



District Evaluating New Ways to Conserve Newly proposed rate model would encourage efficiency

LAGUNA NIGUEL, Calif. (September 1, 2010) - Every MNWD customer has unique water needs. Typically, more water is used in large homes than condos, 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, and to encourage everyone to use water more efficiently.

MNWD's Board of Directors has asked District staff to analyze a potential transition from the current tiered rate model to a new Efficiency-Based Rate Structure, as a way to stabilize water bills and allow MNWD customers to become part of the solution as we work together to protect our region's limited water resources. The move to Efficiency-Based Rates would only be a change to the way rates are assessed, and in fact, customers who use water wisely would actually see equivalent or lower water bills as a result.

The Board's request has begun what will be a lengthy process of evaluating this potential new rate structure. Our customers will have several opportunities to participate in this process, and will hear from the District numerous times in the coming months with more information before the Board considers the change in a public hearing in 2011.

What are Efficiency-Based Rates?

Efficiency-Based Rates make sure everyone receives a customized amount of water – a water budget – to meet their specific needs. This amount would be calculated based on a detailed survey MNWD is conducting of each of our customer's water needs, based on lot size, landscaped area, the number of residents in each home and localized weather data, among other factors. Customers whose water use remains within their budgets would be billed at lower rates; customers who waste water by exceeding their budget would be billed at a higher rate. This new rate structure would reward efficiency and give customers the freedom to use their water budgets as they see fit.

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