

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER OF UKRAINE AS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE STATE POLICY**

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**ABSTRACT**

The article attempts to analyze the legal fundamentals, principles and mechanisms of state policy principle on ensuring free access to information in the field of water supply and wastewater of Ukraine. The main focus is on normative legal acts that determine the need for open access of citizens of Ukraine to information, including in the field of water supply and wastewater. Responsibilities for providing open access to such information are entrusted to state authorities, local governments and water supply and wastewater companies. The author carries out the systematization of the types of information, access to which is provided to consumers in the field of water supply and wastewater, with the indication of the managers of such information and means of its provision. Provides data on the availability and adequacy of some types of information in the field of water supply and wastewater. The article also discusses the issues of realization of the right to access public information by analyzing the annual report of the Ombudsperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on human rights and jurisprudence. The system violates the legislation in the area of granting access to public information, the main groups of violations of the legislation in this area of legal regulation are defined. Information activities of state authorities, local self-government bodies and enterprises of Ukraine, despite numerous reforms, are still characterized by certain limitations and formalities.

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**Introduction.** Human right to water gives everyone the right to sufficient, safe, affordable, physically and economically affordable water for personal and household use. Sufficient amount of safe water is needed to support life and health, to meet consumption needs, prepare food, personal and household hygiene requirements, and more. The right to water contains both liberties and rights. Freedom includes the right to access existing water sources, which is necessary for the right to water, and the right to freedom from interference, such as the right to freedom from arbitrary disconnections or pollution of water supply. And rights include the right to water supply and management system that provides people with equal opportunities to enjoy the right to water [4]. Although the sufficiency of water required to qualify for water may vary according to different conditions, under all circumstances, the following factors apply: 1) Availability. The water supply of each person should be sufficient and continuous for personal and everyday use. The amount of water available to everyone should be in line with the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO). 2) Quality. The water needed for every personal or household use

should be safe, therefore it should not contain microorganisms, chemicals and radiological factors that pose a threat to human health. In addition, water should have an acceptable color, smell and taste for every personal or household use. 3) Accessibility. Water, water supply and water supply should be accessible to everyone without any discrimination within the jurisdiction of the member state. Accessibility has four meanings: (1) Physical accessibility: water and relevant water objects and services should be within the reach of all segments of the population. Sufficient, safe and acceptable amounts of water should be available internally or in close proximity to each household, educational institution and workplace. All water facilities and services should be of sufficient quality, meet the cultural conditions and take into account the requirements of sex, life cycle and confidentiality. Physical security should not be jeopardized when accessing water objects and services; (2) Economic accessibility. Water, water facilities and services should be accessible to everyone. Direct and indirect costs and charges related to water supply should be accessible and should not jeopardize or threaten the realization of other rights; (3) Prohibition of discrimination: water and wastewater should be accessible to all, including the most vulnerable or marginalized, in accordance with the law and in fact without any discrimination on any of the prohibited grounds; (4) Availability of information: includes the right to seek, receive and disseminate information relating to water problems [4]. Thus, the right to accessible information on water supply and wastewater is an integral part of the human right to water, as defined by international and national law.

The right to access public information in the possession of public authorities occupies a special place in the system of human rights and citizen and is a guarantee of democratic development of the state [5, p.4]. Ukraine has its own twenty years of development of the basic principles of state access to information, which formed certain legal principles for the construction of an information society - a necessary condition for the implementation of the constitutional right of citizens to information: a number of normative legal acts have been adopted, which, in particular, regulate public relations for the creation of information electronic resources, protection of intellectual property rights for these resources, introduction of electronic document circulation, information security, etc. [5, p.17]. At the same time, the low level of implementation of legal acts on access to information is still implicitly associated with the practice of "closing down" information inherited from the Soviet era and limiting access to information that is in the possession of the authorities.

