't create a *new* plan, we create a plan. Anything that is created is new.

cross-section Hyphen.

curb/kerb To *curb* is to restrain or keep something in check. A *kerb* is the edge of the pavement.

currently An over-used term. Prefer *now* or *present*. Don't add it in sentences where it is superfluous e.g. *work is (currently) taking place*. Note the word *presently* does not mean the same as *currently*. It means *soon*.

Glossary

D

Dates Date, month, year e.g. *5 February 2023*.

Department Our lead government department is now the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) no longer exists from 1 January 2023.

Director Capitalise *Director* when referring to a member of the current Board, but lower case *director* if referring to a former board director.

E

E.coli Acceptable as the short form of *Escherichia coli*.

e-form Short for electronic form.

e.g. Means *for example*. Use with full points.

eftpos No capitals.

Elder/s Capitalise when referring to an Aboriginal Elder/s.

email No hyphen.

e-news Short for electronic news.

employee/s Prefer over the term *staff*.

Engage & Explore Our online community engagement portal.

engagement/engaged Prefer over consultation/consulted.

Enhanced Operations Capitals.

enquire, enquiry Asking a general question. Use *inquire, inquiry* for more formal investigations..

escalate Use *rise, grow, increase, worsen*.

Essential Services Commission (ESC) Capitals.

etc No points. Best avoided or kept to a minimum in formal documents.

eventuate Use *happen, occur, result in*.

expert Consider using *specialist, professional, authority*.

expertise Consider using *skill, ability, knowledge*.

ex Prefer *former employee, former director* (instead of *ex-employee, ex-director*).

Glossary

F

facilitate Another buzzword. Use *ease*, *help*, *aid*, *enable*.

fast-tracked Use *brought forward*, *given priority*.

fewer/less Use *fewer* when referring to numbers; *less* when referring to quantity e.g. *fewer than 15 employees*, *less than 15 megalitres of water*.

Financial Inclusion Action Plan Capitals, no italics. FIAP for short.

finalise Use *complete*, *finish*.

first Not *firstly*. Also avoid repetition such as *first ever*, (just say it was the *first*), *first discovered* (just say *discovered*), or *first introduced* (just say *introduced*).

focus Also *focused*, *focusing* (not *focussed*, *focussing*).

Freedom of Information Capitals, no italics unless referring to the *Freedom of Information Act*.

free Never *free of charge* or *for free*.

fridge Abbreviation for refrigerator.

front yard Two words.

fulfil Also *fulfilment*, *fulfilled*, *fulfilling*.

full-time, part-time Use a hyphen when they are adjectives, otherwise two words e.g. *the full-time position*, *the position is full time*.

fund Avoid using as a verb. Prefer *pay for*, *finance*.

further Use instead of *farther*.

G

gender The pronouns *they*, *them* and *their* are common-gender terms but are also plural. Avoid sentences such as *the applicant* (singular) *must pay for their* (plural) *own expenses*. Instead convert the sentence to plural: *applicants must pay for their own expenses*.

Gender Equality Action Plan Capitals, no italics. GEAP for short.

gentleman Use *man*.

give consideration to Use *consider*.

going forward Avoid. Use *advancing*, *continuing*, *proceeding*, *moving on*, *in the future*.

Grade/Year Capitalise when using with a number e.g. *Grade 3*, *Year 10*.

Grampians Written as *the Grampians* not *The Grampians*.

Grampians System Capitals

Great South Coast No longer used. Use South West Victoria (capitals) instead.

greenhouse gas emissions No capitals.

groundwater One word.

Glossary

H

h Use 'a' before all words beginning with a consonant sound e.g. *a hotel, a historic moment*. Use 'an' before words beginning with a vowel sound e.g. *an hour, an honour*.

halfway One word.

handout One word.

headworks Facilities that harvest raw water for transfer to treatment plants e.g. dams, weirs, river offtakes and groundwater extraction facilities.

Health & Wellbeing The formal Wannon Water program uses an & and capitals. When referring to health and wellbeing generally, do not capitalise and spell out 'and'.

holidays All institutional holidays or holy days should be capitalised e.g. *Australia Day, Anzac Day, Christmas* (not X-mas).

home/house Use *home* if you are addressing the occupants e.g. *the contractors will be working outside your home*. Use *house* where there is no personal connection e.g. *the project will provide services to 25 houses*. The word *property/properties* is a suitable (and often preferred) term.

honour With a 'u'.

