

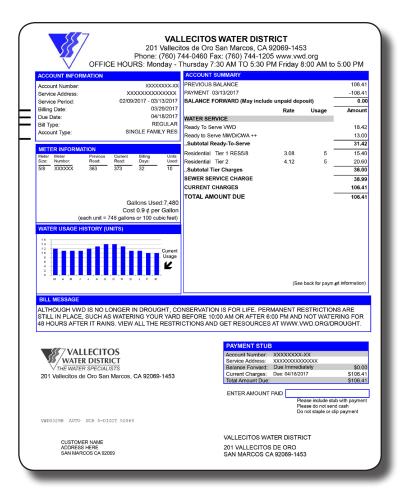
Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Your Water Bill

Why does your water bill continue to increase or fluctuate from time to time?

You may notice an increase in your water bill due to recent rate increases. Rate increases are necessary to cover the escalating cost of imported water, efforts to comply with environmental regulations, maintain and periodically replace aging infrastructure, and to provide safe, reliable and sustainable water and sewer service to customers.

The majority of the water we provide is imported. Therefore, when our wholesalers raise the water rates, this can significantly affect your water bill.

Your bill statement may also fluctuate from time to time because meter reading is not necessarily performed on a 30-day cycle. Some bill statements could reflect a 28 through 34-day cycle depending on the month, weekends, and holidays.



Your water bill includes the following charges:

Ready-to-Serve Charge

The ready-to-serve charge (RTS) is assessed to cover fixed costs. These charges are assessed even if the meter is not in service, as Vallecitos incurs these costs no matter how much water is used. For example, an increase in the RTS for a standard single family meter covers Vallecitos' fixed administrative and operating costs. It also covers the fixed costs that are assessed by our wholesale water supplier, the San Diego County Water Authority, who charges Vallecitos not only a charge based on consumption, but also fixed charges regardless of the amount of water we request to be delivered.

Sewer Charge

Sewer charges are usually assessed on a fixed basis, regardless of the flow from your residence to the sewer. The sewer charge is fixed for the same reason the (RTS) is fixed – even though sewer flows fluctuate, we will always need certain operational resources and must adhere to stringent regulatory requirements.

Water Charge

The cost of water used during a month includes wholesale costs plus local treatment, storage, distribution and facility replacement. To encourage conservation, Vallecitos implements a 4-tiered rate structure that puts the burden of costs associated with limited supply on those customers whose water usage is above average.

Pump Zone Charge

This charge is used to cover the power costs if you live in a zone where water must be pumped to a higher elevation. About 10 percent of our customers live in pump zones.

Where does the money from your water bill payment go?

The payment received from water bills covers wholesale water costs, administrative expenses, operating costs, and asset replacement.

- Administrative expenses include labor costs, outside services, utilities, insurance, materials, and any costs related to engineering, customer service, information technology, facilities, conservation, and other administrative-type activities.
- Operating costs include labor costs, materials, utilities, outside services, repairs, and costs related to transmission, distribution, tanks, reservoirs, meters, and any other activities related to maintaining and operating the water system.
- Asset replacement is achieved by using available reserve funds. Some parts of the system are more than 50 years old. Reserves are maintained for replacements and to avert further declines in reserves.



Inside the District's 33-million gallon Twin Oaks Reservoir, one of the largest pre-stressed concrete tanks in the world.

Where does the money from your sewer bill payment go?

Sewer service charges cover payments to the Encina Wastewater Authority, a regional wastewater treatment plant that is partially owned by Vallecitos, for treatment and disposal of wastewater. It also pays for the collection, conveyance, and treatment of wastewater at Vallecitos' water reclamation plant, and all other operating costs, administrative expenses and debt service related to sewer projects and sewer asset replacement.



Staff work diligently to maintain the District's extensive assets, including this pump at thethe Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facil-

How can you use so much water while on vacation?

Most of the residential water usage comes from outdoor irrigation. Fifty to 80 percent of water is used for watering landscapes. Therefore, water usage may not really fluctuate while you are on vacation and water bills may still reflect similar monthly usage.

Checking for leaks and irrigation maintenance issues is something to consider before leaving for a vacation or business trip. In addition, making sure the irrigation controller is programmed with a current schedule that meets the needs of the soil and plant material is essential for water efficiency.

For More Information

We're here to help. Our Customer Service Department is available at (760) 744-0460 or visit our website at www.vwd.org.