

Sierra Lakes County Water District

Guidelines for Accessing Public Records

Revised July 2015

The following guidelines apply to requests for access to public records that are maintained by the Sierra Lakes County Water District. Public Records consist of writings containing information relating to the conduct of the District's business, prepared, owned, used, or retained by District regardless of physical form or characteristic and include any means of recording upon any tangible thing, any form of communication or information regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored.

Making a Request for Public Records: Requests may be made orally, in person, or by a written request to the District. Requests should be submitted to the District, care of the District Secretary at P.O. Box 1039, Soda Springs, CA 95728, or may be made by email addressed to anna.nickerson@slc wd.org. The District encourages, but does not require, requests for records be made in writing. Written requests will help the District in correctly identifying the records requested. Denials of written requests will be provided in writing.

Identifying Records: In order to help the District provide records promptly, requesters should provide specific information about the records they seek. When a record cannot be identified by name, the requester should attempt to be as specific as possible in describing the record, based on its content. When a request is not sufficiently specific, District staff may request additional information from the requester in order to identify the information being sought.

Inspection of Public Records: Public records maintained by the District shall be available for inspection during the District's regular business hours. Members of the public are not required to give notice in order to inspect public records at the District office during normal working hours. However, if the request requires the retrieval, review or redaction of records, a mutually agreeable time should be established for inspection of the records. In order to prevent records from being lost, damaged or destroyed during an inspection, District employees may determine the location of, and may monitor, the inspection.

Processing Requests for Copies of Records: When a copy of a record is requested, and the record cannot be produced immediately, the District will determine within 10 days after receipt of the request whether to comply with the request and shall promptly inform the requester of its decision and the reasons for the decision. The initial 10-day period may be extended for up to an additional 14 days if the District needs to inspect voluminous records or construct a computer report to extract data. Whenever possible, the District will provide records at the time the determination is made to disclose them. If immediate disclosure is not possible, the District will provide an estimated date on which the records will be available and will provide the records within a reasonable period of time.

Copying Fees: The District may charge the direct cost of duplication when it provides copies of records to the public (10 cents per page). The direct cost of duplication includes the pro-rata expense of the duplicating equipment and the staff (salary/benefits) required to make a copy of the record(s). Direct cost of duplication does not include the staff person's time in researching, retrieving, redacting and mailing the record. When the District must compile electronic data, extract information from an electronic record, or undertake computer programming to satisfy a request, the District may require the requester to bear the full costs, not just the direct cost of duplication.

Exemptions: The District will provide access to all public records upon request unless the law provides an exemption from mandatory disclosure. Examples of records exempt from mandatory disclosure under the California Public Records Act include: certain personnel records, investigative records, drafts, confidential legal advice, records prepared in connection with litigation, and information that may be kept confidential pursuant to other state or federal statutes.