



CITRUS
HEIGHTS
WATER
DISTRICT

WaterLine

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Countdown to Metered Billing Conversion

After years of work installing federally required water meters, the Citrus Heights Water District is approaching the final year of flat-rate billing.

Beginning in January 2008, customers will be billed according to their actual water use. Another major change will be a switch to bi-monthly billing rather than the current semi-annual system.

“It’s our goal to provide every customer with one year’s experience with a meter so they can monitor their water use, and compare their usage to what they would be charged for under the metered-rate versus the current flat-rate system,” noted General Manager Bob Churchill.

With the last few hundred meters now being installed, the District is on track to meet that goal. To date, 702 residential customers have voluntarily changed to metered billing.

The metering program is required under a federal law passed in 1992. District crews and contractors have installed 18,700 meters to date. Because retrofitting nearly every residence with a water meter is so expensive, the District secured long-term financing to cope with the costs and lessen the impact on ratepayers.

In addition, the District received permission from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to extend its scheduled implementation, which also reduced rate impacts.

Once the new metered billing system begins, customers will receive a bill every two months. It will include the payment due date as well as detailed information on water use.

“The adoption of water rates tied to water consumption will provide customers with a resource to control their water costs,” Churchill said. ●



Experience Counts

Citrus Heights Water District **General Manager Bob Churchill** and **Assessor/Collector Nancy Alaniz** celebrate their 30-year anniversary with the District. Bob began in May 1976 as office engineer while Nancy was hired in June 1976 as an assistant to the billing clerk.

It’s a District priority to recruit and retain the best personnel. The District’s 26 employees have an average service with the District of nearly 15 years each.



Fun Day

Citrus Heights Water District personnel staffed a booth during the annual **Sunday Fun Day**. The booth featured games and giveaways designed to promote the District’s message of water conservation.

Water Service Payment Due January 22, 2007

Bills for 2007 flat rate residential water service will be mailed to customers in early December 2006. The first installment of the semi-annual flat rate charges for water service must be received by the Citrus Heights Water District no later than 5 p.m. Monday, January 22, 2007. Late payments are subject to additional charges and fees. Payments received after the due date but with a postmark on or before January 22 are also subject to late fees.

Customers can pay their bill by electronic funds transfer (EFT). This option allows customers to pay directly from a checking or savings account with no service fee. Contact the District at (916) 725-6873 for further information on this convenient payment option.

Directors Re-Appointed to Positions

With no other candidates filing for election to the Board of Directors, Directors Allen B. Dains and Joseph M. Dion have been re-appointed to their positions by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. The appointments save the District the expense of an election.

Dains will begin his third term while Dion embarks on his second full term.

District Adopts Budget, Rates for 2007

Following the most extensive customer outreach in the history of the Citrus Heights Water District, the District's Board of Directors has approved a \$7.7 million operating budget for 2007. The annual single-family residential flat rate water charge for the coming year will be \$378 a year, or \$31.50 per month, an increase of 7.4 percent over 2006 charges.

Despite the increase, customers in the Citrus Heights Water District continue to pay less than the average charge for water service in the region.

“Our commitment is to provide our customers with reliable and dependable

water service at an affordable cost that is within the mid-range for the Sacramento region,” noted General Manager Bob Churchill. “This budget accomplishes that goal.”

In September, a letter was sent to every owner of property in the District explaining the Board's rate-setting process and inviting them to attend the November 14 public hearing on the proposed budget and rate schedule.

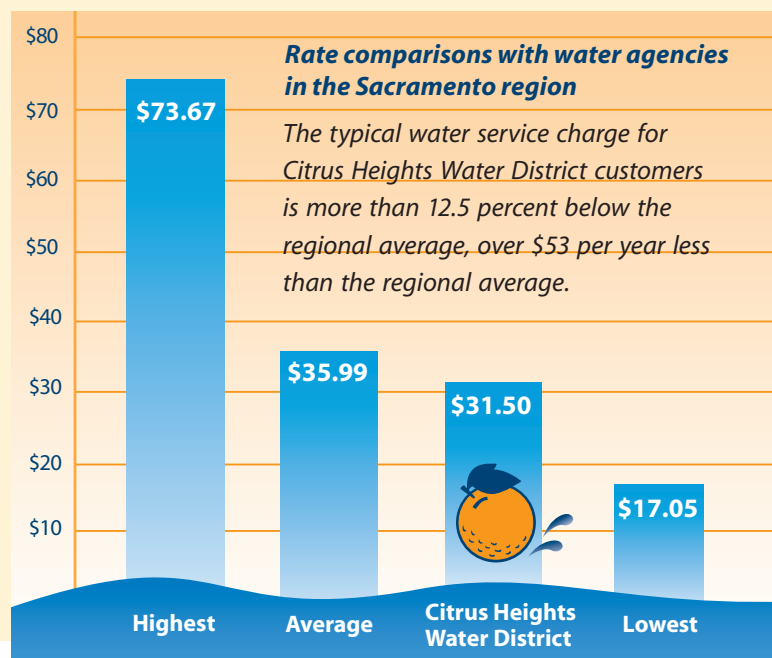
Water purchases, transmission and distribution continue to be the District's most costly operations, accounting for more than half of budgeted expenditures.

