



Water Wise

Tips on Understanding Your Water Bill



Who Sets My Water Rates?

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates the State's investor-owned and privately owned water utilities. Rates are set by the CPUC every three years to cover a company's costs (purchasing and providing water, treating it, purchasing electric power, etc.) and to provide an opportunity for the company to earn a reasonable return on prudent investment in the water system, such as pipes and treatment facilities.

How Are My Water Rates Determined?

Water rates are based on the cost of providing water service, including the costs of purchasing, treating, and delivering water to customers. Rates and billing frequency vary according to geographic region. For example, while you may be billed based on the amount of water you use, measured by a water meter, someone else may be billed at a fixed, or "flat" rate. Please visit your water service provider's website for rates, schedules, and tariff information in your area.



Where is My Water Meter Located, and Why Should I Learn How to Read It?

Many water meters are in concrete boxes near your front curb. Knowing how to read your water meter can help you determine how much water your household has used and to detect any leaks. Leaks and irrigation issues are the two most common causes for higher-than-normal monthly water bills. If your water bill continues to rise and you have not increased your usage, you may have a water leak.

How Do I Read My Water Meter?

Reading your water meter is like reading an automobile's odometer. Meters typically measure hundreds of cubic feet of water used (100 cubic feet = 748 gallons) or meters can measure use in gallons. Read digits left to right. This represents water that has passed through the meter. The hand on the meter turns as you use water. If you turn off all your household water, and the hand continues to move, you may have a leak, such as a leaky toilet or faucet.



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