Thus, during the year 2018, the Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights received 4201 reports of violations of the right to access information, such as: failure to provide an answer to a request within the time limit set by the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Public Information" (2011, January 13); denial of access to information; refusal to satisfy the request, since access to information has already been legally restricted before the request is received; refusal to satisfy the request in connection with the non-payment by the requesting user of the costs of copying the documents, while not telling how much and on what details the requestor should make such payment; refusal to provide information with reference to public sources [1]. The practice of judicial protection of the right to information is also controversial. The courts, in resolving disputes on these issues, largely support the failure to provide information based on the established practice of restricting citizens' access to information and a formal approach to dealing with cases. There are different approaches of the courts to addressing certain issues regarding the right to access public information, which creates a situation of legal uncertainty and requires additional measures to overcome it [14]. The aforementioned conditioned the need to study the issue of providing free access to information in the field of water supply and wastewater, as the principle of state policy of Ukraine in this area.

**Purpose of the study.** The purpose of the article is to analyze the level of free access to information in the field of water supply and wastewater and the effectiveness of the implementation of the relevant principle of state policy in the field.

**Research results.** The right to access information is guaranteed by every article 34 of the Constitution of Ukraine, namely: the right of everyone to freedom of thought and speech, the free expression of their views and beliefs, and the right to freely collect, store, use and disseminate information orally, in writing or otherwise on their own choice. The exercise of these rights may be limited by law: in the interests of national security; in the interests of territorial integrity; in the interests of public order; in order to prevent disturbances or crimes; for public health; to protect the reputation or rights of others; to prevent the disclosure of information received in confidence; to maintain the credibility and impartiality of justice [17]. The right to information and the mechanism for its realization, which is enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine, is determined by the main Laws of Ukraine "On Information" (1992, October 2), "On Access to Public Information" (2011, January 13) and other sectoral legal acts. In particular, in the sphere of water supply and wastewater, these are the Laws of Ukraine "On Drinking Water, Drinking

Water Supply and Wastewater" (2002, January 10), "On Housing and Communal Services" (2004, June 24), "On Natural Monopolies" (2000, April 20), "On the peculiarities of Access to Information in the Spheres of Electric Power Supply, Natural Gas, heat supply, centralized supply of hot water, centralized drinking water supply and wastewater" (2015, December 10).

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Information" (1992, October 2) information is any information and / or data that can be stored on physical media or displayed electronically. The exercise of the right to information should not violate the public, political, economic, social, spiritual, environmental and other rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of other citizens, the rights and interests of legal entities [10]. The right to information is provided by the state: by creating a mechanism for implementing the right to information; creation of opportunities for free access to statistical data, archival, library and museum funds, other information banks, databases, information resources; the duty of the subjects of power authorities to inform the public and mass media about their activities and decisions; the duty of the subjects of power to determine the special units or responsible persons to provide applicants with access to information; implementation of state and public control over observance of the legislation on information; establishing liability for violations of information law [10].

The public information is understood as reflected and documented by any means and on any medium, information obtained or created in the course of the fulfillment by the subjects of authority of their duties, provided by the current legislation, or which is in the possession of the subjects of power authorities, other administrators of public information, defined by the Law of Ukraine "On access to public information" (2011, January 13) [7]. The administrators of public information shall recognize: 1) subjects of authority - bodies of state authority, other state bodies, bodies of local self-government, bodies of power of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, other entities exercising executive power in accordance with the legislation and decisions of which are obliged to "be tangible for execution; 2) state financed legal entities, local budgets, the budget of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea – regarding information on the use of budget funds; 3) persons, if they perform delegated powers of the subjects of power authorities in accordance with the law or contract, including the provision of educational, recreational, social or other public services, concerning information related to the performance of their duties; 4) undertakings holding a dominant position in the market or having special or exclusive rights or being natural monopolies – with regard to information on the conditions of supply of goods, services and prices for them. Managers of public information, which are obliged to publish and provide public information upon request, are equated with economic entities that possess: 1) information on the state of the environment; 2) information about the quality of food products and household items; 3) information on accidents, catastrophes, dangerous natural phenomena and other extraordinary events that have occurred or may occur and threaten the health and safety of citizens; 4) other information of public interest (publicly necessary information) [7].

The right to access public information is guaranteed by the state through: 1) the obligation of information administrators to provide and disclose information, except in cases stipulated by law; 2) determination by the information manager of special structural subdivisions or officials who organize in accordance with the established procedure the access to public information that he owns; 3) maximum simplification of the procedure for requesting and obtaining information; 4) access to meetings of collegial subjects of power, except in cases stipulated by law; 5) implementation of parliamentary, public and state control over observance of the rights to access public information; 6) legal liability for violation of the legislation on access to public information [7].