Horne Road Industrial Estate Correct title of industrial estate on eastern side of Warrnambool.

householder Consider using *property owner/occupant* where correspondence is being addressed to properties which may include vacant blocks, businesses etc.

Glossary

I

i.e. Means *that is*. Use with full points.

impact/impacted Do not use as a verb e.g. *rising costs impacted on our ability to complete the project*. Instead use alternatives such as *affected, influenced, harmed, damaged, weakened*.

implement (verb) Use *do, carry out*.

in addition/in addition to Use *also, too, besides, as well, as well as*.

in attendance Use *present, there*.

Incident Management Team (IMT) Capital letters.

Inclusion & Diversity The formal Wannon Water program uses an & and capitals. When referring to inclusion and diversity generally, do not capitalise and spell out 'and'.

increasing numbers of Use *more*.

in excess of Say *more than*.

Information and Communication Technology ICT is the shortform.

infrastructure Be specific if you can e.g. *pipes, water supply, sewer mains, buildings, sewerage network*.

initiatives/innovations Don't say *new initiative* or *new innovation*. The word *new* is not required.

inquire/inquiry Not *enquire/enquiry*.

inside Not *inside of*.

in spite of Use *despite*.

install Also *installed, installation, instalment*.

instil Also *instilled, instillation, instilment*.

intense/intensive *Intense* means extreme. *Intensive* means thorough or concentrated.

intents and purposes it's *to all intents and purposes* (not *for all intensive purposes*). Best avoided as 'intent' and 'purpose' mean the same thing.

in the lead-up to Use *before*.

in the near future Use *soon*.

issue Often used in place of the preferred *subject, topic, problem etc*.

K

kerb/curb A *kerb* is the edge of the pavement. To *curb* is to restrain or keep something in check.

Kilolitre 1,000 litres. Shortform is kL.

km/h Kilometres an hour.

Konongwootong Correct spelling.

Glossary

L

lady Use *woman*.

large-scale Just *large* will do.

last/past *Last* refers to a period of time which is the final phase of a certain activity or event e.g. *There was more interest during the last half of the workshop*. We use *past* to refer to a period of time which has recently gone by e.g. *the water has been off for the past two hours*. Note also that referring to *last year* means the previous calendar year, but referring to the *past year* means the 12 months preceding today.

Learning & Development The formal Wannon Water program uses an & and capitals. When referring to learning and development generally, do not capitalise and spell out 'and'.

learnt Not learned.

lengthy Refers to something of an unusual length. Do not use for *long*.

licence/license *Licence* is the noun e.g. *EPA licence, driver's licence, licence number*. *License* is the verb (to grant permission or authorise) e.g. *The EPA has licensed Wannon Water to discharge treated water*.

long-term Hyphen when used as an adjective e.g. *a long-term goal* otherwise two words e.g. *the project will be completed in the long term*.

low-income Uses a hyphen. Also *high-income, middle-income*.

M

major/mega Over-used terms. Consider using *big, large, great, leading, important strong* etc instead. When it is used, *major* should be without qualification. Something is either major or it is not, so avoid terms such as *very major, quite major or the most major*.

manhole Use sewer access point instead.

materialise Avoid using unless you are referring to the supernatural. Use *appear, happen, come about* etc instead.

meet Not *meet with*.

megalitre A million litres. Many people find it easier to understand millions of litres, so consider converting.

meters Water *meters*.

metres Measurement.

midday/midnight Also *midweek, mid-year*. Note it is *midday* or *noon*, not *12 midday* or *12 noon*.

minor use without qualification. Something is either minor or it is not, so avoid terms such as *very minor, quite minor, the most minor*.

Mr, Mrs, Dr etc Use without full points.

Glossary

multi Words with the multi prefix are generally one word e.g. *multicultural, multimedia, multipurpose, multistorey*.

myWannonWater Our online customer portal. One word, lower case italics at the start.

N

nationwide Also *statewide, worldwide*. *National* is preferred.

necessitate Prefer *require*.

necessity Prefer *need*.

non-drinking water Water that is not fit for human consumption (preferred over non-potable water).

no one Two words with no hyphen.

numbers Within written text, numbers *one* to *nine* are expressed in words, and numbers *10* and above are expressed as numerals. A comma is used to separate thousands. When opening a sentence, a number should always be expressed in words e.g. *Thirty-four people attended the session*.

nurdles No capital.

