



# Our Water Supply

Helping Redwood City to be a WaterWise Community

## Understanding Your Water Rates

How rates work, where the money goes, & the need for rate increases

Redwood City residential utility customers pay their water bill every two months, and depend on the City to provide every-day water services to the community. As long as water comes to our homes, most of us are satisfied that the system works. However a further explanation will help people to understand how their water rates work, how those funds are used, and why it's necessary for rates to increase.

### Your Water Bill Payments Are Used Only For The Water System

The revenues we receive from your water bill are not put into the City's general fund and are not used for general City services. Rather, they are kept separate in a self-sustaining "enterprise" fund and are used to pay for all on-going water systems operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement. As an enterprise fund, the revenues and expenditures must be in balance each fiscal year. Any new or increased expenditures must be covered by rate increases.

#### MOST expensive water rate per unit

Level 5	•
Level 4	•
Level 3	•
Level 2	•
Level 1	•

Wherever your **total usage** is (level 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5), **all** of your water beyond the first 10 units is charged at the rate for that level. If you use less water, you pay a lower per-unit water rate.

#### LEAST expensive water rate per unit

*progressive water conservation rate structure*, the more water you use, the more you pay per unit of water, based on your maximum usage level.

### The Need For Rate Increases

**This spring, the City Council will be considering how to implement rate increases.** This adjustment is necessary to reflect the continuing increases in the wholesale cost of water, and the City's ongoing investment in water conservation and new water supply and distribution systems. The benefits to the community are significant: these efforts will result in a reliable and efficient water supply for the near future, *and* for the generations to come. Even with the necessary rate increases, Redwood City will still be able to provide the community with water at rates that are among the lowest on the Peninsula. The Council will make the final decision on how to implement this necessary rate increase, and will hold at least one public hearing on the increase this spring. Detailed information on this necessary water rate increase will be provided in the next issue. Be sure to check [www.redwoodcity.org/water](http://www.redwoodcity.org/water) for meeting schedule and periodic updates.



### How Your Water Bill Is Calculated

Your water bill has two elements. First, there's a monthly basic service charge – this pays for salaries, equipment, supplies, and services required for the operation and maintenance of the water system, or what might be called our "fixed costs" – right now that charge is \$12.00 per month.

Then there is a variable usage rate based on how much water you use – this revenue pays for our purchase of wholesale water, power to run the pumping systems which transport the water, capital improvements to the water system, our active water conservation program, and the cost of our recycled water program. Under this

# Spring is Irrigation System Tune-Up Time!

Now is the time to check your sprinkler system and make sure it's working correctly—get ready for spring and summer so your lawn and garden will look good while you save water!

- ⇒ **Turn on each watering station** and inspect the sprinklers in order to make sure they are not leaking, clogged, misaligned, tilted, too low, or impeded by vegetation; then mark the sprinklers that need attention.
- ⇒ **Make the necessary repairs and adjustments** to the sprinkler heads and flush the line to remove sediment if necessary.
- ⇒ **Inspect your sprinkler timer/controller**, replace the back-up battery, and make sure the date and time are correct. Then, adjust the watering schedule to meet your spring season watering requirements and turn it off until the weather warms-up.



Redwood City invites you to attend **FREE** spring gardening workshops this May. **Call 780-7436** today to reserve your place for one or more of these **fun and informative workshops for homeowners!**

**Mark Your Calendar for FREE WaterWise Spring Gardening Workshops!**

## May 6

**Irrigation Basics for Homeowners** (9 am to 12:30 pm) ~ Learn the components of an irrigation system, how to lay out, install, and maintain your system, and how to identify and solve common irrigation problems.

**Smart Gardening** (1:30 pm to 5 pm) ~ This workshop brings together home gardening basics like garden design, irrigation systems, scheduling and fertilizers, and plant selection.

## May 13

**ET Controller Concepts** (9 am to 12:30 pm) ~ Get the scoop on evapotranspiration (ET) irrigation controllers that “know” when your landscaping needs water, and how much water to provide!

## May 20

**Irrigation Scheduling/Maintenance** (9 am to 12:30 pm) ~ How much water is enough...or too much? You'll learn that it all depends on the weather, the plant selection, soil condition, and your irrigation system.

**Smart Gardening** (1:30 pm to 5 pm) ~ This workshop (*a repeat of the May 6 class*) brings together home gardening basics like garden design, irrigation systems, scheduling and fertilizers, and plant selection.

Your service club, neighborhood association, community organization, or other group can learn more about water conservation — Redwood City offers a **Water Conservation Speakers Bureau** that provides an informative and interesting presentation for your gathering. Call 780-7436 to schedule a speaker for your group.