



SACRAMENTO COUNTY
WATER AGENCY

Water Metering Information

The following water metering information will help you understand the meter installation process and the need for, and benefits of, metered water billing. If you have any questions after reading this fact sheet, please contact us at 874-6851 or visit us online at www.scwa.net for up-to-date project information.

Why are water meters necessary?

The Sacramento County Water Agency is mandated by the State to install water meters to all customers.

Meter installation status

About 80 percent of Water Agency customers already have water meters. Currently, there are three types of residential service conditions:

- 1) those who already have water meters;
- 2) those with meter boxes that only need a meter placed inside (meter-ready); and
- 3) those who do not have anything in place for the meter installation. These homes will require a “meter retrofit”.

Is Sacramento County Water Agency the only water supplier required to install meters?

No. The state of California requires all water suppliers to install water meters by January 1, 2025. Many other water suppliers in the Sacramento area are in the process of installing water meters too. While metering is new to some areas of Sacramento, it is a common and long standing practice in almost every city and region of California and throughout the country.

The benefits of metered water billing

All Water Agency customers will benefit from water metering. Metering will help the county better manage its water supply, encourage efficient water use among customers and ensure that customers enjoy a high-quality and reliable water source for decades to come.

An additional benefit is more equitable charges for water service. Meters will allow customers to pay for what they actually use. Customers then can directly benefit from efficient water use measures they choose to implement.

Water Conservation Discount Program: For the very first time, the Water Agency will reward water conservation by providing meter-billed residents a water conservation discount. This conservation discount became effective July 1, 2009. A 10 percent discount will be given to customer who use 22,440 gallons or less per billing cycle and a 20 percent discount to customers who use 10,472 gallons or less per billing cycle.

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Where will the water meter be installed on my property?

Because of the way the meter must connect to the existing water pipes, Water Agency crews have very little flexibility in the placement of the meter. Water meters have to be installed where water first enters the customer's property. Water is supplied to your home through a series of pipes. Water is supplied to all the homes on your street through a "water main" pipe. This pipe is located in the street approximately three feet below ground level. Each home is then individually supplied from the "water main" pipe through a smaller "water service" pipe that is also about three feet below the ground. Your meter box and meter will be connected to the water service pipe and will be placed on your lot approximately 18 inches from the edge of the sidewalk or road.

Landscape Restoration

In most cases, a full retrofit is a simple construction process. A crew will come to your property, dig a hole about three feet wide, four feet long, and approximately four feet deep to install the meter box and meter.

After installation, removed sod will be reused and re-laid the same day your meter is installed. Any areas that cannot be re-laid with original sod will be replaced with new sod. In some situations, over the course of many years, improvements other than lawns have been constructed over easements-- such as RV pads or driveways extensions. If construction crews need to construct within an improved area, every effort will be made to return this area to its pre-construction condition. Toward this effort, both "before" and "after" photos will be taken to assure, as is reasonably feasible, that the pre-construction condition is fully restored.

Will I have to pay the cost of the meter and the meter installation?

No. The Water Agency will pay for all expenses associated with water meter installation – including the cost of the meter. For this particular project, we have been awarded stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and through the California Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to install water meters in your community. This stimulus funding is specifically dedicated for water infrastructure projects and your community has been selected because it best meets the project criteria set forth in the ARRA.

Will my water bill increase because of being meter billed?

Metered billing allows customers to pay for what they actually use. Customers then can directly benefit from efficient water use measures they choose to implement. However, customers who use an inordinate amount of water will see their bill increase. Compared to the current flat rate system, metered water bills are generally higher in the summer and lower in the winter.

When will be I switched over to metered billing?

After your meter is installed, you will be placed on a one-year "statistical metering" program. This program is designed to statistically track your water use and provide you with comparative data on metered versus flat water rates. You will remain on a flat water rate during the one-year study period unless you request an early conversion to metered water billing. At the end of the study period, you will convert to metered billing at which point you will be able to qualify for our **Water Conservation Discount Program**.

What can I do to use less water?

To help you use water more efficiently, we offer a free water use survey called a Water Wise House/Business

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Call. A certified water professional will visit your home to review your water use, check your irrigation system, inspect for water leaks and offer water saving tips specific to your property. Customers receive a written report of findings and recommendations, and a 12 month irrigation schedule. Call 772-2226 to schedule your free water use survey. You can also check our Web site, www.scwa.net, for more water conservation tips.

How will I be notified when my meter will be installed?

- 1. Installation notification letter.** You will be notified by mail of your scheduled installation date at least two weeks in advance. If you have any concerns about your installation date, you will be given the opportunity to reschedule within two weeks of your originally scheduled installation.
- 2. Door hanger.** Approximately two to three days prior to your installation date, you will be provided with a reminder door hanger.

Give us a call!

The Water Agency is doing its part to ensure a reliable, high-quality water supply—now and into the future. We follow the Water Forum best management practices—a comprehensive set of water efficiency programs including implementing activities like metered water billing. For more information on the Agency’s water use efficiency programs, please visit our website www.scwa.net, or call 874-6851.

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Main: 827 7th St., Rm. 301, Sacramento, CA 95814 • (916) 874-6851 • fax (916) 874-8693 • www.scwa.net
Facilities Operations & Admin.: 3847 Branch Center Rd. #1, Sacramento, CA 95827 • (916) 875-RAIN • fax (916) 875-6884
Elk Grove Office: 9280 W. Stockton Blvd., Suite 220, Elk Grove, CA 95758 • (916) 875-RAIN • fax (916) 875-4046