

A Resolution

NO. _____

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A PRIVACY POLICY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS ACQUIRED BY THE WATER DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, Section 501.052 of the Texas Business and Commerce Code provides that municipally owned utilities may not require an individual to disclose the individual's social security number to obtain goods or services unless the utility: (1) adopts a privacy policy; (2) makes the privacy policy available to the individual, and (3) pursuant to the private policy, maintains the confidentiality and security of social security numbers disclosed to the utility; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Worth Water Department requests that a person opening a water service account provide a social security number to the Water Department but does not require the social security number as a condition of obtaining water service; and

WHEREAS, the City may redact the social security number of a customer from a request for public information without the necessity of requesting a decision from the attorney general and is exempt from Section 552.021 of the Texas Government Code; and

WHEREAS, Section 182.052 of the Texas Utilities Code further requires the Water Department to protect a customer's personal information including water usage from disclosure upon written request; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers disclosed to the City in connection with the provision of city services; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with state law, the City Council must adopt a privacy policy relating to the collection, use, protection, access to and disposal of social security numbers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT WORTH, TEXAS:

The City Council hereby adopts the privacy policy regarding the protection of Social Security Numbers by the Water Department in compliance with state law, attached hereto as Exhibit "A".



Adopted this _____ day of _____ 2018.

ATTEST:

By: _____

Mary Kayser, City Secretary



PRIVACY POLICY FOR THE FORT WORTH WATER DEPARTMENT RELATING TO SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

When a person opens a water utility service account, the City of Fort Worth Water Department requests that person provide his or her social security number for the reasons stated below. However, the Water Department does not require a social security number as a condition of obtaining water service. The purpose of this policy is to address the collection, use, protection, access to and disposal of social security numbers in compliance with Section 501.052 of the Texas Business and Commerce Code.

Collection of personal information: The Water Department requests the name, address, telephone number, driver license or ID number and social security or Tax ID number from each person who opens a water utility service account (which serves to collect amounts due for water, wastewater, solid waste, storm water and environmental protection fee). Such information can be obtained from the customer in person or by phone, mail, email, facsimile or online via the internet.

How and when personal information is used: A social security number is requested from the applicant when seeking to obtain a water utility service account or at times when the Water Department is securing payment for such services. The request for the social security number is: (1) a means of identifying an individual; (2) for internal verification or administrative purposes; (3) to research credit worthiness; and/or (4) for debt collection.

How personal information is protected: The Water Department maintains all personal information electronically and by paper file. In compliance with Section 552.147 of the Texas Government Code, once a social security number is obtained it is entered into the Water Department's electronic database and all but the last 4 numbers are redacted for display and presentment.

Other personal information of a water utility customer such as an individual's address, telephone number and information relating to volume of usage and amounts billed is protected from disclosure upon request and submission of a confidentiality form. The form can be obtained from the Customer Service Division of the Water Department, 908 Monroe St, Ft Worth, TX 76102 or via the website at <http://fortworthtexas.gov/utilities>.

Who has access to personal information: Employees of the Water Department's Customer Relations Division have access to customers' personal information, including social security numbers. In addition, personal information may be shared or confirmed with Police Department and Code Compliance as allowed by state law or as otherwise excepted from protection by Section 182.054 of the Texas Utilities Code.

How personal information is disposed of: Any retained paper document containing a social security number are disposed of through off-site shredding per the City's record retention schedule. Electronic files of closed accounts are deleted in accordance with the City's electronic file retention policy.

Compliance with State Law: Any provision of this privacy policy in conflict with state law as it is now or as it may be amended shall be deemed null and void. All other provisions shall remain effective.