

NEW CUSTOMER PRIVACY LAW

196.137 Municipal utility customer information.

(1) Definitions. In this section:

(a) "Customer information" means any information received from customers which serves to identify customers individually by usage or account status.

(b) "Municipal utility" has the meaning given in s. 196.377 (2) (a) 3.

(2) Prohibition. A municipal utility may not release customer information to any person except with the consent of the customer obtained on a form specified under sub. (4), or except to any of the following:

(a) Agents, vendors, partners, or affiliates of the municipal utility that are engaged to perform any services or functions for or on behalf of the municipal utility.

(ae) In connection with an issue of municipal securities and to the extent the municipal utility determines release is necessary to comply with securities disclosure obligations, a lender or a purchaser, or potential purchaser, of or investor, or potential investor, in municipal securities.

(am) In connection with the preparation of real estate closing documents, a title agent, insurer, lender, mortgage broker, or attorney providing legal services.

(ap) In connection with a real estate transaction or appraisal of real property, a real estate broker or salesperson licensed under ch. 452 or an appraiser certified or licensed under ch. 458.

(as) In connection with the foreclosure of real property, a lender or prospective purchaser.

(b) Transmission and distribution utilities and operators within whose geographic service territory the customer is located.

(c) The commission or any person whom the commission authorizes by order or rule to receive the customer information.

(cm) An owner of a rental dwelling unit to whom the municipal utility provides notice of past-due charges pursuant to s. 66.0809 (5).

(cr) An owner of real property provided with municipal utility service or the owner's designated agent or representative.

(d) Any person who is otherwise authorized by law to receive the customer information.

(3) Public record exception. Customer information is not subject to inspection or copying under s. 19.35.

(4) Consent form. No later than April 1, 2014, the commission shall specify a form for a municipal utility to obtain a customer's consent to the release of customer information.

(5) Customer postcards. A municipal utility that sends a billing statement to a customer on a postcard does not violate the prohibition under sub. (2).