



TDPUD Water Meter Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the District installing water meters?

The Water Meter Project is the result of an unfunded, State of California mandate. California state law requires the installation of water meters for all water customers over a period of time, and requires that the District begin billing customers who have a meter for how much water they use (volumetric billing) by 2010. Water meters will support the District's management of a limited and critical resource.

2. How did the District arrive at the current Water Meter Project and customer surcharge?

The TDPUD underwent an extensive public process in 2008 to create a plan for the Water Meter Project, which resulted in the customer surcharge. Under the current plan, the District will pay for 2/3 of the project cost and the customer will pay for 1/3 of the project cost through the customer surcharge.

3. Who is covered by the Water Meter Project and are all of the customers required to pay the customer surcharge?

ALL treated water accounts in the District are included in the Water Meter Project and ALL of these water customers require a new register and automatic meter reading technology.

4. When will I get my water meter?

The Water Meter Project is broken into three phases in the following order:

Pilot Study Phase 1 – Completed with 400 meters installed.

Phase 2 – Water connections made in 1992 or later – will have meters installed by 1/1/2010 or sooner.

Phase 3 – Water connections before 1992 – the District has a goal to have meters installed by 1/1/2013 or sooner. This schedule has yet to be determined. You will be notified prior to the installation of your water meter.

Note: The District has developed a web-based tool to allow customers to see when they are scheduled to have a water meter installed. Please visit www.tdpud.org/watermeters.

5. When will the District begin volumetric billing of water?

The new rates will begin to take effect, for customers in the Pilot Phase and Phase 2, in 2010. The District's goal is to have all customers on volumetric billing by 2013. All residential customers will, for up to a year, continue paying the current fixed rate while they see what their bill would have been with the new rate structure. This side-by-side billing period will allow our residential customers to understand the impacts of the new rates and allow them the time to adjust their water use accordingly.

6. What will the new water rate structure look like?

The District hired HDR, who specializes in designing new water rates and who has extensive experience working with public water agencies in both California and the North Lake Tahoe area, to conduct a cost of service study and to present possible rate structures. After an extensive public process, and the input from HDR, the Board is moving towards an inclining block rate structure for residential water customers and a uniform rate structure for commercial customers. As required by California Proposition 218, a letter was mailed to each customer of the district with the full details of the new water rates. To view this letter, please go to www.tdpud.org and follow the link on the left to [Water Meters, Rates, & Zones](#).

7. How was my pumping zone determined?

The pump zone is determined by the number of pumping stations the water must flow through before it reaches your home. To see your new pump zone, please go to www.tdpud.org and follow the link on the left to [Water Meters, Rates, & Zones](#).

8. I have my meter. Why can't I start paying the metered rate right away?

The District's Board wanted to give existing customers a transition period to allow for the adjustment to metered billing. By providing at least a year from the date of meter installation, customers have an opportunity to see their usage, repair any leaks, and make adjustments to the way they use water before being billed for actual usage. The District's budget is based upon customers paying a flat rate during this transition period.

9. I'm seeing water usage on my bill now. How could I use so much water?

If you Google [water usage facts](#) or [water usage calculators](#) you will get a wealth of information to help you determine how much water it takes to do all the normal daily activities such as showering, laundry, dish washing, etc.

10. Can I get a graph showing my daily usage?

TDPUD can provide you with a graph showing your daily usage. Due to the high volume of these requests, please allow at least 5 working days for us to provide the graph. It is best if we can e-mail it to you.

11. Will you check my house for leaks?

The new water meters are equipped with a built-in leak detection function which identifies leaks on the customer-side of the meter. TDPUD periodically runs reports identifying those customers that register constant leaks. These reports are reviewed by our billing staff and those with constant leaks greater than ½ gallon per hour will be notified by letter. The letter will explain the estimated number of gallons per minute we believe the leak to be and include methods for detecting your leak. Leaks on the customer-side of the meter are the responsibility of the customer and the District will not conduct on-site inspections to investigate leaks. The District does have a new Customer Leak Repair Rebate Program to help our customers locate and repair leaks (go to www.tdpud.org and follow the link on the left to [Leak Rebate Request Form](#)).

12. I received a leak letter. How can I confirm that my leak has been repaired?

As TDPUD does not have access to your home and is unaware of the conditions of plumbing in your home, irrigation system or service line, we cannot definitively tell you if a leak has been repaired. We can only provide information based on the data our meter reading system

provides. We can tell you whether or not your account still appears on our leak list, but nothing more. Please note that it takes 24 hours after a leak has been repaired for the automated leak detection function to reset after a leak has been repaired. The TDPUD cannot confirm that a property is off the leak list until at least one day after the repair work has been completed.

13. I hired a plumber and he found no leaks. Why did you tell me I had a leak?

Again, TDPUD can only give information based on data we receive from our meter reading system. Sometimes, simply turning valves off, then on again will take care of the leak without it being obvious to you or your plumber.

14. I think you must have my meter and the neighbor's mixed up. Will you come out and confirm that you are registering the correct meter for my home?

We will be happy to confirm that we are reading the correct meter for your home. Remember, however, that in multi-unit complexes such as condominiums, TDPUD depends on the plumbing information given by the original contractors. You may need to have the on-site maintenance person help you verify that the meter designated for your unit is correct.

15. What are the benefits of the Water Meter Project?

Water meters will improve customer service, identify water system leaks (both on the District and customer-sides of the water meter), enable water conservation programs through customer usage data, and give customers some control over their water bill.

If you have additional questions or require assistance, please contact TDPUD Customer Service at 530-587-3896.

KEY DATES FOR THE WATER METER PROJECT

November 18, 2009	Public Hearing on New Rates
November 18, 2009	Board Votes on New Rates
January 15, 2010	New Water Rates Begin to Take Effect
2010-2012	Phase 3 Meter Installation & New Rates
January 1, 2013	Completed Water Meter Project (goal)