

## CITY OF LOS ANGELES

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - BUREAU OF SANITATION COMMERCIAL PRIVATE WATER SUB-METER INFORMATION PACKAGE

#### INTENTIONS OF THIS PACKAGE:

[BOS](#), [SSC Info](#), [Cost](#), [Summary](#)

To provide meter installation information to customers and billing of sewer service charges (SSCs) based upon private water sub-meter readings **for commercial properties and five dwelling units and more on a single water meter.**

The information in this package will provide you with the following:

1. [Background](#) information about the program.
2. Points to consider about the [benefits](#) and [responsibilities](#) of private sub-metering.
3. The necessary steps to [install](#) a sub-meter.
4. [Another alternative](#) to calculate your discharge to the sewer **before any money is spent.**

#### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The City Council has authorized a procedure that allows City of Los Angeles sewer system customers to use data from private water sub-meters in the calculation of their sewer service charges (**SSC**). The program is totally optional and the customer will bear all costs associated with it.

The program requires that the customer's plumbing be configured to separate the water distribution lines on the customer's property which drain to the sewer ("tributary lines") from those which do not drain to the sewer ("nontributary lines"). The private sub-meter may be installed on either the tributary or the nontributary line. **Only one (1) sub-meter is allowed per DWP water meter in accordance with Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Sec. 64.41.03(g)3ii.** See the [diagram](#) on page four (4) for more information.

The present SSC system bases the SSC on a percentage of the volume of water delivered through the City meter and uses an estimating procedure to determine the nontributary percentage. The private sub-meter will substitute actual data for the estimate. Thus, the program should benefit many customers who use a greater than average volume of water for irrigation or other uses which are not tributary to the sewer.

Since the data from the private sub-meter will provide the best available estimate of the sewage flow generated from a customer's property, the City's base rate of \$3.27 per hundred cubic feet (**hcf**) of sewage flow in effect on July 1, 2008, will be applied to the readings of a private sub-meter (on the tributary line), or the difference between the readings of the Department of Water and Power (**DWP**) meter and the private sub-meter on the nontributary line, to calculate the customer's SSC bill. The \$3.27 represents the City's cost to treat one hcf of sewage flow. This rate is the same as the current SSC rate of \$3.27/hcf for commercial customers applied to 90% of the water delivered. This includes an assumption about the percentage of water delivered that becomes sewage (90% for most commercial customers which includes multiple dwellings of five units or more). In other words, the \$3.27 will be applied to the volume of actual sewage discharge.

#### 2. IS THIS PROGRAM BENEFICIAL TO ME?

For those SSC customers that may be considering installing a private water sub-meter in order to decrease their SSC bill, the following will help you decide if this is the right solution for your property.

- A. Is the percentage of delivered water which your whole premises discharges to the sewer less than 90%? The current SSC system full rate assumes a 90% discharge for most commercial customers. You need to have a rough idea of the percentage of your yearly water usage going to the sewer. Annually, if it is not less than 90%, your SSC bill could increase under this program.

- B. Is your irrigation plumbing totally separate from your inside plumbing? If not, you will have to rearrange your plumbing to separate the tributary and nontributary uses. There is an exception for hose bibbs, which may remain attached to the tributary plumbing, but no credit against the SSC will be given for nontributary water discharged through hose bibbs.
- C. The estimated cost for the private water sub-meter<sup>1</sup> and its installation as depicted in our attached [schematic](#) is approximately \$400 to \$850. This includes two hours of time for a qualified licensed and bonded plumber. The replumbing referred to in (B) above would cost extra.
- D. THE PRIVATE SUB-METER PARTICIPANT HAS THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:
- 1. You will be responsible for all the costs associated with the installation and maintenance of the private sub-meter, additional plumbing, etc.** The private sub-meter belongs to you.
  - 2. Since this is a private water sub-meter, you will be required to maintain it in good operating condition** per the manufacturer's specifications.
  - 3. You will be required to periodically calibrate the private sub-meter** per manufacturer's specifications and recommendations and send the results to the City.
  - 4. You must install the private water sub-meter in a location in front of the building that is readily accessible to the DWP meter readers.**
  - 5. The meter must be bought from DWP and installed as a horizontal installation.** See note 1 above and [diagram](#) on page 4
  - 6. If your sub-meter is malfunctioning and you do not take the necessary steps to correct it, you will be put back on the City's standard billing system.** That system bills you SSC based upon 90% (commercial class) of delivered water.
  - 7. If at anytime you decide to discontinue being charged based upon the private sub-meter readings and revert to the City's standard average sewage system, you will not be allowed back on the private water sub-meter billings until one year has elapsed.**
  - 8. You must sign a release form that indemnifies the City from any damages (physical or financial) which may arise from the installation of the private water sub-meter at your premises.** See [LAMC 64.41.03\(g\)3ii](#).

