

## California Senate bill SB 7

SUMMARY: Requires, as of January 1, 2017, that individual water meters, also called submeters, be installed on all new multifamily residential units or mixed commercial and multifamily units and requires that landlords bill residents for the increment of water they use. Specifies rights and obligations between landlords and tenants. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Creates a new article in the Water Code regarding submetering (submetering article) that requires each water purveyor that sells, leases, rents, furnishes, or delivers water service to a newly constructed multiunit residential structure or newly constructed mixed-use residential and commercial structure for which a water connection is submitted after January 1, 2017, to ensure each individual unit be metered or submetered as a pre-condition to new water service. Prohibits the water purveyor from imposing an additional capacity or connection fee or charge for a submeter that is installed by an owner or his or her agent.
- 2) Exempts long-term health care facilities, low-income housing, residential care facilities, housing at a place of education, and time-share properties from the requirement to submeter.
- 3) Defines low-income housing as a residential building financed with tax credits, tax-exempt mortgage bonds or other federal, state, or local funds, as specified, and where 90% or more of the units are occupied by lower income households, which is defined as persons and families whose income does not exceed the qualifying limits for housing under Section 8 of the

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United States Housing Act of 1937 or, under specified circumstances, an equivalent.

- 4) Allows the Department of Housing and Community Development

(HCD) to develop requirements for the installation of water submeters in multiunit residential structures, including specifying when such installation is infeasible and thus exempt, such as potentially with high-rise multifamily buildings and to propose those requirements for adoption by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) in the next regularly-scheduled update of the California Building Standards Code that occurs on or after January 1, 2016.

5) Requires HCD to exempt long-term health care facilities, low-income housing, residential care facilities, housing at a place of education, and time-share properties in any building standards it develops for submetering. Defines low-income housing for the purposes of the exemption section.

6) Renders the submetering article inoperative (and thus superseded) on the date that the CBSC includes submetering requirements in the California Building Standards Code that conform to the submetering article.

7) Adds a new Chapter to the Civil Code regarding "Water Service" with findings that the purpose of this Chapter is to encourage water conservation in multifamily residential buildings while ensuring that practices for water service billing are just, reasonable, and include appropriate safeguards for both landlords and tenants.