



San Benito County Water District Land Tax Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the land tax on my annual assessment?

In 1977, the residents of San Benito County voted on a measure to begin importing water from the federal Central Valley Project (CVP). The measure approved the assessment of the land tax to fund the construction and maintenance on both the federal and local distribution systems, and to fulfill the District's ongoing financial obligation under its water supply contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

What is the land tax used for?

The voter-approved measure was intended to cover the costs of building the necessary infrastructure to import and distribute CVP water, and to maintain the system into the future. The imported water improves water quality for agricultural and municipal use and prevents further decline in groundwater levels. Local groundwater is naturally high in salts and minerals and needs to be blended with imported water to maintain adequate water quality for municipal and agricultural customers. Without imported water the County would not be able to meet its existing water supply needs.

Does the land tax expire?

No, the land tax does not sunset. The propositions approved by the voters in 1977 state that the land tax would be needed to fund ongoing operations, maintenance, and repair of the facilities required to deliver CVP water to the County and distribute to customers. The District still has a substantial outstanding obligation under its CVP contract, both to pay off the capital costs for building the federal facilities, and to pay the annual water rates assessed by the federal government.

How is the land tax calculated?

The tax is levied at a rate of \$0.25 per \$100.00 of assessed land value for all parcels located within the District's "Zone 6" area of benefit. It appears on all property tax statements regardless of whether a parcel has access to CVP water, as there is a direct benefit to the groundwater basin in this area.

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