If you have studied the above guidelines, have decided not to request for a free investigation for adjustment per Section 4 on page 3 and still feel that it will be worth the investment, then you **must** perform **all** the following steps to change over to the new billing system using a private water sub-meter. **Only one (1) sub-meter is allowed per DWP water meter per LAMC Section 64.41.03(g)3ii.**

### **3. HOW WOULD I GO ABOUT ACQUIRING A PRIVATE WATER SUB-METER?**

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#### PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING THE PRIVATE SUB-METER

**The person that will be installing the private water sub-meter must be given this information package to read it carefully before any work is done. He/she must determine if your plumbing configuration is appropriate for the installation of this private water sub-meter and determine the proper meter size.** A licensed plumbing contractor should be consulted on the proper location of the sub-meter and should verify that tributary and nontributary plumbing is properly segregated.

- A. Whoever is doing the installation must first **obtain a plumbing permit (\$43.40) from the Department of Building and Safety (DBS)**. The installer must be a licensed and bonded plumbing contractor to perform this job. There are various DBS offices throughout the City so please call **213 482-0061** to find the office nearest you.
- B. Then, **take the DBS permit to the DWP to purchase a private water sub-meter** and its enclosure box (approximately \$140 - \$800 depending upon the size of the meter). **The water sub-meter must be purchased from DWP if you want to qualify for this program. DWP will not read the meter if it is not purchased from them.** Please contact DWP at **213 367-2130** to find the office nearest you.
- C. **After the private sub-meter has been installed, you will notify DBS that the sub-meter has been installed and is ready for inspection.** If the DBS plumbing inspector finds that the tributary and nontributary lines have not been totally segregated (except for hose bibbs as explained on the diagram), additional plumbing work will be necessary and inspection cost incurred. Once the DBS plumbing inspector has approved the installation, DBS will notify DWP to begin reading your private water sub-meter and bill you under the new system. Please read the **SUMMARY** information on page 5.
- D. You will receive your first DWP bill with the SSC based upon the private sub-meter readings after you have accrued one complete cycle of private water sub-meter read data (approximately 30 or 60 days) depending on the frequency of your current billing.

#### 4. **REQUEST FOR SSC ADJUSTMENTS OR MORE INFORMATION**

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Financial Management Division (**FMD**) can do an investigation, upon written request, to compute an estimated percentage discharge for your property **before** any money is spent by you to install a private sub-meter. FMD will require that the customer send a letter and **information that supports the basis** on which you believe the property qualifies for an adjustment such as occupancy, irrigated area, water that goes into a product or cooling tower evaporation, two (2) or more water meters, etc. Also include a copy of the latest DWP bill or bills for the service address. The request(s) for an SSC adjustment must be in writing and sent to: **Bureau of Sanitation, Commercial SSC, PO Box 79112, Los Angeles, CA 90079-0112** or faxed to: **213 485-2984 or 485-4269**.

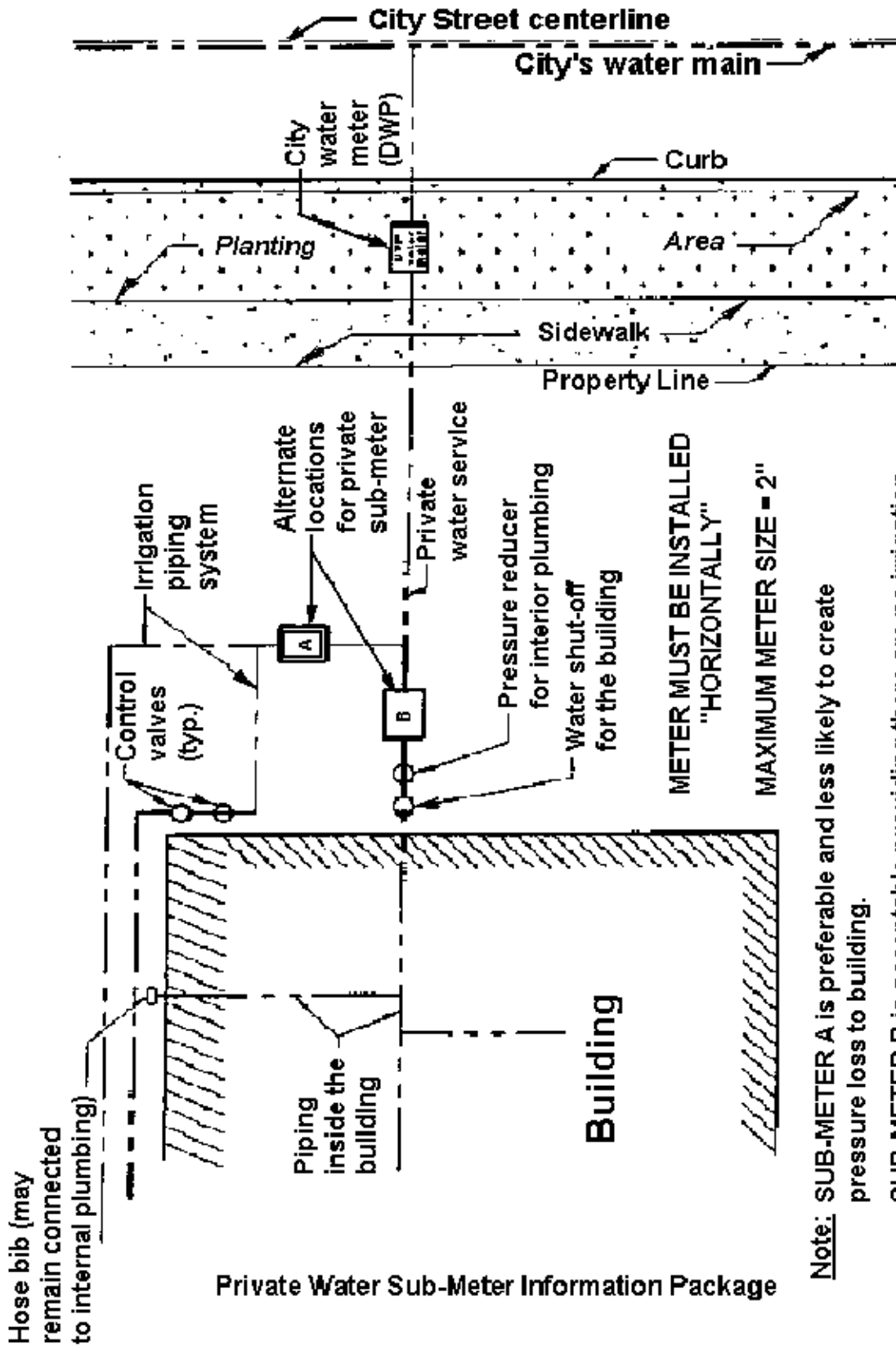
#### **HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THESE PROGRAMS?**

