

Answers to commonly asked questions regarding water **Reno-Sparks Area**

If you are moving your business to a new location, or expanding your building size and/or water use at your current location, you should determine the following:

- 1. Contact TMWA and determine the total amount of water rights (acre-feet per year) that have been dedicated to the parcel and the average water use for the parcel for the previous three years.**
 - Adequate water rights may not be appurtenant to the property. If your projected or historic use exceeds the amount of the dedicated water rights, the deficit must be made up. Water rights can be purchased from TMWA (currently the price is about \$7,500 per acre-foot, subject to change) or purchased on the open market through local water right brokers.*
- 2. Contact the Fire Authority and determine the minimum fire flow requirement (flow and duration) to the site.**
 - If your project involves a building permit to make modifications or additions to an existing building, or construction of a new building on a vacant parcel, the Fire Authority will need to determine the minimum fire flow requirement for the site. If the required fire flow exceeds the capacity of the water system (this may occur in older areas where the water system was designed for lower fire flows) you may be required to construct off-site improvements to the water system (which may involve significant cost) to improve the fire flow capacity to the project site.*
- 3. Determine any special requirements related to your business needs such as pressure or chemistry.**
 - If you have industrial or manufacturing processes that require specific water pressures that exceed the pressure available to the property, you may need to install an internal booster pump system to provide adequate pressure (pressure is dependent upon location and can vary from 40-120 pounds per square inch (psi)).*

4. Determine if there are separate services to the parcel for domestic, irrigation and internal fire suppression systems.

- *Your sewer bill is calculated based on your metered water use. If your current domestic service also supplies your irrigation system, your sewer bill will be too high. You may want to consider adding a new irrigation service to avoid the higher sewer bills.*

5. Determine if there are backflow devices installed on the services to the parcel.

- *Water service to commercial properties must have an appropriate backflow device installed just downstream of the meter. Many older properties do not have backflow devices installed on their water services which will require a retrofit installation – the installation of new services and vaults/boxes can be disruptive to parking and landscaped areas and usually require excavation and pavement restoration in the street. The installation of backflow devices can be expensive and some backflow devices require an electrical service to power a space heater to avoid freezing of the service line.*

6. Determine if there are any existing services that are not being used or will not be needed in the future.

- *Any water main or water service stubs to the property that are not being used or will not be used in the future must be retired all the way back to the main. This work may require excavation in the street along with pavement restoration and possibly street cut penalties.*

TMWA has a new business process called a “Discovery” that can provide answers to many of the questions above. To implement this process, please complete an application (form is available on-line at www.tmwa.com) and submit it with the \$720 application fee along with any drawings (site plan, grading plan) that may be available. Discoveries may take 30-60 days to complete depending upon workload.