According to Art. 6 of the Law of Ukraine "On Drinking Water, Drinking Water Supply and Wastewater" (2002, January 10), the principle of state policy in the field of water supply and wastewater is to provide free access to information: on the quality of drinking water, the status of sources and systems of drinking water supply and wastewater, the order of formation of norms of drinking water supply and tariffs centralized water supply and wastewater services [8].

According to Art. 9 of the said Law to every consumer of drinking water, the state guarantees the right of free access to information on the quality of drinking water [8]. This right is realized through the annual publication by the central executive body that implements the state policy in the sphere of housing and communal services of the National Report on the quality of drinking water and the state of drinking water supply in Ukraine and the provision of interested state bodies, public organizations, enterprises, institutions, organizations and citizens information about the cases and causes of pollution of drinking water, the procedure for calculating tariffs for centralized water supply and wastewater services. The National report on the quality of drinking water and the state of drinking water supply in Ukraine is based on official data on the state of surface and underground sources of drinking water, drinking water supply and wastewater systems, quality of drinking water, as a result of

monitoring, the composition of wastewater discharged into the reservoirs and their impact on the environment, results of state sanitary supervision of drinking water supply systems, emergency situations in centralized water supply and wastewater systems, their causes, consequences and measures taken, State reform and development of water and wastewater, new forms of business management, improvement of the legal, financial and economic bases of enterprises water supply and wastewater, roads, public relations, experience of leading the industry [12].

The duty to inform consumers of cases of abnormal drinking water by indicators from the state standard, about the quality of drinking water lies with local government [8].

Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine "On Housing and Communal Services" (2004, June 24) among the rights of consumers of services determined the right to receive, without additional payment, from the provider of housing and communal services price / tariff information, the total cost of the monthly payment, the structure of the price/tariff, the consumption norms and the procedure for providing the corresponding services, as well as its consumer properties [9].

In spite of the norms of the relevant national laws on the availability of information in the field of water supply and wastewater, in 2015 a separate Law of Ukraine "On the peculiarities of access to information in the spheres of supply of electric energy, natural gas, heat supply, centralized supply of hot water, centralized drinking water water supply and wastewater" (2015, December 10) [11]. The said Law was developed with the aim of implementing Directive 2006/32/ EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the efficiency of energy end-use and energy services, as well as the repeal of Council Directive 93/76/EEC, which defined the mandatory commitment of consumers to billing for energy consumption to provide end users with a comprehensive report on the current cost of energy (although the Directive was repealed by Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25.10.2012 at the time of the adoption of the Law) [2; 3]. At the same time, the EU has identified the limited impact of the provisions of Directive 2006/32/EU on accounting and billing for energy savings. In many EU countries, these provisions did not lead to consumers receiving relevant information on their energy consumption or invoicing based on actual consumption with frequency, which, as the research shows, is necessary for consumers to regulate their own energy use. In areas such as indoor heating and hot water supply of multi-apartment buildings, insufficient clarity of these provisions has also led to numerous consumer complaints [3].

The Law of Ukraine "On the peculiarities of access to information in the spheres of supply of electric energy, natural gas, heat supply, centralized supply of hot water, centralized drinking water supply and wastewater" (2015, December 10) identified the types of information access to which is provided to consumers. Namely, information on: consumer rights, place and procedure for obtaining information by consumers; prices/tariffs for all categories of consumers, their change; comparison in different regions of Ukraine, as well as with other states; forecasts of changes in prices/tariffs and justification of necessity of such changes; qualitative characteristics of goods and services; the average monthly payment for a household for consumed goods, services by categories of consumers; the size and periods of arrears of payment for consumed goods and services; the procedure for granting subsidies, privileges to certain categories of citizens; investment programs of licensees and sources of their financing, loans attracted and their intended purpose, reports on implementation of investment programs [11]. The access of consumers to the information is provided by the state authorities, local governments, economic entities that carry out activities in the field of water supply and wastewater by placing it on the official websites of owners of such information on the Internet, in the mass media and on information stands at subscriber departments of business entities. Information on the size of prices / tariffs for goods, services provided by economic entities in payment documents used for payment by the population, as well as by providing consumers with access to electronic payment accounting systems of consumers through official web sites of business entities on the Internet. Similarly, business entities in the area of centralized drinking water supply and wastewater provide access to information on investment programs [11].