O

Occupational Health and Safety OH&S is the short form.

o'clock Use *8.15am, 5pm, noon*, not *quarter-past eight in the morning, five o'clock, 12 noon* etc.

off words Hyphenate *off* words such as *run-off, spin-off, turn-off*.

OK/okay Not *ok* (lower case).

ongoing One word.

on-site Hyphen.

optimise Prefer *make the best use of, use effectively*.

organisation Not *organization*.

Otway System Capitals. Not *Otways*.

out words Hyphenate *out* words such as *black-out, cut-out, drop-out, hand-out, look-out*.

over/about Do not use the word *over* for *about* e.g. *a dispute about an easement* (not *a dispute over an easement*).

Glossary

over/more than Do not use *over* for *more than* e.g. *more than 200 people attended the open day* (not *over 200 people attended the open day*). The exception to this is when you are referring to heights e.g. *over 20 metres high*.

overflow One word.

P

participate Prefer *take part*.

part-time/full-time Use a hyphen when they are adjectives, otherwise two words e.g. *the part-time position, the position is part time*.

past We use *past* to refer to a period of time which has recently gone by e.g. *the water has been off for the past two hours*. Note that referring to the *past year* means the 12 months preceding today. but referring to *last year* means the previous calendar year.

Permanent Water Saving Rules Capitals.

persons Use *people* instead.

phone Preferred over *telephone*.

potable water Water for human consumption. Prefer *drinking water*.

practice/practise *Practice* is the noun e.g. *sport practice*. *Practise* is the verb e.g. *she practises netball*.

presently This means *soon, in a little while*. Use *now* if you are referring to the present time.

preventive Not *preventative*.

Price submission Only use title case and italics when referring to the official document name e.g. *Wannon Water Price Submission 2023-28*. Thereafter, refer to 'price submission' (no capitals, no italics). Never use 'pricing submission'.

pricing period Not *price period*.

prior to Use *before*.

program Not *programme*.

purchase Use *buy* for the verb.

Glossary

R

Reconciliation Action Plan Capitals, no italics. RAP for short.

Research & Development *R&D* is the shortform.

rainfall One word.

rainwater One word.

rateable Not *rate-able*.

raw water Two words (prefer *untreated water*).

reclaimed water Use *recycled water*.

recognise Not *recognize*.

recycled water water produced from a sewage treatment plant used for irrigation on farms and sporting facilities etc.

regulated water Formal term for water that is not fit for human consumption. Instead, use the easier to understand *non-drinking water*.

relocate Prefer *move, shift, transfer, go* etc.

renters Not *tenants*.

report *Report on* (not *report into*).

reservoir Use capital letters only when referring to a particular reservoir. e.g. *Rocklands Reservoir*.

reside Use *live*.

respect *In respect of* (not *in respect to*).

Ripple Effect Wannon Water's community sponsorship and grants program. Italics.

roadside One word.

roof/roofs Singular/plural.

roof water Two words. When referring to the full project title use *Warrnambool Roof Water Harvesting System*.

run-off Hyphen

Rural Water Surcharge Capitals.

S

Saputo NOT Warrnambool Cheese and Butter.

seasons Lower case e.g. *summer, autumn, winter, spring*.

sewage Waste matter e.g. human excreta or domestic waterborne waste, that is untreated or partially treated. *Sewage* is treated at a *sewage treatment plant*.

sewage treatment plant This term is simpler and more easily understood than the previously used *water reclamation plant* and *wastewater treatment plant*. Note that there are no capitals, unless referring to a specific facility e.g. *Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant*.

sewerage The sewerage network is the system that carries sewage away in *sewers, sewer pipes, and sewer mains*.

sewer pump station No capitals, unless referring to a specific facility e.g. *Lyndoch Sewer Pump Station, Officer Street Sewer Pump Station*.

shortlist No hyphen.

should have Not *should of*.

side effect Two words.

sizeable Prefer *large, big* etc.

Glossary

sludge The organic solid component of sewage removed during the treatment process. Once *sludge* is dried and composted for at least three years to satisfy guidelines set by the Environment Protection Authority, it becomes a nutrient-rich organic matter known as *biosolids*.

Smart Energy Precinct Capitals.

smelt Not smelled.

SMS Not *SMS message*. The term *text message* is preferred.

South West Healthcare Note there is no hyphen in *South-West* and the word *Healthcare* is one word.

