



# CALIFORNIA WATER & WASTEWATER ARREARAGE PAYMENT PROGRAM

## **Wastewater Debt Assistance Information for Wastewater Customers**

As part of the state's efforts to help Californians recover from the pandemic, the State Water Resources Control Board is helping wastewater agencies cover debt from customers who could not pay their wastewater bills due to COVID-19 related financial hardships. The funding is part of the California Water and Wastewater Arrearages Payment program.

### **What is wastewater?**

Also called sewage, wastewater is the leftover, "used water" that comes from activities like bathing, washing dishes, and flushing toilets. Wastewater must be cleaned before it can be released back into the environment. This cleaning, also called treatment, happens at more than 900 wastewater treatment plants throughout the state. Wastewater treatment plants may bill their customers directly, use third-party billing companies (such as cities, counties, or special districts) or through property taxes.

### **What is the California Water and Wastewater Arrearages Payment Program?**

The California Water and Wastewater Arrearages Payment Program provides up to \$1 billion in financial relief to cover debt accrued during the pandemic by customers of drinking water and wastewater agencies. The drinking water application period has ended.

### **How does the program work?**

1. Wastewater agencies apply for funding February 1 through April 1, 2022.
2. Funding is available for debt accrued from March 4, 2020, through June 15, 2021, including debt transferred to a third-party collection entity, debt collected through property tax rolls, or debt offset by customer assistance programs.
3. Once they receive funding, wastewater agencies have 60 days to credit customer accounts and let customers know in writing that the debt has been cleared or reduced. Wastewater agencies must also waive late fees and interest for these customers.

### **How can I help?**

Contact your wastewater agency and encourage them to apply for funding! Your wastewater agency may be your city, county, or a sewer district. Contact information for your wastewater agency should be listed on your utility bill.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Visit [bit.ly/WastewaterDebtRelief](https://bit.ly/WastewaterDebtRelief) and sign up for email updates (at the bottom of the page) or email [wwarrearages@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:wwarrearages@waterboards.ca.gov).