The rules for the provision of district heating services, supply of cold and hot water and wastewater determined the responsibilities of the operators of centralized supply of cold water and wastewater: 1) inform the consumer of the address and telephone number of the dispatcher, emergency services (indicated in the contract and accounts for payment of services, placed on bulletin boards); 2) provide to the consumer in accordance with the procedure established by law information on the list of services, their value, the total cost of the monthly payment, the structure of tariffs, norms (norms) of consumption, the mode of provision of services, their consumer properties, quality indicators of service provision, deadlines for the elimination of accidents or other violations the order of provision of services, as well as information about these Rules (specified in the contract, and also placed on the

bulletin board in the premises of the performer); 3) inform the consumer of the planned break in the provision of services through the media, as well as in writing no later than 10 days before its occurrence (except for a break that occurs as a result of an accident or force majeure), indicating the reason and time of the interruption in the provision of services; 4) inform the consumer during the day from the day of identifying deficiencies in the work of internal and non-building engineering systems and / or equipment (in the case of personal appeal - urgently), the reasons and expected duration of the suspension of the provision of services or limitation of their number, as well as the reasons for violations of qualitative performance indicators [15].

Since 2018, the State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine has released data on the quality of water in Ukrainian surface water bodies. To date, information on the content of harmful substances in surface water bodies, from which Ukrainians drink water and household needs, was inaccessible. The data are published on 14 main indicators from 435 water monitoring points on the rivers of all major river basins of Ukraine over the last five years, which allows monitoring the quality of water and monitoring the impact of industry on the environment [13]. At the same time, a system for processing, analyzing and evaluating these monitoring data needs to be implemented to take appropriate measures to prevent deterioration and improvement of water bodies.

Types of information access to which is provided to consumers in the field of water supply and water wastewater is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of information in the field of water supply and wastewater with free access

Type of information:	Information manager	Means of support	Rule of Law
1	2	3	4
Consumer rights, place and procedure for obtaining information by consumers;	Water supply and wastewater company	Placing on their official web sites on the Internet, in the media, on their information stands	Part 1-2 of Art. 4 [11]
Prices / tariffs for all categories of consumers, their change;	National Energy and Utilities Regulatory Commission (NEURC) or local self-government bodies, Water Supply and Wastewater Enterprise	Placing on their official web sites on the Internet, in the media, on their information stands	Part 1 of Art. 4 [11]
Comparison of prices / tariffs for goods, services in different regions of Ukraine, as well as in Ukraine and other countries;	NEURC or local self-government bodies	Placing on their official web sites on the Internet, in the media, on their information stands	Part 1 -2 of Art. 4 [11]
Projections of changes in prices / tariffs and justification of the necessity of such changes in accordance with the statement of the economic entity, which is provided for setting tariffs for goods, services;			
Dynamics of changes in historical cost of price / tariff components over the last five years;	NEURC or local self-government bodies	Placing on their official web sites on the Internet, in the media, on their information stands	Part 1-2 of Art. 4 [11]
Qualitative characteristics of services;			
Average monthly payment for a household for consumed services by consumer category;	Water supply and wastewater company	Placement on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands placed in subscriber departments of enterprises	Part 1-2 of Art. 5 [11]
Size and periods of arrears of payment for consumed services;			

Continuation of table 1.

