

# NOTICE OF WATER RIGHT REGISTRATION FEE PAYMENT CHANGES

The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights is now charging annual fees, rather than a fee every five years, for water right registrations.

## **When will I be billed?**

The California Department of Tax and Fee Administration issues the annual fee assessment on a fiscal year basis running from July 1 of each year through June 30 of the following year. The actual issuance of the assessments usually occurs in October or November of the fiscal year. An example of the assessment that you will receive is available [here](#).

## **Why does the State Water Resources Control Board charge annual water right fees?**

Effective January 1, 2004, the Water Code was amended to require the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt emergency regulations revising and establishing water right and water quality certification fees to be deposited in the Water Rights Fund in the State Treasury. Since then, the State Water Board has charged annual water right fees for most water rights with the exclusion of registration fees that were due every five years. Fees for registrants have been changed from an every five year fee to an annual fee. The Water Code authorizes the State Water Board to periodically adjust the fees and requires the State Water Board to revise the fee schedule each fiscal year as necessary to conform to the revenue levels set forth in the annual Budget Act.

## **Why were my fees changed to annual and increased?**

The Division of Water Rights routinely reviews and updates water rights related fees. Raising fees moves revenue closer to staff costs to administer the registration program and switching to annual fees provides a more stable funding source.

## **I recently paid a renewal fee. Do I need to pay the fee indicated in the fee assessment?**

Yes, you must pay the fee indicated in the fee assessment that you receive from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. Carryover of previous fee payment is not applicable as the type of fee has changed.

However, the Division of Water Rights will issue refunds of any for registration right holders that paid \$100 to renew those registrations that were subject to renewal between July 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018. Due to uncertainty regarding whether the registration fees would change in 2018, the Division issued notices in December 2017 regarding the need to pay renewal fees to all registration right holders that were subject to renewal between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018. As registration renewal fees have changed to annual fees for the fiscal year from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, the Division will issue refunds for those registration right holders that paid \$100 to renew their registrations in response to the Division's December 2017 notice.

## **What is my fee amount for this year (2018-2019)?**

Small Irrigation Use Registration annual fees are now \$100. The Small Domestic Use Registration and Livestock Stockpond Use Registration fee for fiscal year 2018-2019 is \$50, with increases over the next two years: \$75 for fiscal year 2019-2020, and \$100 for fiscal year 2020-2021 and thereafter.

## **Are there any discounts of the fees?**

Yes, there are new discounts, as of this year, applicable to two registration programs.

### Small Domestic Use Registrations:

A 20% discount in the fee is available for right holders who hold their registration for the purpose of providing water for human consumption (drinking), cooking, and sanitary purposes, and where they certify either (or both) apply: 1) their gross household income is 200% or less of the [federal poverty level](#); or, 2) the right holder or a person in their household is currently enrolled in a [qualified public assistance program](#). Right holders can request the discount on their [annual water use report](#), currently due by April 1 each year. Discounts requested for the current year will be applied to the fiscal year 2019-2020 billing cycle (in addition to any discount for that year).

### Livestock Stockpond Use Registrations:

A discount consisting of a maximum cap is provided for a single primary owner who hold five or more LSURs of at \$250 (FY 2018-19), \$375 (FY 2019-20) and \$500 (FY 2020-21). This discount is applied by the Division of Water Rights prior to billing – no action is required on your part.

### **Are all registration types included? What about Stockpond Certificates?**

Yes, Small Domestic Use, Small Irrigation Use (non-cannabis), and Livestock Stockpond Use registrations now all have annual fees. Stockpond Certificate holders hold a different type of appropriative water right, and the annual fees discussed here are not applicable to that program.

### **What happens if I don't pay my bill?**

If you do not pay your bill, you may incur late fees. If water right is subject to renewal (every five years), your registration may be subject to revocation for failure to pay the required fees.

### **Is my registration now renewed on an annual basis, or is it still every five years?**

The Division of Water Rights intends to continue to process renewals of water rights registrations on a five-year interval. As parties will be paying fees and reporting diversion and use on an annual basis, renewals are not anticipated to require an additional information request from the right holder.

### **Who should I contact if I have more questions?**

Contact the Division of Water Rights at (916) 341-5300.