California Code, Government Code - GOV § 53069.45

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(a)(1) Notwithstanding any other law, the legislative body of a “local agency,” as defined in [Section 54951](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&originatingContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&pubNum=1000211&refType=LQ&originatingDoc=Iafe76060a5ea11ed9c4884bd25368be0&cite=CAGTS54951), that provides water services, may adopt an ordinance that prohibits water theft and makes a violation of an ordinance enacted by the local agency regarding water theft subject to an administrative fine or penalty, as provided in this section.

(2) The local agency shall adopt an ordinance that sets forth the administrative procedure that shall govern the imposition, enforcement, collection, and administrative review by the local agency of the administrative fines or penalties for water theft.

(b) If the water theft is committed via meter tampering in violation of an ordinance adopted under this section, it is punishable as follows:

(1) A fine not exceeding five hundred dollars ($500) for a first violation.

(2) A fine not exceeding five thousand dollars ($5,000) for a second violation of the same ordinance.

(3) A fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars ($10,000) for the third violation and each additional violation of the same ordinance.

(c) All other forms of water theft in violation of an ordinance adopted under this section, including but not limited to unauthorized use of a fire hydrant or fire detector check (DC), are punishable as follows:

(1) A fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars ($2,500) for a first violation.

(2) A fine not exceeding *five t*housand dollars ($5,000) for a second violation of the same ordinance.

(3) A fine not exceeding tenthousand dollars ($10,000) for each additional violation of the same ordinance.

(d) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) “Irrigation district” has the same meaning as “district,” as that term is defined in [Section 20513 of the Water Code](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&originatingContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&pubNum=1000226&refType=LQ&originatingDoc=Iafe823b0a5ea11ed9c4884bd25368be0&cite=CAWAS20513).

(2) “Water theft” means an action to divert, tamper, or reconnect water utility services, as defined in [Section 498 of the Penal Code](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&originatingContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&pubNum=1000217&refType=LQ&originatingDoc=Iafe823b1a5ea11ed9c4884bd25368be0&cite=CAPES498).

(e) An irrigation district may impose fines or penalties for water theft in accordance with this section or [Division 11 (commencing with Section 20500) of the Water Code](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&originatingContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&pubNum=1000226&refType=LQ&originatingDoc=Iafe84ac0a5ea11ed9c4884bd25368be0&cite=CAWAS20500). This section shall not cap or limit the fines that an irrigation district may impose in accordance with [Division 11 (commencing with Section 20500) of the Water Code](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&originatingContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&pubNum=1000226&refType=LQ&originatingDoc=Iafe84ac1a5ea11ed9c4884bd25368be0&cite=CAWAS20500).