



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 26, 2020

Ms. T. Trisha Dang
Assistant City Attorney
City of Sugar Land
P.O. Box 110
Sugar Land, Texas 77487-0110

OR2020-21513

Dear Ms. Dang:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 843159 (ORR# W009661).

The City of Sugar Land (the "city") received a request for a list of addresses where water services were cut off. The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exception and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note only the submitted addresses are responsive to the request for information. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request, and the city is not required to release this information in response to this request.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This exception encompasses section 182.052(a) of the Utilities Code, which provides, in part, the following:

- (a) Except as provided by Section 182.054, a government-operated utility may not disclose personal information in a customer's account record, or any information relating to the volume or units of utility usage or the

amounts billed to or collected from the individual for utility usage, if the customer requests that the government-operated utility keep the information confidential. . . .

Util. Code § 182.052(a). “Personal information” under section 182.052(a) means an individual’s address, telephone number, or social security number, but does not include the individual’s name. *See id.* § 182.051(4); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 625 (1994) (construing statutory predecessor). Section 182.054 of the Utilities Code provides six exceptions to the disclosure prohibition found in section 182.052. *See* Util. Code § 182.054.

The city states the submitted responsive information pertains to customers who timely requested confidentiality of their personal information under section 182.052. There is no indication the exceptions to confidentiality under section 182.054 apply to the information. We also understand the primary source of water for the city’s utility services is not a sole-source designated aquifer. Therefore, the city must withhold the submitted responsive information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 182.052 of the Utilities Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/mo

Ref: ID# 843159

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)