1	2	3	4
Procedure for granting subsidies, privileges to certain categories of citizens;	NEURC or local self-government bodies	Placing on their official web sites on the Internet, in the media, on their information stands	Part 1-2 of Art. 4 [11]
Energy saving measures;			
State target and other energy saving programs;	Water supply and wastewater company	Placement on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands placed in subscriber departments of enterprises	Part 1-2 of Art. 5 [11]
Investment programs of licensees and their sources of financing, attracted loans and their intended purpose, reports on performance of investment programs			
Address and telephone number of the control room, emergency services;	Water supply and wastewater company	Placing on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands, which are placed in subscriber departments of enterprises, in the contract and bills for payment of services, on bulletin boards	Part 1-2 of Art. 5 [11]
The list of services, their value, the total cost of the monthly payment, the structure of tariffs, norms (norms) of consumption, the mode of provision of services, their consumer properties, quality indicators of service provision, deadlines for the elimination of accidents or other violations of the order of service provision, as well as information on the Rules of granting centralized heating, cold and hot water supply and wastewater services;			
Planned break in the provision of services through the media	Water supply and wastewater company	Placement on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands placed in subscriber departments of enterprises	Part 1-2 of Art. 5 [11]
Identification of deficiencies in the work of internal and non-building engineering systems and / or equipment, the causes and expected duration of the suspension of the provision of services or the limitation of their number, as well as the reasons for the violation of quality indicators of service provision			
Annual National Report on Quality of Drinking Water and Drinking Water Condition in Ukraine	Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine	Published on the official web-site of the Ministry of Regional Development	Art. 9 [8]
About cases of deviations of drinking water on the indicators from the state standard on the quality of drinking water	Local governments	Placement on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands placed in subscriber departments of enterprises	Art. 9 [8]
About the status of water objects, its change and implementation of water protection measures	Oblast, Kyiv and Sevastopol city councils	Placement on their official web-sites on the Internet (if available) and on information stands placed in subscriber departments of enterprises	Art. 8, 17-1 [18]
The state of water objects, emergency ecological situations that may adversely affect people's health and the measures taken to improve the state of water;	District councils, village, settlement, city and district councils in the cities		Art. 9, 10 [18]

\*Composed based on [18; 9; 11; 8].

The water supply and wastewater sector is specific and rather closed to access to the field due to technical, strategic, political, and economic factors. At the same time, information on the status of water bodies, water sources, drinking water quality, water supply and wastewater services is related to public information and is not subject to any restrictions on access (such information can not be classified as secret, official or confidential information) [10]. Therefore, all the information that water supply and wastewater companies have in regard to drinking water supply and wastewater services and services is open, that is, it should be provided freely upon the request of individuals and legal entities.

However, by analyzing the official websites of local governments, state authorities, water supply and wastewater companies, it can be argued that the state policy in the field of water supply and wastewater does not provide full access to Ukrainian citizens for information on drinking water quality, drinking water supply and wastewater. A lack of a mechanism for monitoring in the field of water supply and wastewater, indicators of such monitoring and analytical data of monitoring confirm the impossibility of obtaining relevant and necessary information in the field. Table 2 shows the availability and adequacy of some types of information in the field of water supply and wastewater.

Table 2. Characteristics and adequacy of some types of information in the field of water supply and wastewater

Type of information	Characteristics	Adequacy
The National Report on the Quality of Drinking Water and State of Drinking Water Supply in Ukraine	Generalized at the national and regional levels information on the quality of drinking water, sources of water supply, the state of the water supply and wastewater system	It is issued annually, but it is issued with 2-3 years delay. In particular, as of May 1, 2019, the report for 2017 has not been officially approved or published.
Information on the quality of water wastewater discharges	Is the departmental information and is fixed in the 2TP of the State Water Management Commission	Not available in the free access
Information on cases of abnormal drinking water by indicators from the state standard on the quality of drinking water	It should be placed on the official sites of local self-government bodies	Not available (*author reviewed 7 official cities of Kiev, Kharkiv, Kropivnitsky, Zhytomyr, Ternopil)
Information on the health and / or the environment	It should be provided by local government bodies on official websites and / or by the Ministry of Health	Not available
Information on the analysis and processing of consumer complaints in the field of water supply and water wastewater	It should be located by enterprises of water supply and water wastewater, local self-government bodies, state authorities	Not available

\*Composed based on [12; 19].

According to the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in the field of access to public information in 2018, systemic violations were identified: refusal to satisfy the request due to the fact that the requested information is information with restricted access; failure to use the "three-component test" as the sole reason to restrict access to information; refusal to provide information on the wastewater of budget funds, possession, use or wastewater of state or communal property; providing incomplete information while restricting access to its other part; a reference to the non-assignment by the requestor of the purpose with which he asks for the information or with the invitation to familiarize himself with the requested information in the manager's premises; The answer is not the essence of the request; refusal to provide information on the wastewater of state or communal property (alienation of land, buildings, movable property, etc.); formal and unlawful refusal to provide information in connection with the non-alignment of the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Public Information" (2011, January 13) on information about the activities of state and municipal enterprises and institutions [1]. Monitoring the state of compliance with the legislation on access to public information made it possible to identify the following major groups of violations of the law in

