



**DELIVERING
HIGH-QUALITY,
RELIABLE
WATER**

UNDERSTANDING WATER RATES: HOW LOCAL FACTORS SHAPE YOUR BILL

Various factors such as water source, infrastructure maintenance, and population density all affect water rates. Each water district serves distinct communities, and their unique landscapes influence the design and construction of water systems. Whether serving hilly terrains that require pumping supplies to storage tanks or ensuring that the needs of large properties with extensive landscaping are met, water systems must be designed and built to meet the specific needs of each community.

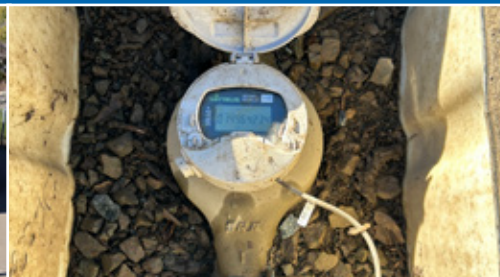
At San Juan Water District, our ongoing commitment is to meet the evolving needs of our customers for reliable, high-quality, and sustainable water services. This commitment is reflected in our rate structure, which balances fixed costs with variable rates.

The following information is intended to help customers understand the distinction between these charges and how they relate to the manner in which costs are distributed.

USAGE CHARGE VS. DAILY BASE CHARGE

- **Usage Charge:** This component of water rates reflects the costs associated with sourcing, treating, and delivering water, which fluctuate based on the volume of water used. It is based on a uniform water rate multiplied by your water use.
- **Daily Base Charge:** This component covers the basic infrastructure and operational costs of the water district that remain constant. Fixed rates cover costs such as maintenance, customer support, and regulatory compliance that do not change with water usage – ensuring all customers contribute to the essential functions of the water system.

Key Factors Affecting Water Rates



Water Source

The cost of water can vary depending on its source. San Juan Water District keeps this variable cost low because it does not need to import water. Our water supply is sourced from the American River, diverted from Folsom Reservoir, and transported to our treatment plant before it's delivered to customers.

Infrastructure Costs

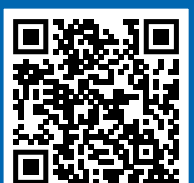
These are fixed costs associated with building, maintaining, and upgrading the physical systems required to deliver water to customers. These costs represent expenses related to modernizing equipment such as pumps, valves, and water treatment facilities, as well as installing or replacing water meters and pipelines.

Geography and Population Density

In areas with challenging terrain or larger lot sizes, these fixed costs may be spread across fewer customers, leading to higher rates per user. Additionally, the need to pump water over elevation changes can increase operational costs, as more energy is required to move water uphill or over uneven landscapes.

Monthly Board Meeting Information

Our Board of Directors meets monthly on the third Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. in the District Office. We encourage participation and welcome public comments on District activities. For more information and to view the agenda for the next meeting, please visit sjwd.org/board-meetings.



WILDFIRES AND WATER SYSTEMS

The recent, tragic wildfires in Altadena and Pacific Palisades have generated significant scrutiny on water systems and firefighting capabilities. These fires occurred in urban areas, where storage tanks, pipelines, and fire hydrants provided some of the water that firefighters used to respond to the fires. Unfortunately, the intensity of the fires and the rapidity with which the hurricane-force winds spread them throughout those steep, bone-dry canyons created demands for water that quickly outstripped the ability of the water systems to keep up. Firefighters then turned to their usual tools for fighting wildfires – air drops of water and fire retardant and reducing fuel on firebreaks on the perimeter of the fire zones. Urban water systems are built to provide firefighters with supplies to respond to fires that affect a few houses in any particular neighborhood, but the cost of installing the pumping, storage, and distribution infrastructure to respond to wildfires would be prohibitive.

San Juan Water District does have robust and reliable water storage and delivery systems that serve not only San Juan's retail service area, but also the service areas of its wholesale customer agencies. San Juan can divert and deliver 150 million gallons of water per day through its treatment plant, which flows by gravity to most of its wholesale service area and is pumped to tanks in certain parts of its retail service area. This capacity represents 3-5 times the baseline demands of the service area, and provides a significant margin of safety for emergencies. Coupled with this treatment capacity is almost 70 million gallons of water storage in both the wholesale and retail systems. Both the treatment plant and the pumps that deliver this water have backup power supplies, so they are not solely reliant on SMUD or PG&E. San Juan is prepared to meet the water supply needs for firefighting in its service area for all but the most cataclysmic fires.



STATUS OF MERGER DISCUSSIONS

For more than a decade, San Juan has been working with a neighboring water agency, the Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD), to identify steps that both districts can take to make our operations more efficient, provide better customer service, and jointly manage our water supplies to lower costs and provide more reliability. By the fall of 2024, San Juan and SSWD had completed the preliminary analyses and were preparing to start the final assessment of either continuing as individual agencies or merging into one organization. However, last year's elections resulted in changes on San Juan's Board of Directors, a majority of whom voted in December 2024 to suspend any further deliberation on this subject.



DISTRICT AWARDS

We are proud to share that San Juan Water District is the recipient of several recent awards, which honor our hard work and commitment to providing high-quality, reliable water service.

These include the following:



**American Public Works Association
Project of the Year Award:**

Honored Hinkle Reservoir Floating Cover and Liner Replacement Project



Government Finance Officers Association:

Received Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (8th consecutive year)



Government Finance Officers Association:

Received The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (8th consecutive year)

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