

## **#5 All of a Sudden, an Unusually High Water Bill!**

**(See also FAQ #8 – “How Do We Check the Water System for Water Leaks?”)**



### ***How does an unusually high water bill occur?***

There are several reasons why customers may suddenly find an unusually high water bill:

- In the winter, a sudden cold spell may cause a freeze and a water pipe will burst. In the morning when the pipe thaws, the water will flow and if there is no one around, this can cause an unusual amount of water loss.
- In the summer, sudden water usage can occur if water is forgotten when watering a tree or garden and left on overnight.
- Sometimes, a plastic pipe can be accidentally torn-out or chewed by an animal trying to access the water.
- Water theft.
- And, of course, if the meter reader misreads the meter.

### ***Are there other things that can cause higher water bills?***

- Leaks! Leaks can be very sneaky and costly; sometimes one can see them, other times they are difficult to detect. Leaky toilets can sometimes be heard, often not seen, many times ignored. A worn washer in a hose bib can allow a faucet to leak a great deal of water very quickly and sprinkler systems can be the source of a leak. Irrigation systems.
- A pencil size stream can leak hundreds of gallons in a short time. One has to be very alert to find an underground leak. Damp soil, extra green grass, weeds or plants can be a clue. Sometimes an underground leak never surfaces.

*Who is responsible for water losses?*

- Anything on the street side of the meter is the responsibility of the Water District. Please advise the District ASAP if you notice a leak.
- Anything on the property side of the meter is the responsibility of the tenant or owner of the property.



*What can be done?*

- Check all pipes with a leak detector, and ask neighbors if anyone was seen playing with faucets. Re-read your meter and confirm that the reading is higher now than the last reading amount on your water billing. If the reading is lower call the office to have the District re-read the meter.
- As a final resolution, have the District pull and test your meter for accuracy. Meters typically run slower with age, not faster. At the time the meter is pulled for testing, it will be replaced with a new meter. Don't be surprised if your water usage increases. Customers often notice an increase in their next water billing because a new meter runs more accurately.
- The District Customer can appeal in writing or in person at a regular Board Meeting for help or advise from the Board Members. Provide as much detail as possible.
- Depending on the circumstances, The Board sometimes provides relief to customers unusually high water bills, also know as the Water Assistance Program (WAAP).