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Montecito Water District Responds to Customer Concerns

The 2014-15 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury (Jury) investigated customer complaints that water allocations for customers of the Montecito Water District (MWD) were inequitable. “The Jury found the MWD billing statements were confusing. The MWD revised their billing statements, differentiating residential and agricultural charges, eliminating the confusion,” according to Sandi Miller, Foreperson.

New ordinances declaring a water emergency and placing restrictions on water usage went into effect in February. For water customers who used both agricultural and residential allocations, the resulting water bills did not segregate the two allocations. This led users to believe they were not getting any water for residential use, yet were being charged for it.

“During a prolonged drought we are reminded how precious a reliable water supply is to our way of life,” said Foreperson Miller. “The Jury commends community members who get involved with community actions that are proposed by our elected officials.”

The entire report, “Montecito Water District Tightens the Valve”, can be accessed at www.sbcgj.org.

The Santa Barbara County Grand Jury is a basic part of California government within the judicial branch. The Grand Jury is charged with keeping watch over county government as well as cities and districts operating within the county.