Early Connection Option (ECO) for Sewering the Southern Peninsula

Frequently asked questions

**What is the Early Connection Option (ECO) for Sewering the Southern Peninsula?**

*Early Connection Option (ECO) for Sewering the Southern Peninsula* is a $357m project that delivers on South East Water’s commitment to connect the last unsewered area in Melbourne’s south east.

More than 16,200 unsewered lots between Rye and Portsea on the Southern Mornington Peninsula can now choose to connect earlier than the scheduled rollout of South East Water’s project to sewer the townships of Rye, Blairgowrie, Portsea, St Andrews and Sorrento.

South East Water’s approach involves construction of the entire reticulation network (230km of pipes) in less than 30 months – rather than with the conventional rollout timeframe of 16 years. This is the largest pressure sewer project in Australian history.

New technology developed by South East Water also frees up capacity in the existing sewage transfer system, enabling up to 4,000 early connections to take place.

With construction fast-tracked, and new technology to accommodate more connections, customers can choose to pay for an early connection to the system, or stay with the scheduled program for connection.

**What is the Early Connection Option (ECO)?**

Early Connection Option (ECO) enables customers to connect to the network earlier – in some instances up to 16 years earlier – than scheduled.

Customers who choose an ECO will pay a brought forward fee, which is less than the actual cost to South East Water for providing the service.

You don’t have to opt for early connection – it’s your choice. ECO is offered in addition to the scheduled rollout, which will begin in Rye and work progressively towards Portsea.

**What are the benefits of the project?**

Sewering the Southern Mornington Peninsula addresses environmental and public health risks associated with failing on-site sewerage systems in accordance with obligations specified in the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for the area prepared under the State Environmental Protection Policy.

With ECO, customers can enjoy the benefits of being connected to the sewer network sooner – in some instances up to 16 years earlier – than waiting for the scheduled rollout.

**What are the costs of ECO?**

For customers who choose ECO, the associated fee covers the brought forward costs of the required infrastructure (i.e. the reticulation network and customer pump stations). The fee is calculated using a formula approved by the Essential Services Commission.
The ECO fee will vary depending on the number of years of benefit a customer receives from being connected earlier than scheduled. Once the schedule of works is finalised we’ll be in a position to calculate individual property connection costs.

**Is my property included in the project?**
Properties in Rye, Blairgowrie, Portsea, St Andrews and Sorrento are included.

**When will I be connected under the scheduled rollout?**
We’re currently finalising the project schedule. We will be in touch with households and businesses along the Southern Mornington Peninsula to provide more information about the scheduled rollout and Early Connection Option.

**Is this a separate project to the Rye Coastal Sewerage Scheme?**
Yes. The area covered by the Sewering the Southern Peninsula project is next to an area which is currently being sewered by another South East Water project, the Rye Coastal Sewerage Scheme.

The Rye Coastal Sewerage Scheme is using the remaining capacity of the existing sewer system along Point Nepean Road, connecting approximately 1,700 properties to reticulated sewer. To service the remaining properties across the Southern Mornington Peninsula, a new system is required.

**Who can I contact for more information?**
To register your interest in an early connection, visit southeastwater.com.au/ECO. For more information on the project contact South East Water Community Engagement Adviser Sandra Glass:

*Phone:* 1800 330 129

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