



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ENTITLEMENTS

How is the entitlement determined for an account?

For accounts that were on service prior to 1991, the entitlement is based upon the historical water use for that site or the purchased water entitlement, whichever is greater. For all new accounts, i.e., where no water meter previously existed for the site, the entitlement equals the amount purchased through connection fees, which are based on calculations performed by Marin Water's Engineering Department. These calculations take many factors into consideration, including the type of use the site will have, i.e., restaurant vs. retail store, the number of people using the site, such as 20 employees vs. 200 employees, etc.

For new dedicated irrigation accounts, the water entitlement purchased through connection fees is based upon a review of the project's landscape plans in accordance with the district's landscape plan review process.

Why is my entitlement different than my water budget?

The water budget is representative of a service's actual water needs. It is based upon the historical water use for the site, site audits, and area averages for similar services.

For new dedicated irrigation accounts, or for existing irrigation accounts where the type of plant material or planted area is significantly changed, the water budget is calculated by using Estimated Total Water Use (ETWU) calculations as required under the landscape plan review process.

The water budget may be less than or equal to the entitlement, but in no case may it ever exceed the entitlement. Although the water budget may fluctuate, the entitlement for the parcel remains unchanged.

Do all accounts have entitlements and water budgets?

No, only non-residential accounts are assigned entitlements and water budgets. A dedicated irrigation meter that irrigates a residential property is considered a non-residential account.

How can I find the entitlement or water budget for a property?

The district has the entitlements/water budgets for all accounts on file and can provide this information over the phone, 415.945.1520.

Why is it important for me to know my entitlement/water budget level?

Unlike a residential account, whose water bill is determined by using a fixed, four-tiered billing structure, non-residential accounts' water bills are based on the water budget, which must be less than or equal to the entitlement. Basically, if the water use at a site exceeds the annual entitlement—thereby exceeding the water budget and baseline—the water bill may increase drastically. Please see [How Does the Water Entitlement Affect My Water Bill?](#) for more information.

How do I know if I am exceeding my entitlement and/or water budget?

If your water use in a billing period is equal to the baseline for that billing period, you will have 85% of your water billed at Tier 1 and 15% billed at Tier 2. Please see [How Does the Water Entitlement Affect My Bill?](#) for more information.

Therefore, if more than 15% of your water use is billed in Tier 2 in each billing period, you are exceeding your water budget. Because, in most cases, the sites water budget equals the water entitlement, this would mean you are also exceeding your entitlement.

More questions?

For further information on entitlement purchases or to inquire about potential water transfers, please contact our Engineering Department at 415.945.1530.

For general questions regarding the Entitlement Program or to get entitlement or water budget information for your property, please contact the Water Conservation Department at 415.945.1520.