

The District at a glance...

The South Tahoe Public Utility District is a California special district formed on September 28, 1950, to provide fiscally and environmentally responsible water and wastewater services to the community of South Lake Tahoe.

Special districts are legally constituted governmental entities that are neither cities nor counties, and are formed by voters to perform specific services within defined boundaries.

An elected five-member Board of Directors, which serve staggered four-year terms, govern the District. The Board of Directors meet on the first and third Thursday of each month at 2:00 p.m. The meetings are held at the Customer Services Building located at 1275 Meadow Crest Drive in South Lake Tahoe. All board meetings are open to the public and the District encourages and welcomes customer input.

The District prides itself on fair, consistent, and predictable management that has resulted in the District winning numerous water and wastewater industry awards, the most notable being the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year award won first in 1994, then again in 2001. The award has only been given to the same agency on two other occasions since its inception in 1972. One of the primary criteria for this award is fiscal efficiency and minimization of energy and chemical usage.



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**2011/2012
COMPARISON**

The Value of Water and Sewer Services



530.544.6474

What exactly are my water and sewer charges?

For purposes of illustration, we will cite water and sewer charges for a typical single-family dwelling (a three bedroom, two bath home). While rates vary depending upon water line size, number of toilets, and may differ for different rate classes (residential vs. commercial), similar overall value exists.

For the typical **non-metered** single-family home, adopted water and sewer charges effective July 01, 2011 are:

Water:

\$119.89/quarter (\$479.58/yr.)

Sewer:

\$ 89.86/quarter (\$359.44/yr.)

Total:

\$ 839.02/yr. - or - **\$2.30/day!**

For **\$2.30** per day our customers enjoy safe, pure drinking water use plus environmentally cutting edge wastewater collection, treatment, and export that has been cited as "one of the most significant environmental projects ever undertaken to protect Lake Tahoe's legendary clarity." (Dr. Charles Goldman—UCD Lake Tahoe Researcher)

To put these figures into every day perspective, take a look at some very common items purchased nearly every day without a second thought:

- 16 oz. bottled water **\$ 1.89**
- Gallon reg. gas **\$ 4.05**
- Loaf of bread **\$ 3.79**
- "Designer" Latte **\$ 3.95**
- Six-pack Coke **\$ 3.50**
- 1 lb. ground beef **\$ 3.99**
- Gallon of milk **\$ 3.59**

(date of survey 06/10/11)

Metered Water Service Value

Lake Tahoe is blessed with a plentiful groundwater aquifer, as well as water chemistry that is the envy of other statewide water suppliers. The United States has the most stringent water quality standards in the world, and California prides itself as being even more protective of its drinking water. To further illustrate the value of District water services, consider the metered volumetric (metered customers pay a fixed charge plus metered usage) rate of \$2.05 per 100 cubic feet* of water, or less than 1/3 of a cent per gallon. That's right—less than 1/3 of a **penny** per gallon! A value by any measure!

* 100 cubic feet = 748 gallons

Sewer Service Value

In 1968, California voters approved what is considered to be the most comprehensive water quality legislation ever proposed, the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. This legislation pays particular attention to Lake Tahoe and prohibits the in-Basin reuse of recycled water, regardless of the level of treatment. The District was the first Tahoe Basin wastewater agency to comply with this requirement and, on April 1, 1968, recycled water began to flow into District-owned Indian Creek Reservoir near Markleeville, California, in nearby Alpine County.

Nearly forty percent of your sewer charges are directly attributable to meeting the provisions of the Porter-Cologne Act. Recycled water from South Lake Tahoe is now pumped 26-miles over Luther Pass to the District owned and operated Harvey Place Reservoir. It is stored during the winter months and land applied, under contract, to ranchlands in Alpine County. To be sure, protecting Lake Tahoe comes with a healthy price tag!

What is Value?

Value is generally defined as a unique combination of price and quality. Lowest price is usually not the best value, nor does high price always confer best quality. The District prides itself on providing the best overall value to its customers, while still complying with an increasingly complex regulatory environment and responsibly investing in infrastructure replacement. A good measurement of this value is benchmarking our rates to other local agencies facing the same unique Tahoe Basin requirements, as well as to statewide averages.

Water: The District's rates are among the lowest among Lake Tahoe Basin water suppliers. Internet research found the California state average water bill for single family dwellings at \$51/month or \$153.00 per quarter. The District's current rate of \$119.89/quarter is 78% of the state average (or \$33.11 less per quarter).

Sewer: The District's rates are the lowest among Lake Tahoe Basin wastewater providers. Recent District research determined nearly 40% of sewer charges could be attributed to the state's requirement to export our recycled water. Even after the significant additional costs of complying with the Porter-Cologne Act, the District's sewer rates are well below the state average.

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