

## **CITY OF SANTA ROSA SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TIERED WATER RATE STRUCTURE**



In January 2007, the City of Santa Rosa Water Utility implemented a tiered water rate structure for all Single Family Residential accounts. The tiered water rate structure is focused on promoting outdoor water use efficiency and consists of the following three tiers:

Tier	Monthly Allocation
Tier 1	Your “cap” plus up to 8,000 gallons
Tier 2	All water use above Tier 1, up to 30,000 gallons above your cap
Tier 3	All water use above Tiers 1 and 2

**Q. When did the tiered water rate structure go into effect?**

**A.** The tiered water rate structure was implemented in January 2007. It affected bills rendered on or after January 1, 2007.

**Q. Why did the City change the rate structure?**

**A.** The City implemented the tiered water rate structure to focus on encouraging efficient irrigation water use. During the summer months, total water use is double the amount of water used during the winter months, and this increase is due to landscape irrigation. The Water Conservation Program analyzed outdoor water use and found that there is widespread inefficiency and over irrigation in landscape watering. The city designed the water rate structure to focus on reducing outdoor water use.

**Q. Are all customers billed under the tiered rate structure?**

**A.** No. The tiered water rate structure only applies to Single Family Residential (SFR) accounts and dedicated irrigation accounts. SFR accounts are those accounts where a single water meter provides water to an individual residence, which could be a home, town home, or condominium. Dedicated irrigation accounts are those accounts where a single water meter provides irrigation water only.

**Q. How are the SFR tiers determined?**

**A.** The tiered rate structure includes sufficient water for all indoor use and irrigation for a typical single-family residential dwelling. Typical single-family residential dwellings might include 2,000 to 3,000 square feet of landscaping. Based on peak evapotranspiration during summer months, 8,000 gallons is enough water to efficiently irrigate 2,000 to 3,000 square feet of landscaping, depending on plant type. Therefore, the first tier breakpoint was determined to be 8,000 gallons above your cap. The second tier breakpoint was designed to target only very large irrigation uses, and only 2 percent of all single family residential water use would typically fall in Tier 3. Therefore, the second tier breakpoint was determined to be 30,000 gallons above your cap.

**Q. What is my cap?**

**A.** Your indoor water use is called your “cap.” Your cap is an average of water used during the December, January and February billing periods, when virtually all water consumption is indoors.

**Q. How is my cap incorporated?**

**A.** The tiered water rate structure incorporates each individual account’s cap into Tier 1, which allows all indoor water use (your cap) plus 8,000 gallons to be billed under Tier 1.

**Q. Why is my cap incorporated?**

**A.** The tiered water rate structure is focused on outdoor water use. By incorporating each customer's cap into the rate structure, it allows all indoor water use to be billed at the Tier 1 rate.

**Q. What if I have a zero cap?**

**A.** If all of your water use is indoors and you don't have any outdoor water use, all your water use will be billed at the Tier 1 rate.

**Q. What if I don't have sewer service and only have water service?**

**A.** If you only have a water account and do not receive sewer services from the City, a cap will be calculated for your account based on your December, January and February billing periods. This calculated cap will be used to determine your allocation under the tiered water rate structure.

**Q. How can I reduce my water use?**

**A.** If you think you are using water inefficiently, the Water Conservation Program offers many programs and incentives for reducing water use, identifying water waste and improving water use efficiency. To help reduce water use, the Water Conservation program provides:

- Rebates for replacing high-flow toilets with high-efficiency toilets
- Free high-efficiency showerheads and faucet aerators
- Rebates for replacing your washing machine with qualifying high efficiency washing machines
- Rebates for improving the efficiency of your irrigation systems
- Rebates for removing your turf and replacing it with low water use alternatives
- Rebates for rainwater harvesting
- Free shut off hose nozzles
- Weekly lawn watering and drip watering information through our Turf-Time line, (707) 543-3466, or on the web: [www.srcity.org/turftime](http://www.srcity.org/turftime)
- Tips and information for reducing water use

**Q. Are there any services the Utilities Department offers to help reduce water use?**

**A.** Yes. The Water Conservation Program offers many programs and incentives for reducing water use, identifying water waste and improving water use efficiency. In addition to the incentives already listed, the Water Conservation Program also provides free Home Water Use Survey Kits, which assist customers in identifying and eliminating water waste and improving water use efficiency, and Residential "Check-Ups", where expert staff will come to your home, review your current water uses, and make recommendations for improving your water use efficiency. Home Audit Kits and Check Ups can be requested by calling the Water Conservation Program at 543-3985.

