



Water Meter FAQ

Q: Why are we required to have a water meter?

A: In 2004 the State of California passed Assembly Bill 2572 requiring all urban water suppliers to install water meters on all water connections by January 1, 2025. In addition, any customer who currently has a water meter must be billed for use starting in 2010.

Q: Who pays for the water meter to be installed for my property?

A: TCPUD has historically paid for the installation of water meters for existing properties through existing local tax dollars. TCPUD has never required existing customers to pay for initial meter installations through any type of surcharge.

Q: I am concerned that I have never known how much water I use and that my bill will be very high?

A: We completely understand this concern. In response, we have developed a program for all TCPUD customers that gives the customer at least twelve months of their water use data before billing for water usage. You will continue to pay your regular flat rate for a year, but your monthly bill will show how much water you used each month and what the cost would be if you were being billed for usage. This allows a year to adjust your water usage and provides information necessary to budget for your future water use.

Q: What are the benefits to having a water meter?

A: Since TCPUD installed meters in 2008, the biggest customer benefit we have seen is a reduction in overall water use by 25% or more. Meters provide this benefit by giving the customers the ability to understand how much water they use. As well, the meter technology will alert the TCPUD and/or customer that they have a potential leak in their home or on their property. For example, during one winter deep freeze, the District located 40 homes with broken pipes by reading meters.

Q: How quickly will water meters be installed?

A: It will likely take between two and four years to fully meter all customers in both systems. So, based on having approximately one year with a water meter installed before you are billed based on water use, it will be a minimum of approximately three years and possibly up to five years before you are billed on water use.

Q: Where will my meter be installed?

A: Meters will be installed near the street in front of your house or in the back of your property depending on where your water shutoff is located.

Q: How often will you send a bill?

A: Billing will be monthly for both water and sewer service. The water portion of the bill will include a monthly base rate plus consumption charges. Base rates are billed for the current month regardless of water use and consumption charges, if any are billed for the previous month.

Q: How are meters read in the winter?

A: Meters are read by radio or cellular technology and do not require us to physically see the meter. Meters are read at least monthly and sometimes more frequently for various reasons such as a deep freeze or conservation monitoring. The meters can also sense potential leaks and alert us as soon as we read the meter.

Q: How will I know if I have a leak?

A: We read meters monthly and if your meter shows you have a potential leak, you will be notified on your bill with a big red box. In addition, we review meter reads the day after they are read and identify any significant customer use and/or leaks. District staff will respond to any identified large leaks and shut off the water if necessary to prevent further loss or damage. Our response is free of charge.

Q: What if I have a significant leak and a very high water bill?

A: We understand that accidents happen and broken pipes may occur. If you have had a significant leak and a subsequent large water bill, we offer a leak adjustment policy. In the event of a large water bill due to a leak, burst pipe, or accident, upon proof of repair and completion of an adjustment application, we may adjust the water use portion of your bill down. This adjustment is available once every five years.

Q: Will I be able to read my meter remotely or on the internet?

A: Not at this time. However, the District is working towards providing this feature for all of our customers in the next five to ten years. In addition, within the next year, we will begin offering this service to customers who request it and who are willing to pay an additional fee for the new meter equipment and a small monthly fee for the software. This function will allow you to look at your water use daily, broken down by the hour. It can also be set up to email or text alerts regarding a potential leak. You will be able to retrieve this information on your smartphone or computer.