

THE WATERLINE

No. XXIV

NEWS FROM THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO WATER DEPARTMENT

Summer 2003

Water rate increase effective July 1, 2003

As part of the City of San Diego Water Department's ongoing plans to upgrade, expand and maintain aging water storage, treatment and delivery systems, water rates increased July 1, 2003.

The San Diego Mayor and City Council approved a package of five water rate increases on April 30, 2002. The first increase in the package took place July 1, 2002. This is the second of the five increases. Subsequent increases will take place each July 1 through 2006. The first bill customers receive after July 1, 2003, is prorated, using the old and new rates.

While each of these increases will raise overall revenue to the Water Department 6 percent, the

Rates continued on back

Water and Sewer bills to be issued monthly

Beginning in September 2003, water and sewer bills will be issued once a month instead of every other month.

An important aspect of the monthly billing program is that in order to keep costs at a minimum and not have to hire new personnel, the Water Department will continue to read the meters of all single-family domestic customers every other month.

This means there won't be an actual read each month so the Water Department will be estimating every other bill. The estimate will be based on historical usage. The month following an estimated read customers will receive bills based on actual reads. Any adjustments to the estimated bill (if it was too high or too low) will occur at that time.

Customers scheduled to have their meter read in September will receive their normal bill then for usage during

the previous two months. In October they will then receive an estimated monthly bill. In November, the meter will be read again and a monthly bill will be issued which includes any adjustments made necessary by estimating the previous bill.

Customers who have their meter read in August will receive a bill then for usage during the previous two months. In September they will then receive an estimated bill. In October their meter will be read again and a bill will be issued which includes any adjustments made necessary by estimating the previous bill.

The change to monthly billing is designed to help customers balance monthly budgets by paying smaller bills every month rather than large, bi-monthly bills.

For more information, contact a Customer Services Representative at (619) 515-3500.

Surf over to new Water Department web pages

The Water Department recently unveiled its redesigned website. It's now easier than ever to find information about everything from how to conserve water to where to go fishing.

Among the new features to the site is the I-Pay Bill Payment System. By signing up, customers can now easily receive and pay their water/sewer bill on-line.

The website is one of the most popular in the City of San Diego, with hits totalling more than 300,000 a month. Visit the site at: www.sandiego.gov/water.



Rates continued

percentage each customer's bill will increase will vary depending upon the amount of water used (please see table at right). The reason for this is that half of the increased revenue is coming from the base fee and half is coming from the commodity (or water used) charges. Therefore the base fee cost of your water bill is now a larger proportion of the overall bill than it had been previously.

So, a customer who uses 12 hundred cubic feet (one HCF is equivalent to 748 gallons) in a billing period will see an increase of \$2.88 which is an increase of 8 percent. But, somebody who uses 50 HCF will see their bill go up \$5.74 although their total bill increases only 5 percent.

In San Diego, the average single-family customer uses 14 HCF a month or 28 HCF during the two-month billing cycle. Those customers will have about a 6 percent increase, roughly equal to the overall revenue increase.

A large portion of these increases is going towards the Capital Improvements Program, which was created to ensure San Diego continues to have safe and reliable water systems. Also, for the first time in more than a decade, part of the increase is going to the operations and maintenance sections within the Water Department.

Also, the Water Department was directed to change from billing every other month to billing every month. The new monthly bills will begin in September, 2003 (please see article on front).

For more information about the new water rates or the new monthly billing system, please contact a Water Department Customer Service Representative at (619) 515-3500, or visit our website at: www.sandiego.gov/water.

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This information is available in alternative formats upon request.

New Single-Family Domestic Rates

IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS TABLE IS BASED ON TWO MONTH'S USAGE AS CURRENTLY CUSTOMERS RECEIVE A BILL EVERY OTHER MONTH. MONTHLY BILLING BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER.

	<u>Previously</u>	<u>July 1, 2003</u>
Bi-Monthly Base Fee	\$21.36	\$23.56
First 14 HCF billed at:	\$ 1.338	\$ 1.395
HCF 15-28 billed at:	\$ 1.703	\$ 1.775
29+ HCF billed at:	\$ 1.880	\$ 1.959

To determine your bill, simply add the base fee to the charge for water used, which is obtained by multiplying the total number of hundred cubic feet (HCF, which is equal to 748 gallons) used by the applicable dollar amount. For instance, the first 14 HCF a customer uses during their two-month billing period, as of July 1, 2003, is billed at \$1.395 per HCF.

For examples of typical water bill increases, please see the table below. The average customer in San Diego uses 14 HCF per month or 28 HCF per two-month billing cycle. Again, this table is based on two month's usage.

	<u>Previously</u>	<u>July 1, 2003</u>	<u>\$ increase</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Total bill at 4 HCF	\$ 26.71	\$ 29.14	\$2.43	9%
Total bill at 12 HCF	\$ 37.42	\$ 40.30	\$2.88	8%
Total bill at 20 HCF	\$ 50.31	\$ 53.74	\$3.43	7%
Total bill at 28 HCF	\$ 63.93	\$ 67.94	\$4.01	6%
Total bill at 50 HCF	\$105.29	\$111.04	\$5.75	5%

In all other customer classes the commodity charge is increasing from \$1.567 per HCF to \$1.634 per HCF. For the new monthly base fees, which are determined by meter size, please check your bill or visit our web pages at: www.sandiego.gov/water.

Important Water Department numbers



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

To report a water line break or a sewer overflow	(619) 515-3525
To ask a question about your water or sewer bill	(619) 515-3500
To find out where you can pay your bill	(619) 515-3500
For Water Conservation Program information	(619) 515-3500
To establish or cancel water or sewer services	(619) 515-3500
To ask about San Diego's drinking water	(619) 668-3232
For Lakes Recreation Program information	(619) 465-3474
To schedule a presentation through the Speaker's Bureau	(619) 533-6638
To ask the location of a City water or sewer line	(619) 527-7482
Capital Improvements Projects Hotline	(619) 533-4679
San Diego City Lakes Hotline	(619) 465-3474
To report water theft from the Water Department	(619) 533-4146