

How to reach us

If you have questions, comments or would like more information on water issues, please contact us or visit our web site.

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Capitola, CA 95010
WEB SITE: www.SoquelCreekWater.org
www.WaterSavingTips.org

Soquel Creek Water District is a non-profit, local government agency with a locally elected Board of Directors. The District provides water supply and water resource management to more than 45,000 customers within a 17-square mile area of mid-Santa Cruz County.

The Board of Directors meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM at the District's office at 5180 Soquel Drive. Meetings are open to everyone and comments from the public are heard at each meeting.

Board of Directors
Bruce Daniels, *President*
Dr. Thomas LaHue, *Vice President*
John W. Beebe
Daniel F. Kriege
Dr. Bruce Jaffe

Laura D. Brown, *General Manager*

What's on Tap is an in-house publication printed bi-monthly for the customers of the District. Forward your comments to the editor at the address above.



"New toilet rebate program"
continued from page 2

How Do I Get the \$250 rebate?

Pick up a rebate application at the District office or download it from our web site. Or, you can always call and have one mailed. Rebates are only available when replacing pre-1992 toilets. If you're not sure how old your toilets are, call us for a free water survey.

As of January 1, 2007, the District will no longer offer \$75 rebates for purchasing a typical 1.6 gallons per flush toilet.

"Puzzled about your water bill?"
continued from page 1

Factoring together both the service charge and quantity rates, a Soquel Creek Water District customer using 22 units in a billing period pays 2.5 percent less than the average of the six comparable agencies; however, a customer using 36 units would pay 3 percent more than the average. Typical single-family households use an annualized average of 22 units every two months.

The District wants to help you lower your water usage and avoid Tier 2 quantity charges. See pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter for the latest conservation incentives being offered by the District.

Native grasses demonstration area

Proving that some grass is always greener, the District is developing a native grasses demonstration area at its Headquarters at 5180 Soquel Dr., Soquel. These native plants require little water and low maintenance. Drop by the corner of Rosedale and Soquel Drive after mid-October. If you like what you see, contact Roy Sikes, water conservation specialist, who can provide information on cultivating your own native grasses garden.



What's ON TAP

At the Soquel Creek Water District

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September/October 2006

Puzzled about your water bill?

With increased summer water use, many customers have contacted the District with questions about their bills. New rates and a lower Tier 2 threshold that went into effect last January are being especially noticed by those single-family residential customers who use more than 30 units of water in a two-month period.

Water use above 30 units in a billing cycle is charged at \$6.00 per unit, more than twice the charge for water below 30 units. One unit equals 748 gallons or 100 cubic feet (1 Ccf).

These rates are intended to encourage conservation.

You may also be wondering about the service charge. This fixed fee is based on meter size and is \$24.60 for a two-month period for standard five-eighths inch meters.

The service charge covers costs the District incurs regardless of whether any water is sold; such as maintaining the system necessary to deliver water, providing 24-hour emergency response, and business requirements including meter

readings, billing, collections, and customer service. The District receives no tax revenues and must meet all its expenses from rates and fees.

The six largest public water agencies serving Santa Cruz County all have fixed service charges. Soquel Creek Water District's current service charge for the typical meter size is about 30 percent less than the average service charge paid by customers served by comparable water agencies.

"Puzzled about your water bill?"
continued on back page



New toilet rebate program is flush with savings

Can you believe it? The District is now offering \$250 rebates to customers who replace their older pre-1992 toilets with new High-Efficiency Toilets (HETs).

What are HETs?

HETs use 1.2 gallons or less per flush (gpf) versus a typical toilet purchased today that uses 1.6 gpf. Some of the HETs use only 1.0 gpf and others are dual flush that use 0.8 gpf for liquids and 1.6 gpf for solids. They look just like a regular toilet.

Do they work?

Yes! Independent studies show that HETs perform very well, flushing much better, on average, than the common toilet purchased today. These toilets have been used in Australia and Europe for many years. HET performance information is available on the District's

web site: www.soquelcreekwater.org. Once there, click on the Conservation link and go to the Residential Toilet Rebate link.

How much water do they save?

HETs use at least 20 percent less water than the typical toilet available today and about 70 percent less water than older pre-1992 toilets. Toilets account for the greatest amount of indoor residential water use, so the savings benefits from HETs are significant.

How much do they cost?

The prices start around \$300 and average about \$350.

Are they available locally?

A few stores carry them now, and they will be commonplace soon. American Standard, Toto, and Vortens are three manufacturers that currently have HETs available locally.

“New toilet rebate program”
continued on back page

District offers new ways to save

One of the District's main goals is to help customers reduce water use in order to protect our precious groundwater supply. Richard Ward, a fourth grader at Valencia Elementary School, says it best with his “If” poem, written during the District's annual water conservation poster contest:

“If”

If only we had unlimited water.

But guess what, we don't.

With this in mind, the Board of Directors recently approved five new rebate programs as incentives to help you conserve water. By taking advantage of these rebate programs, customers

can conserve about 30 percent of all household water use.

With the exception of the High Efficiency Toilet (HET) rebate, which is currently available, all other rebate programs will be available October 1, 2006. However, receipts dated after July 18, 2006 will be honored and eligible for a rebate. Call the District for specific details.

The District also offers a \$100 rebate for purchase and installation of an Energy Star clothes washing machine.

NOTE: Generally, the District issues rebates as a credit on the customer's water bill.



Turf Replacement – Replace existing turf with low-water use turf or plants and receive \$100 per 100 square feet of turf replaced. The maximum rebate is \$500.



Weather Based Irrigation Controllers – Purchase and install one of these controllers for a \$75 to \$125 rebate, or more for large sites. These controllers use weather data to help the irrigation system apply the correct amount of water. They typically reduce landscape water use by about 20 percent.



Irrigation Parts Rebate – Replace old sprinkler heads and obtain \$5 per sprinkler head. The maximum amount is \$50 every five years for residential sites and more for large sites. The replaced sprinkler heads must be turned in to the District.



Cisterns (Water Harvesting) – For those who want to go the extra mile and capture rainwater, the District is willing to help. A rebate of \$25 per 100 gallons of storage capacity is rebated with a minimum 200-gallon tank up to a maximum rebate of \$750 (3,000 gallons).



High Efficiency Toilets (HETs) – \$250 per toilet for replacing pre-1992 toilets. See HET related article on previous page for details.