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Julia Escamilla

**District Office Hours**

Monday - Friday

8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

24-hr. Emergency Service

Phone: 760-745-5522

[rinconwater.org](http://rinconwater.org)

## Giving Back to Our Customers

### Board Votes for Direct Rebates

Between 2010 and 2018, the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) filed several lawsuits against the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), challenging their water rates and charges as they were imposed by MWD upon SDCWA and its member agencies. In 2020, a Superior Court decision sided with SDCWA and awarded a total of \$90.7 Million in damages and legal fees to SDCWA related to this litigation.

As the costs to purchase and transport water from MWD is built in to SDCWA's water rates and charges to its member agencies, the SDCWA Board of Directors voted to distribute



the full award amount back to its member agencies. Therefore, in 2021 and 2022, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District (Rincon Water) received a total of approximately \$1.2 Million from SDCWA related to this litigation.

While several options were considered for the use of these funds, in July 2022 the Rincon Water Board of Directors voted unanimously to use this funding to provide a direct rebate to its customers. As such, active potable water customers are receiving a \$140 rebate check.

## Ask an Expert

**Answered By: Josefina Washington**  
Accountant/Customer Service Supervisor

**Q: What is the District's current policy on payments made by credit cards?**

A: As part of Rincon Water's recent Water Rate Study, the Board of Directors approved the elimination of customer credit card transaction fees. Historically, Rincon Water would charge customers a portion of its credit card transaction costs in the form of fees at the time of payment, either a flat \$3.50 fee per phone or online credit card transaction or a 3.5% fee per in-person credit card transaction.

In an effort to ease the financial burden on customers and encourage the convenience of credit card transactions, Rincon Water is absorbing these fees into its overall budget and is not directly charging transactions fees to its customers.

Do you have a question about water? Please submit your question to [conservation@rinconwater.org](mailto:conservation@rinconwater.org) and we will try to answer it in an upcoming newsletter.



## Drought Update

Living in Southern California means we must always be prepared for drought. And since we rely on water imported from the Colorado River and a very small portion from Northern California, it's not only a local drought that can affect us, but a statewide drought can affect us too.

Although the water agencies in San Diego County have hardened their water supplies and diversified their water portfolios, a drought in a far-away location can affect us all because, the more water we use, the less there is to share. For this reason, Rincon Water's Board of Directors adopted a Daily Water Conservation Ethic (DWCE). The DWCE is always in affect – regardless of our State's drought status. And, as a Rincon Water customer, you are encouraged to implement specific water waste prevention activities contained within the DWCE – every single day. It makes good sense to use water efficiently every day of the year, not only to safeguard our environment, but to better contain the cost of your monthly water bill.

You may notice that Rincon Water's DWCE is very similar to the Governor's request to conserve water in the current State Level 2 – Water Emergency and to other San Diego County water agencies. Because each agency has its own unique customer base and water supplies, this is to be expected. Although you may hear different rules reported by the media, you are required only to follow Rincon Water's DWCE to avoid potential penalties for noncompliance.

While you continue to follow Rincon Water's DWCE, we ask that you tighten your water belts a little bit more and conserve as much as you can. Together we can do it! DWCE rules can be found on our website, but several of the most asked about rules are below:

- No washing down paved surfaces.
- No application of irrigation to landscape during and within 48 hours of rainfall.
- No washing of vehicles unless using a bucket and a hose fitted with a positive shut-off nozzle.
- No water waste resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation.
- Irrigate landscape only between the hours of 8 pm to 9 am.
- Repair of all water leaks within five days of notification by Rincon Water unless otherwise specified.

**Still have grass, but want to reduce your water bill? You may want to consider the turf removal rebate, while funding lasts.**

**For details, go to:**

**[SOCALWATERSMART.COM](http://SOCALWATERSMART.COM)**

## Did you know?

With the recently approved water rates and charges, the monthly bill for the average Rincon Water customer, defined as a Single-Family Residential customer with a 5/8" water meter and 10 units of monthly consumption, decreased from \$120.55 per month to \$119.62 per month.



**BTW**

(By the Way)

In 2021, per direction of the Board of Directors, Rincon Water fully funded its OPEB Liability of approximately \$4 Million by investing funds in a dedicated trust fund. In addition, as part of Rincon Water's recent Water Rate Study, the Board of Directors approved accelerated funding of the District's Pension liability, taking steps to fully fund the liability in the next 10-years instead of the standard 30-year amortization, saving approximately \$1.96 Million in interest over the life of the payment period. Both of these actions are important steps in reducing long-term liabilities and protecting Rincon Water's current and future financial stability.

**Commitment to Infrastructure:** Rincon Water's current 7-year financial plan includes between \$3.4 Million and \$3.8 Million annually for Capital Improvement Projects, to replace or rehabilitate existing infrastructure, implement new technologies, and enhance the water system. This is approximately 15% to 20% of Rincon Water's annual budget and demonstrates our commitment to providing a safe and reliable supply of water to our valued customers.

**Will we be able to reach you in an emergency?**

Don't forget to update your emergency contact information in your WaterSmart Portal.