

THE WATERLINE

No. XXI NEWS FROM THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO WATER DEPARTMENT Summer 2002

Water Department's infrastructure receives much-needed funding

On April 30, 2002, the San Diego Mayor and City Council approved a series of five water rate increases designed to help the Water Department upgrade, expand and maintain aging infrastructure in order to meet San Diego's water needs. The first of these increases is effective July 1, 2002.

The first bill you receive after July 1, 2002, is prorated, incorporating both the old and new rates. Subsequent increases will take place each July 1, through 2007.

While each of the increases will raise overall revenue for the Water Department 6 percent, the percentage your bill is increasing varies depending upon the amount of water you use (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 commodity (or water used) charges. This means that the base fee costs of your water bill will now be a larger proportion of the overall bill than it had been previously.

"Somebody who uses 12 HCF (Hundred Cubic Feet, one of which is equal to 748 gallons) of water in a billing period will see an 8 percent increase which equates to \$2.74," explained Alex Ruiz, Deputy Director of the Customer Support Division. "But, somebody who uses 50 HCF will see their bill go up \$5.45 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. The new rate structure is set up so the average customer will have a 6 percent increase, which is equal to the overall increase.

A large portion of these increases will go to funding the Capital Improvement Program which was created to ensure

RATES continued on back

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.

	<u>Previously</u>	<u>July 1, 2002</u>
Bi-Monthly Base Fee		\$
First 14 HCF billed at: \$	\$ 1.285	\$ 1.338
HCF 15-28 billed at: \$	1.635	1.703
29+ HCF billed at:	1.805	1.880

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 is now billed at \$1.285 per HCF. In July, that amount goes up to \$1.338 per HCF.

For examples of typical 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>Last year</u>	<u>July 1, 2002</u>	<u>\$ increase</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Total bill at 4 HCF	\$24.40	\$ 26.71	\$2.31	9%
Total bill at 12 HCF	\$34.68	\$ 37.42	\$2.74	8%
Total bill at 20 HCF	\$47.06	\$ 50.32	\$3.26	7%
Total bill at 28 HCF	\$60.14	\$ 63.94	\$3.80	6%
Total bill at 50 HCF	\$99.85	\$105.30	\$5.45	5%

In all other customer classes the commodity charge is increasing from \$1.505 per HCF to \$1.567 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/

RATES continued

the city has a reliable water system. Also, for the first time in more than a decade, part of the increase will go to the operations and maintenance sections of the Water Department.

"We feel a tremendous responsibility to use our ratepayers' money wisely and prudently," said Mr. Ruiz. "None of us likes to pay more, but in this instance it was necessary in order to keep our Capital Improvements Program on track."

The Mayor and Council have stipulated that, after the first year's increase, the Water Department not add any new staff while these increases are taking place. Also, the Department has been directed to go to a monthly billing system by December 31, 2003.

For more information about the new water rates, please contact a Water Department Customer Service Representative at (619) 515-3500.

Life is simpler with the Direct Debit Program

The Water Department's Direct Debit Program is designed to help you save time and money by having your checking account automatically debited when your water and sewer bill is due every other month. This means no more postage or writing checks.

"This program makes sense for a lot of our customers," said Rosemary Metoyer who is in charge of the Water Department's Customer Services Section. "Already more than 15,000 customers are using the Direct Debit Program."

Instead of a bill every other month, customers in the program receive notification of the amount of their bill and the date upon which that amount will be debited from their checking account. That's all there is to it.

There are two easy ways to get enrolled in the program. You can either call a Customer Services Representative at (619) 515-3500 and request an application, or you can print out the application form from the Water Department's website at www.sandiego.gov/water. From there simply click on "Water Bill/Rates" and then on "How to pay your water/sewer bill by automatic deduction."

Just complete the application and return it to the address listed on the form along with a voided check. Paying your bill could not be simpler!

New locations open for paying water/sewer bill

New locations are now available for customers who want to pay their water/sewer bill in person, and the main City Treasurers Cashier's office has moved.

For those who want to pay at the main City Cashier's office the new location is the lobby of the Civic Center Plaza at 1200 3rd Avenue. The office moved from the old location at 1222 3rd Avenue.

There are locations spread out throughout the City where you can pay your water/sewer bill. For a complete list, call (619) 515-3500 or visit our website at www.sandiego.gov/water.

All City Community Service Centers also accept payments with debit cards, checks or money orders (no cash or credit cards). Some new Centers are now open. Here is a list of the Centers:

CARMEL VALLEY: 3840 Valley Centre Drive, Suite 602, San Diego CA 92130 — (858) 552-1607;

CENTRAL: 2500 Commercial Street, San Diego CA 92102 — (619) 446-1000;

CLAIREMONT: 4731 Clairemont Drive, San Diego CA 92117 — (858) 581-4111;

COLLEGE/ROLANDO: 4704 College Ave., San Diego, CA 92115 — (619) 265-3044;

GOLDEN HILL: 2469 Broadway, San Diego CA 92102 — (619) 235-5202;

MARKET STREET: 4690 Market St., Ste. D20, San Diego CA 92102 — (619) 527-3466;

MID-CITY: 3795 Fairmont Ave., Suite C, San Diego CA 92105 — (619) 641-6120;

NAVAJO: 7381 Jackson Drive, San Diego CA 92119 — (619) 668-2700;

NORTH PARK: 3956-60 30th Street, San Diego CA 92104 — (619) 525-8441;

OTAY MESA/NESTOR: (Open 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.), 695 Saturn Blvd., Ste. E, San Diego CA 92154 — (619) 424-0220;

PENINSULA: 3740 Sports Arena

Blvd., Suite 2, San Diego CA 92106 — (619) 692-4970;

RANCHO BERNARDO: 17110 Bernardo Center Dr., San Diego CA 92128 — (619) 538-8070;

SAN YSIDRO: 663 E. San Ysidro Blvd., San Diego CA 92173 — (619) 424-0230;

SCRIPPS RANCH: (Open Thursdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.): 11885 Cypress Canyon Road, San Diego CA 92131 — (858) 538-8200.

TIERRASANTA: 10615 Tierrasanta Blvd., San Diego CA 92124 — (858) 573-5000.

Important Water Department numbers



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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

(All phone numbers are 619 area code)

This information is available in alternative formats upon request.