

Fact Sheet

The City of San Diego Public Utilities Department

The Cost of Water and How to Keep Your Bill Down

The City of San Diego's water storage, treatment and distribution systems are immense and complex. The three water treatment plants combined to produce more than 70 billion gallons of water in 2009. That water was pushed into all parts of San Diego by 49 pump stations through 3,200 miles of pipeline to nearly 290,000 water meters.

None of this could happen without a tremendous amount of planning and effort. When we turn on a tap and water comes out, it is easy to take these water systems for granted.

However, the one time we don't take drinking water for granted is when it comes time to pay our water and sewer bill. Did you know, however, that about half of your water fees go just to purchasing raw water? But, there are ways to reduce your bills.

Imported Water

On average, San Diego imports about 85 to 90 percent of its drinking water each year. The water comes to us from the Colorado River and from Northern California via the State Water Project. Imported water is expected to continually become more expensive due to the need for infrastructure improvements and environmental mitigation in addition to the increasing cost of energy to transport the water to us. When the wholesalers increase the cost of water, that cost is normally passed on down to customers.

How You Can Help Keep Your Bill Down

Your water and sewer bills can be lower if you decrease the amount of water you use. Lots of San Diegans are conserving. During the past year we've seen a decrease of about 10 percent in the amount of water used. Also, your sewer bill is partially based upon the amount of water you use during the winter months (<http://www.sandiego.gov/water/rates/winter.shtml>). So by saving water in the winter, you could see the benefits for a whole year.

The Public Utilities Department's Water Conservation Program stands ready to help you conserve water. Visit us at <http://www.sandiego.gov/water/> and check out all the great programs we have designed to help San Diegans decrease the amount of water they use. One of the most popular programs is the FREE Residential Water Survey Program. As part of this program, a Water Conservation expert will tour your property to identify leaks and water-saving opportunities. Call (619) 570-1999 or email us at water@sandiego.gov to set up an appointment.

Also on the web page is a Watering Calculator that can help you determine the exact amount of water your landscaping needs.

Local Water Supplies and Reliability Projects

The Public Utilities Department is working to find alternative sources of water and increase water reliability. We want to decrease our dependence on imported water. The Water Reuse Demonstration Project (<http://www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreuse/>) is just one example. A project currently under construction to raise the dam at San Vicente Reservoir and increase water storage will greatly improve water reliability for our region in case of catastrophic emergency.



California Aqueduct

A water resource strategy that includes planning, conservation, recycled water, groundwater, water reuse, and watershed and resource protection is helping to meet future water needs.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



Public Information Office 10/08/10

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