

READING YOUR WATER METER

The water meter is an important tool for understanding and monitoring water use. Your water meter keeps track of how much water your household uses. The meter is usually located along the sidewalk or in the front yard of your home, inside a concrete box marked "WATER METER." The information in this brochure applies to a residence with its own meter.



Information Provided By:

THE LOS OSOS
COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
UTILITIES DEPARTMENT
2212 9th Street, Los Osos, CA 93402
805-528-9376
www.losososcsd.org

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PROJECTING YOUR WATER USE

Look on your last bill under the heading "Meter Read". "Current Meter Read" is the last reading off your meter. If you are reading your meter mid-billing cycle, subtract the number you read today from the last reading on your bill. The difference is how many units of water you have used since your last water bill.

Now look on the bill where it shows the dates in boxes marked "From" and "To". The last date indicates the end of the prior billing period, when the meter was read. Your actual meter read day is not necessarily the exact last day of the billing cycle. It takes the meter readers a few days to read all the meters in Los Osos. Your exact billing cycle is from meter read to meter read, not specific days, but it is generally a two-month period.

If, for example, you have used 3 units in the 15 days since your last reading, you can use that information to estimate how much water you may use by the end of the current billing period.

Since there are about 60 days in each billing period, divide 60 by the number of days since the last reading. Take that number and multiply it by the number of units you used since your last reading. The answer will be your estimated use:

$$60 \div 15 = 4$$

$$4 \times 3 = 12$$

Based on your current rate of use, 12 units is an estimate of the water use that will show up on your next statement.

Who's Responsible?

The District is responsible for the service line in the street, the meter and the connections to it. The service line and all plumbing fixtures on the customer's side of the meter are the responsibility of the water customer. If you find a leak in your meter box you should call 528-9370 immediately for staff to investigate the problem.

For additional information visit the LOCS D Utilities website at www.losososcsd.org

If you need to speak with someone at the CSD, please call:

528-9378 for billing questions or
528-9376 for conservation issues

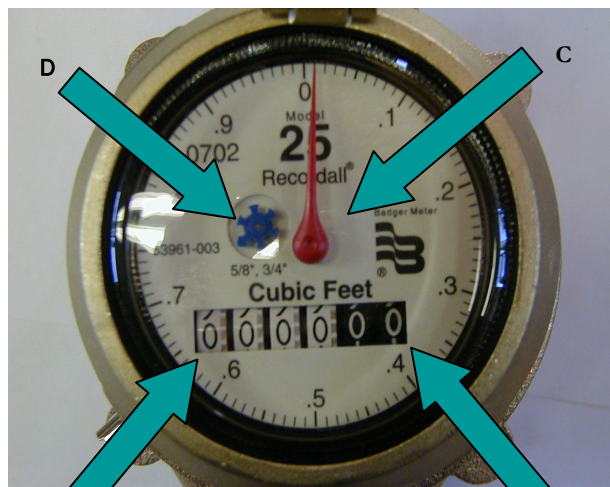
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There Are Some Things You Should Know Before You Read Your Meter

Most residential meters are digital. A digital meter has a large dial and reads in a straight line, much like a car odometer reads. It also has a red sweep hand. Each complete revolution of the hand indicates one cubic foot (7.48 gallons) of water has passed through the meter. Your meter is read about every 60 days and the results are recorded in billing units. One billing unit is 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons.

How to Read Your Meter

To read your meter, look at the straight row of numbers on the dial (A) these numbers with the white background are the numbers on your water bill. The last two numbers (B) are not read as they represent a fraction of one billing unit. One full revolution of the red sweep hand (C) equals 7.48 gallons.



Detecting Leaks

Left unfixed, leaks waste a tremendous amount of water and can develop into more serious plumbing problems. If you have a leak it can usually be detected at the water meter. First, turn off all water uses on the property while you are checking for leaks. Many newer meters have a small red triangle or blue star on the face of the dial (D). This is a very sensitive “leak detector.” Even a small leak will be indicated by a rotating triangle or star. If after a few seconds, you see no clear movement, you probably don’t have a leak, unless it’s an intermittent toilet leak (see LOCSD Brochure Identifying and Repairing Toilet Leaks).

For meters that have no leak detector you can use the red sweep hand to check for leaks. Make a note of where the sweep hand is pointing, then come back in about 20 minutes. If it has moved, you have a leak. You can determine how much water is leaking by using the following guidelines to measure the water use of a fixture.

You will need a calculator, a watch with a second hand and pencil and paper.

Measuring the Water Use of a Fixture

For a single family residential dwelling, each full revolution of the red sweep hand means you have consumed 7.48 gallons. The dial is divided into tenths.

First, make sure no one will be using any water during your test. If you want to measure how much water your toilet uses in one flush, read your meter and note the position of the red sweep hand on the dial. Then go inside and flush the toilet.

Come back out and read the position of the sweep hand again. If your sweep hand moved, for example, from .1 to .5, multiply $7.48 \times .4$ to see that your toilet has used 2.99 gallons (this means you have not retrofitted to a water-efficient 1.6 gallon per flush toilet yet!)

If you want to compute how much water you use to irrigate your yard, measure how much your meter shows for one minute (as instructed for your toilet) then multiply that number by the number of minutes you water each time. For instance, if the red sweep hand turns from 0 to .95 in a minute, you have used 7.106 gallons in that minute. If you water for 20 minutes: $7.106 \times 20 = 142.12$ gallons consumed.

When a water meter fails, it stops registering water use. A meter is incapable of over-registering use. However, a meter-reader can misread the number on the dial. If you receive a bill with an unusually high meter reading you should immediately go out and read the meter yourself to see if it may have been misread.