Customer service and administrative costs are nearly 22 percent of costs while debt service and depreciation are projected at 21 percent. Conservation programs tally up to nearly 5 percent of District expenditures.

The adopted budget includes the first staff addition to the District in more than 10 years. A new customer service representative will be hired to assist in handling the increasing customer calls and payment processing that will occur after the transition to bi-monthly billing.

In addition to the operating budget, the Board of Directors approved a \$3.4 million capital improvements budget, a decrease of 16 percent from 2006 levels. Among the major improvement programs planned are:

- Completion of two groundwater wells. The District will be receiving about \$1 million in grant funds from Proposition 13 for these water supply improvement projects, that are estimated to cost a total of \$2.8 million.
- Various pipeline replacement projects estimated to cost around \$950,000.
- Expansion of the Administration Building, and installation of energy-efficient window and wall improvements.
- Replacement of two aging service trucks, and a dump truck.



Park District Makes Major Investments in Water Efficiency

In a small office at the Sunrise Recreation and Park District's Corporation Yard on Antelope Road, Virg Anderson peers into a computer screen displaying the irrigation system at one of the district's 39 parks.

Using state-of-the-art technology, Anderson, the deputy superintendent of park administration, can tell if there's a broken sprinkler on any one of the 50 sprinkler lines that irrigate the park.



*Using a state-of-the-art computerized system to monitor the Sunrise Recreation and Park District's irrigation at 21 different parks, **Virg Anderson**, the District's deputy superintendent of park administration, can dispatch maintenance personnel to fix faulty sprinklers and other problems within minutes of identifying the problem.*



"In the past it could take maintenance crews three or four hours to identify exactly where we had a problem," Anderson says. "Now the system flags problems back to the office and we know where the problem is within 20 to 30 minutes."

Not only does that increase the efficiency of the Park District's maintenance crews but, just as importantly, it means "less water down the gutter," according to Anderson.

So far, the Sunrise Recreation and Park District has 21 of its parks hooked up to the wireless irrigation control system, at an investment of nearly \$300,000. With 394 acres of parkland irrigated within the District and an annual water bill from three different purveyors—including Citrus Heights Water District—totaling roughly \$200,000, Anderson says the high-tech control system makes a lot of sense for the District.

Citrus Heights Water District, through its affiliation with the Regional Water Authority, sponsored a California Department of Water Resources Proposition 13 grant to assist the Park District in its investment in the technology to provide precision control of its irrigation system.

"It's always a priority to assist large water users in the District to ensure that they are using their water efficiently," noted Conservation Specialist Rex Meurer. "If people recognize the expense to which some of our larger water consumers go to control their water costs, it makes sense for them to take measures to ensure they are also efficient water consumers."

The District provides a variety of water conservation services to its customers. For further information, contact Citrus Heights Water District at (916) 725-6873. ●



Relay for Life

Citrus Heights Water District water quality technician **Jason Tupper** organized a District team to participate in the annual Relay for Life, held at San Juan High School in June. The team raised more than \$5,700 for cancer research.



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HEIGHTS
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Assessor/Collector*

PRESORTED STANDARD

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA

PERMIT NO. 393

ECRWSS

▼ *Postal Customer and Water Consumer in
Citrus Heights Water District*

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*Parks District Makes Major Investments in
Water Efficiency*

Rebate, Free Services Available

*Did you know that you can avail yourself
of a variety of water conserving—
and money-saving!—services from
the Citrus Heights Water District?*

If you are remodeling
or upgrading a bathroom, **you can
receive up to \$125** for replacing older,
less water-efficient toilets with a new ultra-
low-flush toilet. Rebates are provided as
part of the District's conservation program,
in cooperation with the Sacramento
Regional County Sanitation
District and the Regional
Water Authority.

We also provide a
**free review of your
irrigation system** to ensure
that it is in optimal operating mode.
In fact, we'll even program your
sprinkler timers!

(And don't forget to turn your
sprinklers off now during
the rainy season!)

Or, if you are
using the long winter nights
to plan that new garden for the spring,
the District has a variety of informational
materials that can help you plant for success.
**Tips on grouping plants by water
needs, irrigating and a host of
other helpful topics** can make your
garden project go smoothly.

We also offer
**water-conserving
showerheads and faucet
aerators** to reduce your
interior water usage without
cramping your lifestyle.

Check it out.
Call the Citrus Heights
Water District
for additional
information today at
(916) 725-6873.