South West Victoria Capitals. Not *south-west Victoria* or *Great South Coast*.

spilt Not *spilled*.

state Lower case unless you are referring to the current *State Government*. Likewise for *federal*.

stationary/stationery *Stationary* means something is not moving. *Stationery* refers to writing paper, envelopes etc.

stockpile One word.

stormwater One word.

street/road/avenue etc Only use capitals when it is used with a name e.g. *Gateway Road* (not *Rd*), *Manifold Street* (not *St*). Use lower case when referring to a street generally e.g. *the street will be closed for four hours*.

subsequently Prefer *later* or *since*, depending on context.

Sun Pharma Two words. Acceptable shorter term for *Sun Pharmaceutical Industries (Australia) Pty Ltd*. (Former Glaxo factory at Port Fairy).

support Use the singular *support* when referring to customer support programs e.g. *the support we provide helps customers at times when their needs change* NOT *the supports we provide help customers at times when their needs change*. The plural *supports* should only be used when referring to structures e.g. the building is held in place by many supports.

surface water Two words.

T

T Use a hyphen when referring to *T-bone*, *T-junction*, *T-shirt*.

teamwork One word

technology Singular and plural - not *technologies*.

tenants Incorrect. Use *renters*.

(In) terms of An over-used phrase which is usually superfluous. *In seasonally adjusted terms* means *seasonally adjusted*. *In terms of employment growth* means *employment growth*.

3D Acceptable shorter term for three dimensional.

3 Ps Not 3 *P's* (with an apostrophe). Expanded to read *Pee*, *Poo* and *(toilet) Paper*.

That Do not use 'that' when referring to people, use 'who' e.g. *employees who work part-time* NOT *employees that work part-time*.

Thriving Communities Partnership Capital letters, no italics. TCP for short.

titled *A report titled* (not *entitled*).

to date Prefer *so far*, *until now*.

towards Not *toward*.

Glossary

townhouse One word.

trade names Do not use trade names if there is a generic word available e.g. use *adhesive plaster* (not *Band-Aid*), *ballpoint pen* (not *Biro*), *earth-moving machine* (not *Bobcat*), *soft drink or cola drink* (not *Coca-Cola* or *Coke*), *portable cooler* (not *Esky*).

trade waste Liquid waste generated by an industry, business, trade or manufacturing process.

12 Apostles Not *Twelve Apostles* e.g. *the 12 Apostles Visitor Centre*.

U

undertake Prefer *do*, *carry out*.

underway One word.

unique Something is either *unique* or it's not. The word cannot be qualified with adjectives such as *quite*, *very*, *rather*, etc so use *unique* on its own. Anything that is "almost" *unique* should be called *rare*.

until Do not use *'til*.

untreated water preferred term for raw water.

-up words Hyphenate words such as *build-up*, *check-up*, *break-up*.

upcoming Use *coming*.

upfront Prefer *initial* or *in advance*.

up-to-date As an adjective use hyphens e.g. *an up-to-date report*. Otherwise, *the report is up to date*.

useable Not *usable*.

usage Not *useage*.

utilise/utilisation Prefer *use*.

V

verandah Not *veranda*.

very Often superfluous. Consider whether you need to use it or whether it is *very essential* in your writing.

VicRoads One word, note the capital R. *Regional Roads Victoria* is the new regional division.

Victoria Police The proper name. *Police* is an acceptable shorter form.

virtually This means *practically, in effect, as good as*. Do not use when you mean *almost*.

visit Not *visit with*.

Glossary

W

wait *wait for a result (not wait on a result).*

Wannon Water Can also be referred to as the *Corporation* or the *organisation*. Never use the initials *WW*.

Warrnambool Roof Water Harvesting System Capitals.

wastewater Not to be used - instead use *sewage*.

Water for Community Italics.

water main Two words.

water reclamation plant Use the preferred term *sewage treatment plant*.

waterway One word.

waterSHED Wannon Water's intranet. Note correct use of lower case/upper case.

water supply The entire water system.

wellbeing No hyphen.

whilst Use while.

who/which *Who* belongs to people and *which* belongs to things.

wind farm Two words as a noun, but hyphenated as an adjective e.g. *wind-farm towers*.

workplace One word.

WorkSafe One word. Note the capital S.

worldwide One word.

would have Not *would of*.

X

Xmas Use *Christmas*.

Y

years Write in full e.g. 2023 (not '23).

Z

Zero Harm Caps and italics.

