



Board Studies Methods to Encourage Efficiency

Every MNWD customer has unique water needs. Typically, more water is used in large homes than condominiums and apartments, and some businesses need more than others. That is why the District is evaluating the way we calculate water rates, and looking at new approaches to bring our customers more fairness and equity, as we encourage everyone to use water more efficiently.

The MNWD Board of Directors is continuing to study a potential move from the current water rate model to a Water-Budget-Based Rate Structure. This proposed structure would allow District customers to become a more active part of the solution as we work together to conserve our region's limited water resources, and it would provide customers more freedom to use water as they see fit. Any potential change in rate structure is still months away, and would include several opportunities for customers to participate in the process before a decision is made in a public hearing. Customers will hear from the District several times in the coming months as the study continues, but we first want to answer the question, "What are Water-Budget-Based Rates?"

Water-Budget-Based Rate Structure

The Water-Budget-Based Rate Structure would help customers achieve greater efficiency by providing a personalized amount of water – a water budget – to meet each customer's specific needs. This amount would be calculated for residential customers based on a survey MNWD is conducting of each customer's lot size, landscaped area, the number of residents in each home and localized weather data, among other factors. Businesses, however, use water in a different manner from homes, so their budgets would be calculated based on a three-year rolling average of each commercial customers' monthly use.

Customers whose water use remains within their water budgets would be billed at the lowest rates; customers who exceed their budgets would be billed at higher rates. This new rate structure would reward efficiency and give customers the freedom to use their water budgets as they see fit. The Board of Directors would also give consideration to eliminating the current three-day-per-week watering restrictions. Please look for more information in the near future, or call us with questions at (949) 831-2500.

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