



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 2, 2020

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

OR2020-30006

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# 856979 (ORR# W010274).

The City of Sugar Land (the "city") received a request for a list of residential addresses where the water service was shut off during a specified time period. The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception the city claims and reviewed the submitted information.

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 of the Utilities Code, which provides in part:

(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. However, a government-operated utility may disclose information related to the customer's volume or units of utility usage or amounts billed to or collected from the individual for utility usage if the primary source of water for such utility was a sole-source designated aquifer.

(b) A customer may request confidentiality by delivering to the government-operated utility an appropriately marked form provided under Subsection (c)(3) or any other written request for confidentiality.

Util. Code § 182.052(a)-(b). “Personal information” under section 182.052(a) means an individual’s address, but does not include the individual’s name. *See id.* § 182.051(4); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 625 (1994) (construing statutory predecessor). Water is included in the scope of utility services covered by section 182.052. *See* Util. Code § 182.051(3). Section 182.054 of the Utilities Code provides six exceptions to the disclosure prohibition found in section 182.052. *See id.* § 182.054.

Upon review, we agree the submitted addresses are subject to section 182.052(a) of the Utilities Code. We understand the primary source of water for the city’s utility services is not a sole-source designated aquifer. Further, the city informs us the customers whose information is at issue timely requested confidentiality under section 182.052 prior to the date the city received the instant request for information. Accordingly, the city must withhold the addresses within the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 182.052(a) of the Utilities Code. However, the remaining information does not consist of the types of information made confidential by section 182.052 of the Utilities Code. Therefore, the city may not withhold any portion of the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis. The city must release the remaining information.

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,

Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/mo

Ref: ID# 856979

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)