If you have additional questions, please call the Bureau of Sanitation, **SSC Hotline at 1 800 540-0952 or 213 473-4181**. You can also visit our web site at <http://www.lacitysan.org/fmd/ssc1.htm> for additional information.

#### **BENEFITS OF CONSOLIDATING ALL PRIVATE WATER SUB-METER PURCHASES THROUGH DWP:**

<sup>1</sup> You will be buying an approved meter and also save a considerable amount of money by purchasing a private water sub-meter from DWP, including the following:

- The sub-meters sold by DWP have met their accuracy and quality standards.
- The sub-meters have uniform characteristics because they are from the same vendor.
- The sub-meters have been thoroughly tested by the City's Department of Building & Safety and DWP's Water Meter Division.
- DWP passes on the savings (10% discount on some meters) that it receives from the manufacturer when it purchases the meters in bulk. DWP's meter vendor was selected based on competitive bids to ensure that you receive the best possible price.



NOT TO SCALE

## Sewer Service Charge Private Water Sub-Meter Alternative Locations

**Note:** SUB-METER A is preferable and less likely to create pressure loss to building.

SUB-METER B is acceptable providing there are no irrigation connections downstream of sub-meter. In low pressure areas there could be a noticeable pressure loss to building with this installation.

**METER MUST BE INSTALLED  
"HORIZONTALLY"  
MAXIMUM METER SIZE = 2"**

## SUMMARY INSTALLATION OF A PRIVATE WATER SUB-METER

[BOS Services](#)[Com'l sub-meter](#)[Res'l sub-meter](#)

**Obtain the Private Water Sub-Meter information packet from FMD, DBS or DWP\*. Read the package and decide if it is to your advantage to install the meter. You may call FMD at 1 800 540-0952 or 213 473-4181 for information.**

1. DECIDE IF THE METER IS TO BE INSTALLED ON THE DOMESTIC LINE OR THE IRRIGATION LINE. **Only one private sub-meter per DWP metered line.** See sketch on page 4 of the commercial sub-meter info.
2. OBTAIN PLUMBING PERMIT "FOR PRIVATE WATER SUB-METER" FROM DBS
3. TAKE PERMIT TO DWP & PURCHASE SUB-METER. Call DWP at 213 367-2130 for the nearest location to pick up sub-meter.
4. HAVE LICENSED PLUMBER INSTALL SUB-METER.
5. CALL DBS TO HAVE THE SUB-METER INSTALLATION INSPECTED.

### STEPS CITY DEPARTMENTS MUST COMPLETE

- A. DBS WILL INSPECT THE INSTALLATION AND SEND MEMO TO DWP NOTING TYPE A OR B INSTALLATION ON SKETCH. See SSC sub-meter info packet for explanation.
- B. DWP WILL MODIFY ACCOUNT TO BILL SSC BASED ON SUB-METER READINGS.

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- **DBS** -Department of Building & Safety -213 482-0061
  - **DWP** - Department of Water & Power -213 367-2130
  - **FMD** -Bureau of Sanitation, Financial Management Division –  
1 800 540-0952 or 213 473-4181

Includes DBS info received 4/21/99

submeter.doc