

# How Vallecitos Ensures Accuracy of Water Bills

## We make sure our meters are accurate

- Meters are manufactured, tested and certified per the industry standard of 100% accuracy  $\pm 1.5\%$ .
- Before we replace a meter, we capture the read in our billing software, so we can validate the register on the new meter.

## We use an Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system to avoid data entry errors

- In 2004, the Vallecitos Water District began converting water meters to an Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system for meter reading ease.
- Almost all meters in the District are now read electronically.
- The meter readers drive through each area of the District and a radio signal is sent to their laptop computers with the electronic reading.
- We read approximately 1,250 meters per day, 4 days a week.
- Each meter is read once a month.

## This is how we check our meter reads

- The laptop computer sends an alert to the meter reader when a customer's meter read is unusually high or low.
- The alert will appear on an exceptions report to re-validate the read and check the meter to see if the leak indicator is moving.
- If the leak indicator is moving, the meter reader will look for signs of a leak and either they or customer service will alert the customer.
- Our billing system generates an additional report of the customers with an unusually high or low read. Our meter readers immediately check each high



and low read against the customer's water use history and account information.

- This process is then reconfirmed by Vallecitos' Customer Service specialists which assures that customers are not surprised by a high water bill.

## This is how we verify meter reads that appear unusual

- Our billing system generates a verification report with additional accounts to check prior to billing.
- Customer Service specialists may send out a meter technician to verify reads.

## We work with each customer individually

- When a customer has concerns about high water use or a high water bill, our Customer Service staff work with them one-on-one.
- We walk the customer through a series of questions to identify the cause – an irrigation leak, a leaking toilet or refilling a swimming pool, for example.
- We offer a free home water use evaluation through Mission Resources Conservation District. Customers can sign up for a free evaluation at [www.vwd.org/landscapeaudit](http://www.vwd.org/landscapeaudit).
- Some of the District's meters can pull 45 days of hourly usage to see past usage patterns to help identify what may have caused a high meter read.