this area of legal regulation: 1) lack of understanding of the differences between the request for information and the treatment of citizens; 2) information administrators continue to refuse to process requests for information in connection with the fact that the request does not meet the requirements of the Law, in particular, the electronic request does not have an electronic signature, or the request must be signed and then scanned, otherwise duplicated, upon request, stipulated in the Law of Ukraine "On Citizens' Appeal" (1996, October 2); 3) some information managers do not publish information in the form of open data and information, the obligation of disclosure of which is stipulated by Art. 15 of the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Public Information" (2011, January 13); 4) the absence of the enterprises, institutions and organizations, regardless of the forms of ownership, understanding of Art. 13 of the Law of Ukraine "On access to public information" (2011, January 13), in particular, the administrator of which information they are; incomplete provision of information. Information managers often do not indicate in replies that the requested information (part thereof) is not at their wastewater, or indicate that it is freely accessible on the website; 5) some information managers are engaged in the collection of information from other information managers, thereby violating the deadlines for providing an answer or giving not the information requested by the person; 6) misunderstanding of the requirements of Part 5 of Art. 6 of the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Public Information" (2011, January 13) [1].

For violation of the right to information and right to appeal, in particular for non-disclosure of mandatory information; unreasonable assignment of information to restricted information, failure to provide a response to a request for information, failure to provide information, unlawful refusal to provide information, untimely or incomplete provision of information, provision of inaccurate information; limitation of access to information provides for administrative liability in the form of a fine for officials of information managers [16]. Among other mechanisms for ensuring human rights and freedoms for information can be defined: judicial protection; activity of executive authorities and local self-government on ensuring access to information (the duty of state authorities, as well as local and regional authorities to inform their activities and decisions, the creation in state bodies of special information services or systems that would provide in the established the order of access to information; the free access of subjects of information relations to statistical data, archival, library and museum funds, the restriction of which is determined only by the tsyfikoyu values and those of their conservation, provided by legislation, creating a mechanism for implementation of the right to information, state control over observance of legislation on information, establishing responsibility for violation of legislation on information); parliamentary, state and public control [6, p.77]. But the statistics The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights in the field of access to public information shows the low effectiveness of such mechanisms of provision.

**Conclusions.** The right to accessible information on water supply and water wastewater is an integral part of the human right to water, as defined by international and national legislation. All citizens of Ukraine, state bodies and organizations, public associations have the right to information, which provides for the free reception, use and dissemination of information necessary for the exercise of their rights, freedoms and legitimate interests, the fulfillment of their tasks and functions. The provision of free access to public information in the field of water supply and wastewater is carried out through: the obligation of information administrators to provide and disclose information, except in cases provided for by law; determination by the information manager of special structural subdivisions or officials who organize according to the established procedure access to public information that he owns; maximum simplification of the procedure for requesting and obtaining information; access to meetings of collegial subjects of power, except in cases stipulated by law; implementation of parliamentary, public and state control over observance of the rights to access public information; Legal liability for violation of the legislation on access to public information. Statistics The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on human rights in the field of access to public information shows the low effectiveness of such mechanisms of provision. Among the systemic violations in the area of access to public information are: unjustified refusal to provide information; formal approach to processing requests for information; incomplete information provided; violation of the law on access to public information. Solving the problems of providing free access to information lies in the area of improving the state policy in the field of information and in the sphere of water supply and wastewater through a clear definition of the principles and mechanisms for the implementation of free access to information. In particular, the provision of information should be carried out not according to the "final principle", but on the principle that any information of state bodies, enterprises, local governments regarding water supply and wastewater is public and limited only in certain exclusive



cases. Important is the issue of maintaining the integrity and availability of information in government and enterprises. The duty of information managers in the field of water supply and wastewater should include constant updating and timely disclosure of information. The state information policy in the field of water supply and wastewater is aimed at developing a culture of accessibility and openness for the formation of an appropriate mentality among consumers. An integral part of shaping the culture of accessibility and openness of information in the field of water supply and wastewater should be enlightening consumers, widespread dissemination of information about consumers' rights, types of information and effective means of access to it.

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