



Example of a District water meter

Water meters can be an effective tool for understanding and monitoring your water use and detecting leaks.

After you read this information, you will be able to use the meter to determine if you have a water leak, measure the amount of water leaking, and monitor your overall water use.



<<< See inside for steps on how to read and utilize water meters.

## Visit Us Online!

*The Nipomo Community Services District's website offers helpful tips on reading meters and detecting leaks.*

*Visit our "Resources" page at [www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)*

For more information, contact us at  
**805-929-1133**  
or [info@ncsd.ca.gov](mailto:info@ncsd.ca.gov)

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**NIPOMO COMMUNITY  
SERVICES DISTRICT**

April 2014



# Tracking Water Use With Water Meters



**NIPOMO COMMUNITY  
SERVICES DISTRICT**

# Water Meters as a Tool

The District installs and maintains a water meter at every customer connection point to the water system.

The District reads meters every two-months for billing purposes.

Customers can use this same meter as an accurate tool for measuring water use and detecting leaks.

## Tracking Your Water Use >>>

You can track your water use by reading the meter from time to time (weekly for example) and calculating how much water was used during the period. You can read the water meter before and after irrigation and measure exactly what is being used and where.

## Detecting Leaks >>>

Meters have a small 'tell-tale' triangle on the meter face (see below) that will move if the slightest of flow is present. Turn all your water- using appliances and valves off. If this triangle is still moving, all your water is NOT off and you have a leak. Now you can begin finding the leak.

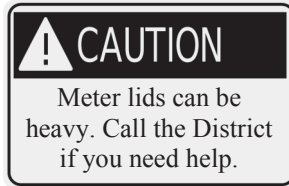


Note:  
Always use caution when accessing the water meter. If you need help, contact the District at 929-1133.

# Reading Water Meters - As Easy as 1-2-3

## 1. Raise the meter lid and open the meter dial cover >>>

Carefully raise the lid and move it out of the way. The District has different types of meter boxes depending on the location of the meter. Typical meter boxes are either concrete or metal. See below. A meter dial cover covers the face of the meter. To read the digits, raise the cover and locate the dial.



## 2. Read the digits >>>

The dial will have a row of numbers similar to a car odometer, a sweep hand, and a 'tell-tale' triangle. Meter faces vary. A typical meter is shown below.

Furthest right on the row of numbers are white numbers on a black background. These record 1's and 10's of cubic feet. Each time the sweep hand goes full circle, 1 cubic foot of water passes through the meter and the farthest right number increases by one.

Note: 1 cubic foot = 7.48 gallons of water.

Numbers change to black on a white background as you move left on the dial. The first row of black numbers on white background (from the right) measures 100's of cubic feet. Example read:



Record ALL numbers on the dial;  
this is Read #1 (514828).

Run some irrigation and/or wait a week.  
Record ALL the numbers again;  
this is Read #2 (515313).



Subtract Read #1 from Read #2 (515313-514828); this equals the cubic feet used (485). Multiply this number by 7.48 to get gallons used (3,627).

## 3. Close meter dial cover and replace the meter lid >>>

Once finished reading the meter, close the meter dial cover. Carefully replace the meter lid and make sure the lid is secure.

### Meter Reads and Billing:

Water meters register in cubic feet, but the District bills in 100 cubic feet increments, or 'units.' Based on the example above, the customer would be billed for 5 'units' of water: (485 cubic feet÷100=4.85 or rounded to 5 units)  
7.48 gallons = 1 cubic foot      748 gallons = 100 cubic feet = 1 unit of water for billing purposes  
In a two-month billing cycle, the average District customer uses 36 units of water which equates to approximately 27,000 gallons of water (36 units x 748 gallons). The District sells 1 unit of water (748 gallons) for about \$3 which works out to less than 1/2 of 1 penny per gallon.