

**COASTSIDE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
CLASS SPECIFICATION
UTILITY BILLING SPECIALIST**

CLASS TITLE: UTILITY BILLING SPECIALIST

DEFINITION: The Utility Billing Specialist is responsible for overseeing all utility billing and meter reading functions, as well as playing a key customer service role, including dealing with difficult customer inquiries and problems. The position will also coordinate closely with administration and field staff in the execution of his or her duties. Other responsibilities include: ensuring the integrity of the District's billing and meter reading systems and processes, including maintaining accurate billing, payment and customer accounting records; identifying and troubleshooting problematic meters; managing service requests; and developing analyses and reporting for District staff.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Utility Billing Specialist will have a solid understanding of generally accepted accounting principles as well as internal controls, and have demonstrated experience in an accounting, billing or other comparable role where accuracy is critical. The position will be held accountable for accurate and timely billing and meter reading; and must also be able to act independently and proactively in order to identify and troubleshoot problems, and bring issues forward to District staff. The Utility Billing Specialist must also possess strong systems, analysis, and report writing skills.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Duties may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

Area of Responsibility:

Utility Billing

- Prepares monthly and bi-monthly utility bills and other related bills and notices including final bills, past due notices, 48-hour shut-off warning notices, and shut-offs. Processes new or cancelled accounts, meter changes, or other similar utility billing activities as required.
- Serves as key liaison with outside billing vendors to ensure that billings are accurate and are processed expeditiously.
- Receives and responds to staff and customer queries on billings, meter readings and other customer service issues. Researches, interprets, and analyzes account history to resolve billing questions on meter readings. Handles customer questions and/or complaints in an efficient and friendly manner. Resolves problems requiring immediate attention, and verifies that underlying systematic or process issues have been addressed.
- Prepares month-end closing and adjustment entries; account reconciliations; month-end reporting, as required.

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- Creates and reviews audit reports to troubleshoot and resolve billing or meter reading issues.

Meter Reading Oversight

- Oversees meter reading process, including scheduling, prioritizing routes to be read, and preparing handheld and other devices for meter reading process. Closely interacts with the field/meter reading crew to ensure that meters are read and reported back on a timely basis, and issues are investigated and resolved.
- Develops analyses, queries, and reports to troubleshoot problematic meters.
- Manages Service Request process, ensuring that all service requests (including meter re-reads, “ins and outs”, etc.) are being handled expeditiously by District staff, and are properly recorded in the District’s systems.
- Manages routes for meter readings including implementing recommendations from the District’s route consultants. Periodically reviews and maintains route efficiency on an ongoing basis.
- Periodically reads meters, including troubleshooting customer service issues.
- Evaluates areas for improvements to the meter reading process. Plays key role in recommending (and implementing) future enhancements such as automated meter reading or advanced metering infrastructure.
- Serves as the in-house expert for meter reading systems, devices, and software; ensures that the District is maximizing the features of the devices/systems.

Analysis and Reporting

- Serves as an expert in designing and developing reports and analyses for District staff, particularly in the utility billing area, utilizing report writing tools such as the utility billing software query language, Access, and or/other report writers such as Crystal.
- Compiles reports and necessary documents, spreadsheets, historical data, billing account statements and other information to respond to staff and customer inquiries, as required.
- Prepares a monthly reporting package of key statistical data for District management as required.

Systems Administration

- Plays key role in the District’s utility billing software implementation. Works closely with District management to develop, document, and implement workflows that will maximize efficiencies gained with the system.
- Serves as the District’s key liaison and troubleshooter with our utility billing software vendors and our information technology consulting team in order to identify and resolve issues and/or implement new processes or reporting.
- Serves as the in-house expert for the utility billing program. Regularly attends training on the software to develop understanding of all aspects of utility billing software and ability to train other employees as required.

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

A combination of education and experience that provides the candidate with the requisite knowledge to perform the requirements of the job. Excel proficiency is required. Candidate must be able to work independently, but must also be comfortable in working in a Customer Service role.

Preferred Education and Experience:

- AA/AS (or higher level) degree in accounting, business, or systems/IT/engineering or (2) years of college level accounting or business coursework; (comparable work experience may be considered)
- 3+ years of experience in a billing/accounts receivable/customer service environment (or comparable experience) and demonstrating increasing responsibility.
- Proficient in an enterprise accounting/utility billing system; Strong MS Office skills. MS Access proficiency, report writing skills a plus.
- Experience in a public utility/agency in a customer service role is a plus.
 - Meter reading exposure is also desirable.
- Excellent verbal skills

In addition to the knowledge, abilities and skills required for the Utility Billing Specialist will include:

Knowledge of:

- Generally accepted accounting principles, internal controls.
- Proper customer care practices.
- Appropriate procedures, practices, rules, and policies governing office and/or system assignment.

Ability and skill to:

- Understand and work effectively with the utility billing software system.
- Evaluate customer problems/concerns and exercise independent judgment to resolve them.
- Negotiate with customers within scope of responsibility.
- Coordinate closely with District field staff in managing customer service cross-functional tasks (including meter reading) in order to accommodate scheduling and to maximize staff efficiency.
- Perform a wide range of customer service functions with speed and accuracy and apply good judgment in recognizing scope of authority.
- Perform analyses/audits of data to ensure accuracy of reporting and billing.
- Identify, analyze and troubleshoot issues, and highlight issues to District management.

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- Interpret and apply policies, procedures, standards and requirements related to assigned responsibilities.
- Plan, organize, coordinate, and prioritize assigned tasks to meet deadlines successfully.
- Ability to read water meters.
- Operate specialized equipment related to assignment such as meter reading devices.

SAFETY/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The incumbent must be able to perform job functions in a safe manner to avoid injuries and damage to district property. Vision, hearing and speech are required along with manual dexterity. This position requires prolonged sitting, standing, walking, reaching, twisting, turning, kneeling, bending, and stooping in the performance of daily activities. The need to drag, lift, and push equipment and materials weighing up to 35 pounds is required. The position requires occasional light field work in a variety of conditions on uneven and slippery surfaces.

OTHER

Incumbent must possess and maintain a valid, unrestricted California Driver's License

This job specification should not be construed to imply that these requirements are the exclusive standards of the position. Not all duties are necessarily performed by each incumbent.