

# Frequently Asked Questions: Parks Charge

Melbourne has one of the world's great networks of parks for its residents. The Parks Charge helps fund the development and management of these major parks, trails, gardens and waterways. The annual Parks Charge is collected from customers in the Western Water region by City West Water and Yarra Valley Water.

## What is the Parks Charge?

The Parks Charge is an annual charge levied on residential and commercial properties to help fund the development and management of a network of regional parks, gardens, trails, waterways, bays and other significant recreation and conservation assets for the benefit of Melbourne residents. The Parks Charge, known as the Metropolitan Improvement Fund before 1992, has been collected by water retailers for over 50 years.

Retail water companies across the Melbourne region collect the charge once a year to minimise overall administration costs. In Western Water's region, the Parks Charge is collected by City West Water (Melton area) and by Yarra Valley Water (Sunbury area).

## Where do the funds go?

The majority of the funds from the Parks Charge go to Parks Victoria for the maintenance, operation and development of metropolitan parks and their facilities around Melbourne. Facilities in these parks include walking trails, BBQ facilities, picnic shelters and tables, wetlands, walking and cycling trails, playgrounds for children, facilities for canoeing, piers, jetties and moorings in Port Phillip Bay, art and artist programs and historical buildings and their maintenance.

Funds are also distributed to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and Cranbourne, the Shrine of Remembrance, and Zoos Victoria to support the Melbourne Zoo, the Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary – places enjoyed by many Victorians.

Parks on the western side of Melbourne include Brimbank Park and Horseshoe Bend Farm, Woodlands Historical Park, Organ Pipes National Park, Westgate Park, Point Cook Coastal Park, Pipemakers Park and Greenvale Reservoir Park. Parks Victoria is currently planning and developing new regional parks along the Werribee River and along Toolern Creek.

## Why should businesses pay?

Like residential properties, businesses benefit from environmental improvements in the Melbourne region. One of the reasons Melbourne is regarded as a great city is the quality and diversity of its parks, which ultimately benefit many Melbourne businesses. Other benefits include improved property values in precincts near parks.

## Why is the parks charge an annual charge?

The Parks Charge is collected annually in order to limit the administrative costs of charging more regularly. However, the charge can be paid in installments with other water utility charges, according to the customer charter of the relevant water retailer.

## How is the charge determined?

The Parks Charge is levied under Section 139 of the Water Industry Act 1994. The charge is determined using the Net Annual Valuation of the applicable property as determined by your local council. The majority of customers pay the minimum applicable charge.

The charge is reviewed periodically in accordance with the Consumer Price Index in order to meet additional costs associated with managing parks and bays services.

## What if I don't pay the Parks Charge?

In the event that a landowner does not pay their water bill, the water retailer that sends the water bill will implement their usual debt recovery procedure in accordance with their policies. During the sale of property any outstanding utility charges, including the Parks Charge, are calculated and are deducted as part of the settlement process.

## How is the charge different to the Melbourne Water Waterways Charge?

The Parks Charge is collected by City West Water (Melton area) and Yarra Valley Water (Sunbury area) to help fund the development and management of a network of public parks, gardens and trails, for the benefit of Melbourne residents.

The Waterways Charge is collected by Western Water on behalf of Melbourne Water. Melbourne Water uses these funds to provide services to directly manage the health of waterways, streamside vegetation, flood protection, and drainage across the whole of the Port Phillip Bay Catchment. The Waterways Charge boundary has recently been extended to include the whole of the Maribyrnong and Werribee Catchments, so it now affects the Western Water service region except Woodend.

## Further information

For further information on the Parks Charge or individual parks please contact Parks Victoria on 13 19 63 or visit [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

For information on the parks around Melbourne please see overleaf.

For more information on the Waterways Charge and Melbourne Water's role in managing rivers and drainage, please visit [www.melbournewater.com.au](http://www.melbournewater.com.au)

# Parks to enjoy around Melbourne



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|--|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Albert Park                                 | 13. Yarra Ranges National Park                   | • Lysterfield Park                        | 30. Mushroom Reef Marine Sanctuary          | 44. Brisbane Ranges National Park |
| 2. Yarra River                                 | 14. Upper Yarra Reservoir Park                   | • Churchill National Park                 | 31. Coolart Wetlands and Homestead          | 45. Werribee Gorge State Park     |
| 3. Herring Island Environmental Sculpture Park | 15. Bunyip State Park                            | • Dandenong Police Paddocks Reserve       | 32. Arthurs Seat State Park                 | 46. Lerderderg State Park         |
| 4. Yarra Bend Park                             | 16. Silvan Reservoir Park                        | 21. Cardinia Reservoir Park               | 33. Mornington Peninsula National Park      | 47. Macedon Regional Park         |
| 5. Westerfolds Park & Surrounds                | 17. Dandenong Ranges National Park               | 22. Jells Park and Surrounds              | 34. Point Nepean National Park              | 48. Greenvale Reservoir Park      |
| • Westerfolds Park                             | 18. William Ricketts Sanctuary                   | • Jells Park                              | 35. Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park | 49. Woodlands Historic Park       |
| • Banksia Park                                 | 19. Dandenong Ranges Gardens                     | • Koomba Park                             | 36. Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary           | 50. Organ Pipes National Park     |
| • Birrarung Park                               | • National Rhododendron Gardens                  | • Nortons Park                            | 37. Point Danger Marine Sanctuary           | 51. Brimbank Park                 |
| • Yarra Flats                                  | • Alfred Nicholas Gardens                        | 23. Wattle Park                           | 38. Port Phillip                            | 52. Pipemakers Park               |
| 6. Warrandyte State Park                       | • George Tindale Gardens                         | 24. Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary       | 39. Point Cook Coastal Park                 | 53. Maribyrnong River             |
| 7. Plenty Gorge Parks                          | • Pirianda Gardens                               | 25. Braeside Park and Karkarook Park      | 40. Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary            | 54. Westgate Park                 |
| • Nioka Bush Camp                              | • RJ Hamer Arboretum                             | 26. Patterson River                       | 41. Werribee Park                           | 55. Jawbone Marine Sanctuary      |
| 8. Yan Yean Reservoir Park                     | • Mt Dandenong Arboretum                         | 27. Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve    | 42. Serendip Sanctuary                      |                                   |
| 9. Toorourrong Reservoir Park                  | 20. Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park | 28. Yaringa Marine National Park          | 43. You Yangs Regional Park                 |                                   |
| 10. Kinglake National Park                     |  | 29. Churchill Island Marine National Park |   |                                   |
| 11. Sugarloaf Reservoir Park                   |  |   |   |                                   |
| 12. Maroondah Reservoir Park                   |  |   |   |                                   |